THE
HOME BOOK OF VERSE

THE

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THE HOME BOOK OF VERSE

AMERICAN AND ENGLISH

1580–1918

With an Appendix Containing a Few Well-known Poems in Other Languages

Selected and arranged

By

BURTON EGBERT STEVENSON

THIRD EDITION

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TO

HENRY HOLT

WITH SINCERE REGARD

INTRODUCTION

I

THE attempt is made in this collection to bring together the best short poems in the English language from the time of Spenser to the present day, together with a body of verse which, if not great poetry, has at least the distinction of wide popularity. In what degree this attempt has been successful the book itself must show; but it may be worth while to state briefly certain purposes which the compiler had in mind when he undertook the task, and which he has carried out as faithfully as he could.

These purposes were to include nothing which did not seem to him to ring true, but, at the same time, to recognize the validity of popular taste as well as of classical taste; to preserve in authentic form certain fugitive poems which everyone admires but which few know where to find; to lay emphasis upon the lighter forms of verse; and to pay especial attention to the work of living English and American poets, particularly of the younger generation.

It would be idle to suppose that everything included here will appeal to everyone as good poetry. Tastes in poetry differ even more inevitably than tastes in food; but the compiler has tried to spread his table in such a manner that every healthy taste may be abundantly satisfied without having to eat of any dish it does not care for. In one respect, he is free to confess that, in arranging the banquet, he has not relied upon his own taste alone. There is a note of pensive sentiment—the note which Longfellow knew how to strike so successfully—which, according to Professor Trent, "finds an echo in the universal human heart," and this note the compiler did not feel justified in disregarding, or even regarding lightly, simply because his own heart happens to be indifferent to it. Nor has he been deterred from using a poem because it was the common

property of anthologists, or tempted to include any because it was little known. For this is a collection, not of curious or unusual, but of favorite verse.

There will be much difference of opinion as to the merit of the selections from the work of living writers included here. Where the test of time is not available, and the stamp of wide approval is withheld, there remains only the test of individual preference, and here the compiler has consulted no judgment but his own. He has been hampered by human limitations as applied to a mass of material so overwhelming in bulk; but he hopes that the selection will be found fairly representative, and that no really great poem of recent years has been overlooked. And while the restrictions of copyright have somewhat limited the representation given certain American poets, he believes that American verse, as a whole, receives far more attention here than in any other general anthology.

II

Practically the first decision the compiler made with regard to this work was that it should be a collection, not of fragments, but of complete poems; and this, while it did not, of course, preclude the use of poems within poems—of lyrics from the dramatists, of songs from Scott's metrical romances, or of such parentheses as Byron's stanzas on Waterloo—while it did not prevent the excision of such obvious digressions as the final stanzas of Timrod's "Spring," and while it was not construed to mean that a sequence such as "Sonnets from the Portuguese" must be given entire, has, nevertheless, resulted in some deprivations. No passages will be found here from any of Shakespeare's plays, no stanzas from the "Fairy Queen," no lines from "Paradise Lost." But the compiler feels that such loss, if it be a loss, is more than counterbalanced by the satisfaction of knowing that, throughout the book, one gets complete the poet's thought, as he embodied it in his verse.

The decision to give every poem entire has resulted in a few exclusions from another cause than that of length; for in some lyrics, especially of Restoration days, there is oc-

casionally a line or stanza too free for modern taste. It is for this reason that Suckling's inimitable "Ballad of a Wedding" will not be found between these covers, since it contains one stanza certainly, and perhaps three or four, not fitted for a "Home Book of Verse." A few other poems which had got through the winnowing as far as the first proofs, were finally cut out for the same reason, rather than presented in a mangled or Bowdlerized version.

And, as already mentioned, the enforcement of copyright restrictions has prevented the use of a small number of poems which the compiler wished to include. There are a few publishers who seem to regard with pronounced disfavor any collection such as this, and who will permit the use of poems which they control either not at all, or only upon conditions which are, in effect, prohibitive. Because of this, the admirers of Henry Cuyler Bunner will look in vain through these pages for any example of his delicate art; and for the same reason a few other American poets are either absent altogether or only meagerly represented. But the losses from this cause are unimportant when compared with the great body of the work, and the compiler feels that he has little reason to complain. For the most part, his requests for copyright permissions have been granted with a most gratifying courtesy and generosity.

III

Great care has been taken to secure accuracy of text, a task whose difficulty only the anthologist can appreciate. In so far as possible, the copy used was taken from the standard editions of the various poets; and where there was any question of authenticity, as in the case of fugitive poems, the poem, if the author was living and could be found, was submitted to him for correction. In the older poems, where there were varied readings of equal authority, the editor has used that which seemed to him the best; and where there have been repeated revisions of a poem, that has been chosen which seemed the better version. This has not been, in every case, the final version; for, as in the case of Coates Kinney's "Rain on the Roof," over-refinement

has sometimes destroyed the spontaneity of the earlier work.

The spelling has been modernized throughout, as there seemed no reason to preserve an archaism not intended by the poet; and such eccentricities of spelling as various writers affected have been made to conform to the accepted American usage. The numbering of stanzas has been omitted as unnecessary and cumbersome. In every case where a short poem has been taken from a longer one, a line has been added to indicate its source, and where the author himself did not supply a title for his poem, the present editor has usually preferred to quote the first line as the title, rather than use a title invented by someone else. In the old ballads, a modern version has been used in preference to the earliest one, which would be unintelligible to many readers; and the use of the apostrophe to indicate an imaginary shortening of a syllable has been done away with. As a matter of fact, there is, for example, no real difference between the pronunciation of "kiss'd," "kist" and "kissed," and so no reason why the regular spelling should not be used.

IV

The classification used in this volume has been made to fit the poems, and not the poems the classification. In other words, with the exception of some of the children's verse, the work of selection was completed before that of classification was begun. The compiler can claim for it no fundamental originality, since most poetry falls into certain well-recognized classes; but he has tried to make it more searching and exhaustive than is usually attempted. He has tried, for instance, to group the poems dealing with the emotions not only by meaning, but by shades of meaning, so that one poem would seem naturally to suggest the next. This has, of course, been a task too fine for accomplishment with anything like complete success; but, as he has looked through the final proofs, he has been conscious of at least a few happy juxtapositions.

Classification is a nerve-racking task, and, even at the best, must sometimes be purely arbitrary; as, for example,

where the present compiler has placed his selection from Meredith's "Modern Love" under "Love Sonnets." For Meredith's stanzas are not sonnets at all, since they consist of sixteen lines each; and yet they have essentially a sonnet effect, and their place seemed to be with the other famous sequences. Then, too, there are many poems which may equally well be placed under various headings, so that it was, more or less, an arbitrary decision which placed "The Courtin' " under "The Comedy of Love" rather than with the humorous poems, and "Kathleen Mavourneen" under "The Parted Lovers" rather than "At Her Window."

And, however complete the classification may be, the anthologist must inevitably, at the end, find himself with a number of poems on his hands which belong distinctly nowhere, and which must yet go somewhere. It has been rather the fashion to solve the difficulty by putting them anywhere; but the present compiler has chosen, rather than break the continuity of arrangement, to set up, in one section of Part VI, a sort of scrap-bag in which these odds and ends are assembled.

V

Where every collection such as this must fail of complete success, as representing the whole field of English poetry, is that it exalts the writers of brief lyrics at the expense of the writers of long odes and epics and narrative poems. Such poets as Milton, Pope and Collins do not loom as large in these pages as their stature merits; to attempt to represent Shakespeare by a few of his songs and sonnets, or Swift by an epigram, is manifestly absurd; so that this collection can claim to be adequate only as a representation of English lyric poetry. That, it is hoped, it will be found to be—something more than that, indeed, since many of the more famous longer poems are also included; and it should be valuable, too, as bringing together in one index a wide range of verse not to be found in the average private library.

In closing this resumé of a task which has occupied some three years in the doing, the compiler wishes to acknowledge his deep indebtedness for many kindnesses to the living writers whose work is represented here. They have been

uniformly helpful and obliging; not only have they cordially assented to this use of their poems, but they have made suggestions, have revised copy and have read proofs. Their sympathy and interest have been never-failing, and it was very largely their enthusiasm and encouragement which enabled the compiler to carry through to completion a task before which he faltered more than once. To them and to their predecessors in the field of English song belong whatever honor and glory it may bring; for, to paraphrase Montaigne, the compiler has contributed to this nosegay nothing but the thread which binds it; theirs is its perfume and its beauty.

B. E. S.

Chillicothe, Ohio,
May 10, 1912

INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD EDITION

When the first edition of this book was published in 1912, there was a tentative agreement between publisher and compiler that, if it was still alive at the end of ten years, it should be revised in an effort to keep it abreast of the times, and so for every decade thereafter. On neither side was there any real expectation that the agreement would ever need to be carried out; certainly there was no reason to suppose that such a revision would be possible, or in any way necessary, at the end of five years; and yet this third edition represents a far more complete revision than was then contemplated —the addition of five hundred and ninety poems, and the deletion of one hundred and sixty-nine; entire repagination, and innumerable minor changes.

It is, of course, primarily because the book has been commercially successful that the publisher is able to spend still more upon it, but that alone would not have warranted a revision such as this. What really warranted it—almost compelled it—was the astonishing renaissance in English and American poetry which the present century has witnessed. "The Home Book of Verse" was launched, by a fortunate chance, just when this renaissance was gathering volume, and its success was due largely, no doubt, to the new interest in poetry thus evoked. But this also had the effect of putting the book more quickly out of date, and anyone in touch with modern verse could not but be disappointed to look through a volume such as this and find nothing by such poets as Lascelles Abercrombie, and John Masefield, and G. K. Chesterton, and Walter de la Mare, and Robert Frost, and Vachel Lindsay, and Richard Middleton, and Ralph Hodgson, and Rupert Brooke.

It is from the work of this younger choir that the additions have very largely been made, and among them will be found some lyrics as fresh and lovely as any in the volume—and as true to the great traditions of English poetry. The dele-

tions are partly of verses whose inclusion was originally determined—as the compiler now realizes—by quotability rather than by merit, and partly of those which failed to stand the test of repeated re-reading—the deadliest test there is. The revision is based upon a careful examination of every significant book of poetry published in this country since 1912, and of many published in England, as well as of a number of older books to which the compiler had not previously had access.

He has also had the assistance of the many columns of critical comment evoked by the appearance of the original edition, and he is not ashamed to say that his attention was called in this way to many notable poems with which he was entirely unfamiliar. Second in value only to the printed criticism was the great mass of correspondence which came and is still coming from all over the country—delightful letters which prove how widespread and genuine is the love of poetry.

The one general criticism—as against specific complaints of certain omissions—which seemed best founded was that no adequate representation was given to the great odes of English poetry. The compiler's first thought had been that they were too long to be included in a book which is essentially a collection of lyrics; but reflection convinced him that these odes did have a place here, and some six or seven of them have been added.

The well-grounded specific criticisms were too numerous to be enumerated; but a particularly striking one was that, while the "Rubáiyát," the great skeptical poem of the nineteenth century, was given entire, there was nothing, or practically nothing, from the century's great poem of faith, "In Memoriam." A careful selection from "In Memoriam" will be found in this edition, preceded by two sections from another great poem, which also in a way counters the "Rubáiyát," though from a vastly different angle—Sir Richard Burton's "Kasîdah."

Then, too, the prestige which the book had gained made it possible to secure permission to use certain poems which were denied to an unknown adventure. Lovers of H. C. Bunner will find nine of his poems here, and a number of other

poets are represented more adequately than was possible five years ago. When the compiler says that he believes this third edition to be a far finer achievement than was the first one, he will be pardoned, since the merit is so largely that of others.

Not least that of other anthologists. Every general collection such as this must have its foundations in other collections, from the very first ones which preserved the "Reliques" and "Pastorals," to the very latest which preserves the magazine verse of the year. The debt varies, of course, but it is nevertheless a debt which the compiler has often felt should have been acknowledged in his original introduction, and which is most heartily acknowledged here.

The general plan of the book has remained unchanged, except in one or two very minor details. The compiler found that, in spite of his best efforts, a few incomplete poems had crept into the first edition. These have either been completed or labelled as extracts; and two or three other incomplete ones have been added—notably Suckling's "Ballad Upon a Wedding," minus five stanzas. It simply had to come in! Several questions of uncertain authorship have been solved. There is no longer any doubt in the compiler's mind as to who wrote "Hoch! der Kaiser," and "There is no Death," and "Little Drops of Water," and "At a Cowboy Dance." And a number of disputed readings have been settled—to his satisfaction, at least. For example, after examining forty-three editions of the "New England Primer," he has found the weight of authority to lie on the side of

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,

rather than

"I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep."

He has taken a real joy, by discovering a misplaced comma, in changing the mediocre line,

"Her hand seemed milk, in milk it was so white,"

to the far more striking

"Her hand seemed milk in milk, it was so white."

He has corrected all the typographical errors he had himself discovered or which had been pointed out by many correspondents; he has labored to make the biographical data as complete as possible; he has checked up the poems in the book with such definitive or revised or collected editions as have appeared since 1912; and he feels that the text may be relied upon as accurate and authoritative.

Finally, he must again express his deep sense of obligation to those living poets, both English and American, who have been so unstinted in appreciation, and so generous in permitting the use of their work. Without their help, this new edition would have been impossible.

B. E. S.

Chillicothe, Ohio,
December 1, 1917.

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The V-a-s-e	*James Jeffrey Roche*	1886
Hem and Haw	*Bliss Carman*	1887
Miniver Cheevy	*Edwin Arlington Robinson*	1888
Then Ag'in	*Sam Walter Foss*	1889
A Conservative	*Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman*	1890
Similar Cases	*Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman*	1891
Man and the Ascidian	*Andrew Lang*	1895
The Calf-Path	*Sam Walter Foss*	1896
Wedded Bliss	*Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman*	1898
The Hindoo's Death	*George Birdseye*	1899
Ad Chloen, M. A.	*Mortimer Collins*	1899
"As Like the Woman as You Can"	*William Ernest Henley*	1900
"No Fault in Women"	*Robert Herrick*	1901
"Are Women Fair"	*Francis Davison (?)*	1902
A Strong Hand	*Aaron Hill*	1902
Women's Longing	*John Fletcher*	1903
Triolet	*Robert Bridges*	1903
The Fair Circassian	*Richard Garnett*	1903
The Female Phaeton	*Matthew Prior*	1904
The Lure	*John Boyle O'Reilly*	1905
The Ballad of Cassandra Brown	*Helen Gray Cone*	1906
A Reasonable Affliction	*Matthew Prior*	1907
The Woman with the Serpent's Tongue	*William Watson*	1908
Suppose	*Anne Reeve Aldrich*	1908
Too Candid by Half	*John Godfrey Saxe*	1909
Fable	*Ralph Waldo Emerson*	1909
Woman's Will	*Unknown*	1910
Woman's Will	*John Godfrey Saxe*	1910
Plays	*Walter Savage Landor*	1910
The Remedy Worse than the Disease	*Matthew Prior*	1910
The Net of Law	*James Jeffrey Roche*	1911
Cologne	*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*	1911
Epitaph on Charles II	*John Wilmot*	1911
Certain Maxims of Hafiz	*Rudyard Kipling*	1911
A Baker's Duzzen uv Wize Sawz	*Edward Rowland Sill*	1915
Epigrams	1915, 1916, 1917, 1918,	1919
Written on a Looking-glass	*Unknown*	1919
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General Summary	*Rudyard Kipling*	1919

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Only Seven	*Henry Sambrooke Leigh*	1925
Lucy Lake	*Newton Mackintosh*	1926
Jane Smith	*Rudyard Kipling*	1926
Father William	*Lewis Carroll*	1927
The New Arrival	*George Washington Cable*	1928
Disaster	*Charles Stuart Calverley*	1929
'Twas Ever Thus	*Henry Sambrooke Leigh*	1930
A Grievance	*James Kenneth Stephen*	1931
"Not a Sou Had he Got"	*Richard Harris Barham*	1933
The Whiting and the Snail	*Lewis Carroll*	1934
The Recognition	*William Sawyer*	1935
The Higher Pantheism in a Nutshell	*Algernon Charles Swinburne.*	1935
The Willow-tree	*William Makepeace Thackeray*	1936
Poets and Linnets	*Tom Hood, the Younger*	1938
The Jam-pot	*Rudyard Kipling*	1939
Ballad	*Charles Stuart Calverley*	1939
The Poster-girl	*Carolyn Wells*	1941
After Dilletante Concetti	*Henry Duff Traill*	1942
If	*Mortimer Collins*	1944
Nephilidia	*Algernon Charles Swinburne.*	1944
Commonplaces	*Rudyard Kipling*	1946
The Promissory Note	*Bayard Taylor*	1946
Mrs. Judge Jenkins	*Bret Harte*	1948
The Modern Hiawatha	*George A. Strong*	1950
How Often	*Ben King*	1950
"If I should Die To-night"	*Ben King*	1950
Sincere Flattery	*James Kenneth Stephen*	1951
Culture in the Slums	*William Ernest Henley*	1951
The Poets at Tea	*Barry Pain*	1953
Wordsworth	*James Kenneth Stephen*	1956

SONS OF THE EMERALD ISLE

Father O'Flynn	*Alfred Perceval Graves*	1957
Father Molloy	*Samuel Lover*	1958
Paddy O'Rafther	*Samuel Lover*	1960
Larrie O'Dee	*William W. Fink*	1961
The Irishman and the Lady	*William Maginn*	1962
Irish Astronomy	*Charles Graham Halpine*	1964
The Fiddler of Dooney	*William Butler Yeats*	1965
The Birth of St. Patrick	*Samuel Lover*	1966
Saint Patrick	*Henry Bennett*	1966
Mr. Molony's Account of the Ball	*William Makepeace Thackeray*	1968
Bachelor's Hall	*John Finley*	1970
The Sabine Farmer's Serenade	*Francis Sylvester Mahony*	1971
The Widow Malone	*Charles James Lever*	1973
Widow Machree	*Samuel Lover*	1974
The Peaceable Race	*Thomas Augustin Daly*	1976
The Recruit	*Robert William Chambers*	1977
Finnigin to Flannigan	*S. W. Gillilan*	1979
Barney McGee	*Richard Hovey*	1980

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Ode to Tobacco	*Charles Stuart Calverley*	1983

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Inter Sodales	*William Ernest Henley*	1986
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Verses placed over the Door at the Entrance into the Apollo Room at the Devil Tavern	*Ben Jonson*	1988
Lines on the Mermaid Tavern	*John Keats*	1989
"Give Me Ale"	*Unknown*	1989
"Jolly Good Ale and Old"	*John Still*	1990
Drink To-day	*John Fletcher*	1991
Coronemus nos Rosis Antequam Marcescant	*Thomas Jordan*	1992
The Epicure	*Abraham Cowley*	1993
Drinking	*Abraham Cowley*	1993
The Winter Glass	*Charles Cotton*	1994
Harry Carey's Reply	*Henry Carey*	1995
Gaffer Gray	*Thomas Holcroft*	1996
"A Reason Fair to Fill my Glass"	*Charles Morris*	1997
"Let the Toast Pass"	*Richard Brinsley Sheridan*	1999
"The Year that's Awa'"	*John Dunlop*	2000
John Barleycorn	*Robert Burns*	2000
"Fill the Bumper Fair"	*Thomas Moore*	2002
"Wreathe the Bowl"	*Thomas Moore*	2003
Saint Peray	*Thomas William Parsons*	2005
"Sparkling and Bright"	*Charles Fenno Hoffman*	2007
The Mahogany Tree	*William Makepeace Thackeray*	2008
Todlin' Hame	*Unknown*	2009
The Cruiskeen Lawn	*Unknown*	2010
Give Me the Old	*Robert Hinckley Messinger*	2011
The Spirit of Wine	*William Ernest Henley*	2013
"Day and Night my Thoughts Incline"	*Richard Henry Stoddard*	2014
Falstaff's Song	*Edmund Clarence Stedman*	2014
The Maltworm's Madrigal	*Austin Dobson*	2015
The Power of Malt	*Alfred Edward Housman*	2016
A Stein Song	*Richard Hovey*	2016
The Kavanagh	*Richard Hovey*	2017

GLINTS O' SUNSHINE

Song, "When daisies pied and violets blue"	*William Shakespeare*	2019
The Widow	*Allan Ramsay*	2020
Sneezing	*Leigh Hunt*	2021
Cautionary Verses to Youth of Both Sexes	*Theodore Edward Hook*	2021
A Credo	*William Makepeace Thackeray*	2022
The Lay of the Levite	*William Edmonstoune Aytoun*	2023
Early Rising	*John Godfrey Saxe*	2024
El Capitan-General	*Charles Godfrey Leland*	2026
The Legend of Heinz von Stein	*Charles Godfrey Leland*	2028
Hallowe'en	*John Mayne*	2028
"Yaw, Dot is So"	*Charles Follen Adams*	2030
Two Hundred Years Ago	*William Henry Drummond*	2031
Wreck of the "Julie Plante"	*William Henry Drummond*	2033
Humpty Dumpty	*Adeline D. T. Whitney*	2034

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Revival Hymn	*Joel Chandler Harris*	2037
The Power of Prayer	*Sidney and Clifford Lanier*	2038
Nebuchadnezzar	*Irwin Russell*	2040
Kentucky Philosophy	*Harrison Robertson*	2041
A Plantation Ditty	*Frank Lebby Stanton*	2043
Angelina	*Paul Laurence Dunbar*	2043
A Lay of Ancient Rome	*Thomas Ybarra*	2044
The Wisdom of Folly	*Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler*	2045
The Post that Fitted	*Rudyard Kipling*	2046

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No	*Thomas Hood*	2048
To Minerva	*Thomas Hood*	2048
The Alphabet	*Charles Stuart Calverley*	2049
A Tragic Story	*William Makepeace Thackeray*	2049
The Jumblies	*Edward Lear*	2050
The Owl and the Pussy-Cat	*Edward Lear*	2052
The Pobble Who Has no Toes	*Edward Lear*	2053
The Courtship of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bó	*Edward Lear*	2054
Nonsense Verses	*Edward Lear*	2057
The Turtle and Flamingo	*James Thomas Fields*	2058
Jabberwocky	*Lewis Carroll*	2059
The Gardener's Song	*Lewis Carroll*	2060
The Walrus and the Carpenter	*Lewis Carroll*	2062
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The Lovers	*Phoebe Cary (?)*	2067
The Twins	*Henry Sambrooke Leigh*	2068
A Threnody	*George Thomas Lanigan*	2069
The Fastidious Serpent	*Henry Johnstone*	2070
My Recollectest Thoughts	*Charles Edward Carryl*	2071
Mr. Finney's Turnip	*Unknown*	2071
The Siege of Belgrade	*Unknown*	2072
Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen	*William Schwenck Gilbert*	2073
To the Terrestrial Globe	*William Schwenck Gilbert*	2075
"His Heart was True to Poll"	*Francis Cowley Burnand*	2076
Red Riding Hood	*Guy Wetmore Carryl*	2077
A Nautical Ballad	*Charles Edward Carryl*	2079
The Plaint of the Camel	*Charles Edward Carryl*	2080
The Frog	*Hilaire Belloc*	2081
Sage Counsel	*Arthur T. Quiller-Couch*	2082
Child's Natural History	*Oliver Herford*	2082
In Foreign Parts	*Laura E. Richards*	2084
A Mosquito Triolet	*Aristine Anderson*	2085
A Grain of Salt	*Wallace Irwin*	2085
The Purple Cow	*Gelett Burgess*	2085
Nonsense Verses	*Gelett Burgess*	2086
Vers Nonsensiques	*George du Maurier*	2087
Home	*Unknown*	2087
Four Limericks	*Carolyn Wells*	2088
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The Ballad of the Oysterman	*Oliver Wendell Holmes*	2139
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Captain Reece	*William Schwenck Gilbert*	2180
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The British Grenadiers	*Unknown*	2280
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The Cavalier's Song	*William Motherwell*	2282
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"I Give my Soldier Boy a Blade"	*William Maginn*	2287
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Music in Camp	*John Reuben Thompson*	2289
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The Song of the Spanish Main	*John Bennett*	2381
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To the Virginian Voyage	*Michael Drayton*	2384
"The Word of God to Leyden Came"	*Jeremiah Eames Rankin*	2386
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PART I

POEMS OF YOUTH AND AGE

THE HUMAN SEASONS

FOUR Seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:

He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honeyed cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto Heaven: quiet coves

His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook:—

He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE BABY

"ONLY A BABY SMALL"

ONLY a baby small,
Dropped from the skies,
Only a laughing face,
Two sunny eyes;
Only two cherry lips,
One chubby nose;
Only two little hands,
Ten little toes.

Only a golden head,
Curly and soft;
Only a tongue that wags
Loudly and oft;
Only a little brain,
Empty of thought;
Only a little heart,
Troubled with naught.

Only a tender flower
Sent us to rear;
Only a life to love
While we are here;
Only a baby small,
Never at rest;
Small, but how dear to us,
God knoweth best.

Matthias Barr [1831–

ONLY

SOMETHING to live for came to the place,
Something to die for maybe,
Something to give even sorrow a grace,
And yet it was only a baby!

Cooing, and laughter, and gurgles, and cries,
Dimples for tenderest kisses,
Chaos of hopes, and of raptures, and sighs,
Chaos of fears and of blisses.

Last year, like all years, the rose and the thorn;
This year a wilderness maybe;
But heaven stooped under the roof on the morn
That it brought them only a baby.

Harriet Prescott Spofford [1835–

INFANT JOY

"I HAVE no name;
I am but two days old."
What shall I call thee?
"I happy am,
Joy is my name."
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy, but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee;
Thou dost smile,
I sing the while;
Sweet joy befall thee!

William Blake [1757–1827]

BABY

From "At the Back of the North Wind"

WHERE did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into the here.

Where did you get those eyes so blue?
Out of the sky as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?
Some of the starry spikes left in.

Where did you get that little tear?
I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high?
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.

What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?
I saw something better than any one knows.

Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get this pearly ear?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands?
Love made itself into bonds and bands.

Feet, where did you come, you darling things?
From the same box as the cherubs' wings.

How did they all just come to be you?
God thought about me, and so I grew.

But how did you come to us, you dear?
God thought about you, and so I am here.

George Macdonald [1824–1905]

TO A NEW-BORN BABY GIRL

And did thy sapphire shallop slip
Its moorings suddenly, to dip
Adown the clear, ethereal sea
From star to star, all silently?
What tenderness of archangels
In silver thrilling syllables
Pursued thee, or what dulcet hymn
Low-chanted by the cherubim?
And thou departing must have heard
The holy Mary's farewell word,
Who with deep eyes and wistful smile
Remembered Earth a little while.

Now from the coasts of morning pale
Comes safe to port thy tiny sail.
Now have we seen by early sun,
Thy miracle of life begun.
All breathing and aware thou art,
With beauty templed in thy heart

To let thee recognize the thrill
Of wings along far azure hill,
And hear within the hollow sky
Thy friends the angels rushing by.
These shall recall that thou hast known
Their distant country as thine own,
To spare thee word of vales and streams,
And publish heaven through thy dreams.
The human accents of the breeze
Through swaying star-acquainted trees
Shall seem a voice heard earlier,
Her voice, the adoring sigh of her,
When thou amid rosy cherub-play
Didst hear her call thee, far away,
And dream in very Paradise
The worship of thy mother's eyes.

Grace Hazard Conkling [18

TO LITTLE RENÉE ON FIRST SEEING HER LYING IN HER CRADLE

Who is she here that now I see,
This dainty new divinity,
Love's sister, Venus' child? She shows
Her hues, white lily and pink rose,
And in her laughing eyes the snares
That hearts entangle unawares.
Ah, woe to men if Love should yield
His arrows to this girl to wield
Even in play, for she would give
Sore wounds that none might take and live.
Yet no such wanton strain is hers,
Nor Leda's child and Jupiter's
Is she, though swans no softer are
Than whom she fairer is by far.
For she was born beside the rill
That gushes from Parnassus' hill,
And by the bright Pierian spring
She shall receive an offering
From every youth who pipes a strain
Beside his flocks upon the plain.

But I, the first, this very day,
Will tune for her my humble lay,
Invoking this new Muse to render
My oaten reed more sweet and tender,
Within its vibrant hollows wake
Such dulcet voices for her sake
As, curvèd hand at straining ear,
I long have stood and sought to hear
Borne with the warm midsummer breeze
With scent of hay and hum of bees
Faintly from far-off Sicily. . . .

Ah, well I know that not for us
Are Virgil and Theocritus,
And that the golden age is past
Whereof they sang, and thou, the last,
Sweet Spenser, of their god-like line,
Soar far too swift for verse of mine
One strain to compass of your song.
Yet there are poets that prolong
Of your rare voice the ravishment
In silver cadences; content
Were I if I could but rehearse
One stave of Wither's starry verse,
Weave such wrought richness as recalls
Britannia's lovely Pastorals,
Or in some garden-spot suspire
One breath of Marvell's magic fire
When in the green and leafy shade
He sees dissolving all that's made.
Ah, little Muse, still far too high
On weak, clipped wings my wishes fly.
Transform them then and make them doves,
Soft-moaning birds that Venus loves,
That they may circle ever low
Above the abode where you shall grow
Into your gracious womanhood.
And you shall feed the gentle brood
From out your hand—content they'll be
Only to coo their songs to thee.

William Aspenwall Bradley [1878–

A RHYME OF ONE

You sleep upon your mother's breast,
Your race begun,
A welcome, long a wished-for Guest,
Whose age is One.

A Baby-Boy, you wonder why
You cannot run;
You try to talk—how hard you try!—
You're only One.

Ere long you won't be such a dunce:
You'll eat your bun,
And fly your kite, like folk who once
Were only One.

You'll rhyme and woo, and fight and joke,
Perhaps you'll pun!
Such feats are never done by folk
Before they're One.

Some day, too, you may have your joy,
And envy none;
Yes, you, yourself, may own a Boy,
Who isn't One.

He'll dance, and laugh, and crow; he'll do
As you have done:
(You crown a happy home, though you
Are only One.)

But when he's grown shall you be here
To share his fun,
And talk of times when he (the Dear!)
Was hardly One?

Dear Child, 'tis your poor lot to be
My little Son;
I'm glad, though I am old, you see,—
While you are One.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

TO A NEW-BORN CHILD

Small traveler from an unseen shore,
By mortal eye ne'er seen before,
To you, good-morrow.
You are as fair a little dame
As ever from a glad world came
To one of sorrow.

We smile above you, but you fret;
We call you gentle names, and yet
Your cries redouble.
'Tis hard for little babes to prize
The tender love that underlies
A life of trouble.

And have you come from Heaven to earth?
That were a road of little mirth,
A doleful travel.
"Why did I come?" you seem to cry,
But that's a riddle you and I
Can scarce unravel.

Perhaps you really wished to come,
But now you are so far from home
Repent the trial.
What! did you leave celestial bliss
To bless us with a daughter's kiss?
What self-denial!

Have patience for a little space,
You might have come to a worse place,
Fair Angel-rover.
No wonder now you would have stayed,
But hush your cries, my little maid,
The journey's over.

For, utter stranger as you are,
There yet are many hearts ajar
For your arriving,
And trusty friends and lovers true
Are waiting, ready-made for you,
Without your striving.

The earth is full of lovely things,
And if at first you miss your wings,
    You'll soon forget them;
And others, of a rarer kind
Will grow upon your tender mind—
    If you will let them—

Until you find that your exchange
Of Heaven for earth expands your range
    E'en as a flier,
And that your mother, you and I,
If we do what we should, may fly
    Than Angels higher.

Cosmo Monkhouse [1840–1901]

BABY MAY

Cheeks as soft as July peaches,
Lips whose dewy scarlet teaches
Poppies paleness—round large eyes
Ever great with new surprise,
Minutes filled with shadeless gladness,
Minutes just as brimmed with sadness,
Happy smiles and wailing cries,
Crows and laughs and tearful eyes,
Lights and shadows swifter born
Than on wind-swept Autumn corn,
Ever some new tiny notion
Making every limb all motion—
Catching up of legs and arms,
Throwings back and small alarms,
Clutching fingers—straightening jerks,
Twining feet whose each toe works,
Kickings up and straining risings,
Mother's ever new surprisings,
Hands all wants and looks all wonder
At all things the heavens under,
Tiny scorns of smiled reprovings
That have more of love than lovings,

Mischiefs done with such a winning
Archness, that we prize such sinning,
Breakings dire of plates and glasses,
Graspings small at all that passes,
Pullings off of all that's able
To be caught from tray or table;
Silences—small meditations,
Deep as thoughts of cares for nations,
Breaking into wisest speeches
In a tongue that nothing teaches,
All the thoughts of whose possessing
Must be wooed to light by guessing;
Slumbers—such sweet angel-seemings,
That we'd ever have such dreamings,
Till from sleep we see thee breaking,
And we'd always have thee waking;
Wealth for which we know no measure,
Pleasure high above all pleasure,
Gladness brimming over gladness,
Joy in care—delight in sadness,
Loveliness beyond completeness,
Sweetness distancing all sweetness,
Beauty all that beauty may be—
That's May Bennett, that's my baby.

William Cox Bennett [1820–1895]

ALICE

Of deepest blue of summer skies
Is wrought the heaven of her eyes.

Of that fine gold the autumns wear
Is wrought the glory of her hair.

Of rose leaves fashioned in the south
Is shaped the marvel of her mouth.

And from the honeyed lips of bliss
Is drawn the sweetness of her kiss,

'Mid twilight thrushes that rejoice
Is found the cadence of her voice,

Of winds that wave the western fir
Is made the velvet touch of her.

Of all earth's songs God took the half
To make the ripple of her laugh.

I hear you ask, "Pray who is she?"—
This maid that is so dear to me.

"A reigning queen in Fashion's whirl?"
Nay, nay! She is my baby girl.

Herbert Bashford [1871–

SONGS FOR FRAGOLETTA

I

FRAGOLETTA, blessed one!
What think you of the light of the sun?
Do you think the dark was best,
Lying snug in mother's breast?
Ah! I knew that sweetness, too,
Fragoletta, before you!
But, Fragoletta, now you're born,
You must learn to love the morn,
Love the lovely working light,
Love the miracle of sight,
Love the thousand things to do—
Little girl, I envy you!—
Love the thousand things to see,
Love your mother, and—love me!
And some night, Fragoletta, soon,
I'll take you out to see the moon;
And for the first time, child of ours,
You shall—think of it!—look on flowers,
And smell them, too, if you are good,
And hear the green leaves in the wood
Talking, talking, all together
In the happy windy weather;
And if the journey's not too far
For little limbs so lately made,
Limb upon limb like petals laid,
We'll go and picnic in a star.

II

Blue eyes, looking up at me,
I wonder what you really see,
Lying in your cradle there,
Fragrant as a branch of myrrh?
Helpless little hands and feet,
O so helpless! O so sweet!
Tiny tongue that cannot talk,
Tiny feet that cannot walk,
Nothing of you that can do
Aught, except those eyes of blue.
How they open, how they close!—
Eyelids of the baby-rose.
Open and shut—so blue, so wise,
Baby-eyelids, baby-eyes.

III

That, Fragoletta, is the rain
Beating upon the window-pane;
But lo! The golden sun appears,
To kiss away the window's tears.
That, Fragoletta, is the wind,
That rattles so the window-blind;
And yonder shining thing's a star,
Blue eyes—you seem ten times as far.
That, Fragoletta, is a bird
That speaks, yet never says a word;
Upon a cherry tree it sings,
Simple as all mysterious things;
Its little life to peck and pipe,
As long as cherries ripe and ripe,
And minister unto the need
Of baby-birds that feed and feed.
This, Fragoletta, is a flower,
Open and fragrant for an hour,
A flower, a transitory thing,
Each petal fleeting as a wing,
All a May morning blows and blows,
And then for everlasting goes.

IV

Blue eyes, against the whiteness pressed
Of little mother's hallowed breast,
The while your trembling lips are fed,
Look up at mother's bended head,
All benediction over you—
O blue eyes looking into blue!

Fragoletta is so small,
We wonder that she lives at all—
Tiny alabaster girl,
Hardly bigger than a pearl;
That is why we take such care,
Lest some one run away with her.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866–

CHOOSING A NAME

I HAVE got a new-born sister:
I was nigh the first that kissed her.
When the nursing-woman brought her
To papa, his infant daughter,
How papa's dear eyes did glisten!
She will shortly be to christen;
And papa has made the offer,
I shall have the naming of her.

Now I wonder what would please her,—
Charlotte, Julia, or Louisa?
Ann and Mary, they're too common;
Joan's too formal for a woman;
Jane's a prettier name beside;
But we had a Jane that died.
They would say, if 'twas Rebecca,
That she was a little Quaker.
Edith's pretty, but that looks
Better in old English books;

Ellen's left off long ago;
Blanche is out of fashion now.
None that I have named as yet
Is so good as Margaret.
Emily is neat and fine;
What do you think of Caroline?
How I'm puzzled and perplexed
What to choose or think of next!
I am in a little fever
Lest the name that I should give her
Should disgrace her or defame her;—
I will leave papa to name her.

Mary Lamb [1764–1847]

WEIGHING THE BABY

"How many pounds does the baby weigh—
  Baby who came but a month ago?
How many pounds from the crowning curl
  To the rosy point of the restless toe?"

Grandfather ties the 'kerchief knot,
  Tenderly guides the swinging weight,
And carefully over his glasses peers
  To read the record, "only eight."

Softly the echo goes around:
  The father laughs at the tiny girl;
The fair young mother sings the words,
  While grandmother smooths the golden curl.

And stooping above the precious thing,
  Nestles a kiss within a prayer,
Murmuring softly "Little one,
  Grandfather did not weigh you fair."

Nobody weighed the baby's smile,
  Or the love that came with the helpless one;
Nobody weighed the threads of care,
  From which a woman's life is spun.

No index tells the mighty worth
Of a little baby's quiet breath—
A soft, unceasing metronome,
Patient and faithful until death.

Nobody weighed the baby's soul,
For here on earth no weights there be
That could avail; God only knows
Its value in eternity.

Only eight pounds to hold a soul
That seeks no angel's silver wing,
But shrines it in this human guise,
Within so frail and small a thing!

Oh, mother! laugh your merry note,
Be gay and glad, but don't forget
From baby's eyes looks out a soul
That claims a home in Eden yet.

Ethel Lynn Beers [1827–1879]

ÉTUDE RÊALISTE

I

A BABY'S feet, like seashells pink,
Might tempt, should heaven see meet,
An angel's lips to kiss, we think,
A baby's feet.

Like rose-hued sea-flowers toward the heat
They stretch and spread and wink
Their ten soft buds that part and meet.

No flower-bells that expand and shrink
Gleam half so heavenly sweet,
As shine on life's untrodden brink
A baby's feet.

II

A baby's hands, like rosebuds furled,
Where yet no leaf expands,
Ope if you touch, though close upcurled,—
A baby's hands.

Then, even as warriors grip their brands
When battle's bolt is hurled,
They close, clenched hard like tightening bands.

No rosebuds yet by dawn impearled
Match, even in loveliest lands,
The sweetest flowers in all the world,—
A baby's hands.

III

A baby's eyes, ere speech begin,
Ere lips learn words or sighs,
Bless all things bright enough to win
A baby's eyes.

Love, while the sweet thing laughs and lies,
And sleep flows out and in,
Sees perfect in them Paradise!

Their glance might cast out pain and sin,
Their speech make dumb the wise,
By mute glad godhead felt within
A baby's eyes.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

LITTLE FEET

Two little feet, so small that both may nestle
In one caressing hand,—
Two tender feet upon the untried border
Of life's mysterious land.

Dimpled, and soft, and pink as peach-tree blossoms,
In April's fragrant days,
How can they walk among the briery tangles,
Edging the world's rough ways?

These rose-white feet, along the doubtful future,
Must bear a mother's load;
Alas! since Woman has the heavier burden,
And walks the harder road.

Love, for a while, will make the path before them
All dainty, smooth, and fair,—
Will cull away the brambles, letting only
The roses blossom there.

But when the mother's watchful eyes are shrouded
Away from sight of men,
And these dear feet are left without her guiding,
Who shall direct them then?

How will they be allured, betrayed, deluded,
Poor little untaught feet!
Into what dreary mazes will they wander,
What dangers will they meet?

Will they go stumbling blindly in the darkness
Of Sorrow's tearful shades?
Or find the upland slopes of Peace and Beauty,
Whose sunlight never fades?

Will they go toiling up Ambition's summit,
The common-world above?
Or in some nameless vale, securely sheltered,
Walk side by side with Love?

Some feet there be which walk Life's track unwounded,
Which find but pleasant ways:
Some hearts there be to which this life is only
A round of happy days.

But these are few. Far more there are who wander
Without a hope or friend,—
Who find their journey full of pains and losses,
And long to reach the end.

How shall it be with her, the tender stranger,
Fair-faced and gentle-eyed,
Before whose unstained feet the world's rude highway
Stretches so fair and wide?

Ah! who may read the future? For our darling
We crave all blessings sweet,
And pray that He who feeds the crying ravens
Will guide the baby's feet.

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

THE BABIE

Nae shoon to hide her tiny taes,
Nae stockin' on her feet;
Her supple ankles white as snaw,
Or early blossoms sweet.

Her simple dress o' sprinkled pink,
Her double, dimplit chin,
Her puckered lips, an' baumy mou',
With na ane tooth within.

Her een sae like her mither's een,
Twa gentle, liquid things;
Her face is like an angel's face,—
We're glad she has nae wings.

She is the buddin' of our luve,
A giftie God gied us:
We maun na luve the gift owre weel,
'Twad be nae blessin' thus.

We still maun luve the Giver mair,
An' see Him in the given;
An' sae she'll lead us up to Him,
Our babie straight frae Heaven.

Jeremiah Eames Rankin [1828–1904]

LITTLE HANDS

Soft little hands that stray and clutch,
Like fern fronds curl and uncurl bold,
While baby faces lie in such
Close sleep as flowers at night that fold,
What is it you would clasp and hold,
Wandering outstretched with wilful touch?
O fingers small of shell-tipped rose,
How should you know you hold so much?
Two full hearts beating you inclose,
Hopes, fears, prayers, longings, joys and woes,—
All yours to hold, O little hands!
More, more than wisdom understands
And love, love only knows.

Laurence Binyon [1869–

BARTHOLOMEW

Bartholomew is very sweet,
From sandy hair to rosy feet.

Bartholomew is six months old,
And dearer far than pearls or gold.

Bartholomew has deep blue eyes,
Round pieces dropped from out the skies.

Bartholomew is hugged and kissed:
He loves a flower in either fist.

Bartholomew's my saucy son:
No mother has a sweeter one!

Norman Gale [1862–

THE STORM-CHILD

My child came to me with the equinox,
The wild wind blew him to my swinging door,
With flakes of tawny foam from off the shore,
And shivering spindrift whirled across the rocks.
Flung down the sky, the wheeling swallow-flocks

Cried him a greeting, and the lordly woods,
Waving lean arms of welcome one by one,
Cast down their russet cloaks and golden hoods,
And bid their dancing leaflets trip and run
Before the tender feet of this my son.

Therefore the sea's swift fire is in his veins,
And in his heart the glory of the sea;
Therefore the storm-wind shall his comrade be,
That strips the hills and sweeps the cowering plains.
October, shot with flashing rays and rains,
Inhabits all his pulses; he shall know
The stress and splendor of the roaring gales,
The creaking boughs shall croon him fairy tales,
And the sea's kisses set his blood aglow,
While in his ears the eternal bugles blow.

May Byron [1861-

"ON PARENT KNEES"

On parent knees, a naked new-born child,
Weeping thou sat'st while all around thee smiled:
So live, that, sinking to thy life's last sleep,
Calm thou may'st smile, while all around thee weep.

William Jones [1746–1794]

"PHILIP, MY KING"

"*Who bears upon his baby brow the round and top of sovereignty.*"

Look at me with thy large brown eyes,
Philip, my king!
Round whom the enshadowing purple lies
Of babyhood's royal dignities.
Lay on my neck thy tiny hand
With love's invisible scepter laden;
I am thine Esther to command
Till thou shalt find a queen-handmaiden,
Philip, my king.

O the day when thou goest a-wooing,
Philip, my king!
When those beautiful lips are suing,
And some gentle heart's bars undoing,
Thou dost enter, love-crowned, and there
Sittest love-glorified. Rule kindly,
Tenderly, over thy kingdom fair,
For we that love, ah! we love so blindly,
Philip, my king.

Up from thy sweet mouth,—up to thy brow,
Philip, my king!
The spirit that there lies sleeping now
May rise like a giant and make men bow
As to one heaven-chosen among his peers.
My Saul, than thy brethren taller and fairer,
Let me behold thee in future years!—
Yet thy head needeth a circlet rarer,
Philip, my king.

—A wreath not of gold, but palm. One day,
Philip, my king!
Thou too must tread, as we trod, a way
Thorny and cruel and cold and gray:
Rebels within thee, and foes without,
Will snatch at thy crown. But march on, glorious,
Martyr, yet monarch! till angels shout,
As thou sittest at the feet of God victorious,
"Philip, the king!"

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

THE KING OF THE CRADLE

Draw back the cradle curtains, Kate,
While watch and ward you're keeping,
Let's see the monarch in his state,
And view him while he's sleeping.
He smiles and clasps his tiny hand,
With sunbeams o'er him gleaming,—
A world of baby fairyland
He visits while he's dreaming.

Monarch of pearly powder-puff,
Asleep in nest so cosy,
Shielded from breath of breezes rough
By curtains warm and rosy:
He slumbers soundly in his cell,
As weak as one decrepid,
Though King of Coral, Lord of Bell,
And Knight of Bath that's tepid.

Ah, lucky tyrant! Happy lot!
Fair watchers without number,
Who sweetly sing beside his cot,
And hush him off to slumber;
White hands in wait to smooth so neat
His pillow when its rumpled—
A couch of rose leaves soft and sweet,
Not one of which is crumpled!

Will yonder dainty dimpled hand—
Size, nothing and a quarter—
E'er grasp a saber, lead a band
To glory and to slaughter?
Or, may I ask, will those blue eyes—
In baby patois, "peepers"—
E'er in the House of Commons rise,
And try to catch the Speaker's?

Will that smooth brow o'er Hansard frown,
Confused by lore statistic?
Or will those lips e'er stir the town
From pulpit ritualistic?
Will e'er that tiny Sybarite
Become an author noted?
That little brain the world's delight,
Its works by all men quoted?

Though rosy, dimpled, plump, and round
Though fragile, soft, and tender,
Sometimes, alas! it may be found
The thread of life is slender!

A little shoe, a little glove—
Affection never waning—
The shattered idol of our love
Is all that is remaining!

Then does one chance, in fancy, hear,
Small feet in childish patter,
Tread soft as they a grave draw near,
And voices hush their chatter;
'Tis small and new; they pause in fear,
Beneath the gray church tower,
To consecrate it with a tear,
And deck it with a flower.

Who can predict the future, Kate—
Your fondest aspiration!
Who knows the solemn laws of fate,
That govern all creation?
Who knows what lot awaits your boy—
Of happiness or sorrow?
Sufficient for to-day is joy,
Leave tears, Sweet, for to-morrow!

Joseph Ashby-Sterry [1838–1917]

THE FIRSTBORN

So fair, so dear, so warm upon my bosom,
And in my hands the little rosy feet.
Sleep on, my little bird, my lamb, my blossom;
Sleep on, sleep on, my sweet.

What is it God hath given me to cherish,
This living, moving wonder which is mine—
Mine only? Leave it with me or I perish,
Dear Lord of love divine.

Dear Lord, 'tis wonderful beyond all wonder,
This tender miracle vouchsafed to me,
One with myself, yet just so far asunder
That I myself may see.

Flesh of my flesh, and yet so subtly linking
New selfs with old, all things that I have been
With present joys beyond my former thinking
And future things unseen.

There life began, and here it links with heaven,
The golden chain of years scarce dipped adown
From birth, ere once again a hold is given
And nearer to God's Throne.

Seen, held in arms and clasped around so tightly,—
My love, my bird, I will not let thee go.
Yet soon the little rosy feet must lightly
Go pattering to and fro.

Mine, Lord, all mine Thy gift and loving token.
Mine—yes or no, unseen its soul divine?
Mine by the chain of love with links unbroken,
Dear Saviour, Thine and mine.

John Arthur Goodchild [1851–

NO BABY IN THE HOUSE

No baby in the house, I know,
'Tis far too nice and clean.
No toys, by careless fingers strewn,
Upon the floors are seen.
No finger-marks are on the panes,
No scratches on the chairs;
No wooden men set up in rows,
Or marshaled off in pairs;
No little stockings to be darned,
All ragged at the toes;
No pile of mending to be done,
Made up of baby-clothes;
No little troubles to be soothed;
No little hands to fold;
No grimy fingers to be washed;
No stories to be told;

No tender kisses to be given;
No nicknames, "Dove" and "Mouse";
No merry frolics after tea,—
No baby in the house!

Clara Dolliver [18 –

OUR WEE WHITE ROSE

From "The Mother's Idol Broken"

All in our marriage garden
Grew, smiling up to God,
A bonnier flower than ever
Sucked the green warmth of the sod;
O, beautiful unfathomably
Its little life unfurled;
And crown of all things was our wee
White Rose of all the world.

From out a balmy bosom
Our bud of beauty grew;
It fed on smiles for sunshine,
On tears for daintier dew:
Aye nestling warm and tenderly,
Our leaves of love were curled
So close and close about our wee
White Rose of all the world.

With mystical faint fragrance
Our house of life she filled;
Revealed each hour some fairy tower
Where wingèd hopes might build!
We saw—though none like us might see—
Such precious promise pearled
Upon the petals of our wee
White Rose of all the world.

But evermore the halo
Of angel-light increased,
Like the mystery of moonlight
That folds some fairy feast.

Snow-white, snow-soft, snow-silently
Our darling bud uncurled,
And dropped in the grave—God's lap—our wee
White Rose of all the world.

Our Rose was but in blossom,
Our life was but in spring,
When down the solemn midnight
We heard the spirits sing,
"Another bud of infancy
With holy dews impearled!"
And in their hands they bore our wee
White Rose of all the world.

You scarce could think so small a thing
Could leave a loss so large;
Her little light such shadow fling
From dawn to sunset's marge.
In other springs our life may be
In bannered bloom unfurled,
But never, never match our wee
White Rose of all the world.

Gerald Massey [1828–1907]

INTO THE WORLD AND OUT

Into the world he looked with sweet surprise;
The children laughed so when they saw his eyes.

Into the world a rosy hand in doubt
He reached—a pale hand took one rosebud out.

"And that was all—quite all!" No, surely! But
The children cried so when his eyes were shut.

Sarah M. B. Piatt [1836–

"BABY SLEEPS"

She is not dead, but sleepeth.—Luke viii. 52.

The baby wept;
The mother took it from the nurse's arms,
And hushed its fears, and soothed its vain alarms,
And baby slept.

Again it weeps,
And God doth take it from the mother's arms,
From present griefs, and future unknown harms,
And baby sleeps.

Samuel Hinds [1793–1872]

BABY BELL

I

Have you not heard the poets tell
How came the dainty Baby Bell
Into this world of ours?
The gates of heaven were left ajar:
With folded hands and dreamy eyes,
Wandering out of Paradise,
She saw this planet, like a star,
Hung in the glistening depths of even—
Its bridges, running to and fro,
O'er which the white-winged Angels go,
Bearing the holy Dead to heaven.
She touched a bridge of flowers—those feet,
So light they did not bend the bells
Of the celestial asphodels,
They fell like dew upon the flowers:
Then all the air grew strangely sweet.
And thus came dainty Baby Bell
Into this world of ours.

II

She came and brought delicious May;
The swallows built beneath the eaves;
Like sunlight, in and out the leaves
The robins went, the livelong day;
The lily swung its noiseless bell;
And on the porch the slender vine
Held out its cups of fairy wine.
How tenderly the twilights fell!
Oh, earth was full of singing-birds
And opening springtide flowers,
When the dainty Baby Bell
Came to this world of ours.

III

O Baby, dainty Baby Bell,
How fair she grew from day to day!
What woman-nature filled her eyes,
What poetry within them lay—
Those deep and tender twilight eyes,
So full of meaning, pure and bright
As if she yet stood in the light
Of those oped gates of Paradise.
And so we loved her more and more:
Ah, never in our hearts before
Was love so lovely born:
We felt we had a link between
This real world and that unseen—
The land beyond the morn;
And for the love of those dear eyes,
For love of her whom God led forth,
(The mother's being ceased on earth
When Baby came from Paradise,)—
For love of Him who smote our lives,
And woke the chords of joy and pain,
We said, *Dear Christ!*—our hearts bowed down
Like violets after rain.

IV

And now the orchards, which were white
And pink with blossoms when she came,
Were rich in autumn's mellow prime;
The clustered apples burnt like flame,
The folded chestnut burst its shell,
The grapes hung purpling, range on range;
And time wrought just as rich a change
In little Baby Bell.
Her lissome form more perfect grew,
And in her features we could trace,
In softened curves, her mother's face.
Her angel-nature ripened too:
We thought her lovely when she came,
But she was holy, saintly now.
Around her pale angelic brow
We saw a slender ring of flame.

V

God's hand had taken away the seal
That held the portals of her speech;
And oft she said a few strange words
Whose meaning lay beyond our reach.
She never was a child to us,
We never held her being's key;
We could not teach her holy things
Who was Christ's self in purity.

VI

It came upon us by degrees,
We saw its shadow ere it fell—
The knowledge that our God had sent
His messenger for Baby Bell.
We shuddered with unlanguaged pain,
And all our hopes were changed to fears,
And all our thoughts ran into tears
Like sunshine into rain.
We cried aloud in our belief,
"Oh, smite us gently, gently, God!
Teach us to bend and kiss the rod,
And perfect grow through grief."
Ah! how we loved her, God can tell;
Her heart was folded deep in ours.
Our hearts are broken, Baby Bell!

VII

At last he came, the messenger,
The messenger from unseen lands:
And what did dainty Baby Bell?
She only crossed her little hands,
She only looked more meek and fair!
We parted back her silken hair,
We wove the roses round her brow—
White buds, the summer's drifted snow—
Wrapped her from head to foot in flowers. . . .
And thus went dainty Baby Bell
Out of this world of ours.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

IN THE NURSERY

MOTHER GOOSE'S MELODIES

MISTRESS MARY, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With cockle-shells, and silver bells,
And pretty maids all in a row.

THERE was an old woman who lived in a shoe,
She had so many children she didn't know what to do;
She gave them some broth without any bread;
Then whipped them all soundly and put them to bed.

PETER, Peter, pumpkin eater,
Had a wife and couldn't keep her;
He put her in a pumpkin shell
And there he kept her very well.

RUB-a-dub-dub,
Three men in a tub,
And who do you think they be?
The butcher, the baker,
The candlestick-maker;
Turn 'em out, knaves all three!

I'LL tell you a story
About Jack a Nory—
And now my story's begun;
I'll tell you another
About Johnny, his brother—
And now my story is done.

HICKORY, dickory, dock,
The mouse ran up the clock;
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down,
Hickory, dickory, dock.

A DILLAR, a dollar,
A ten o'clock scholar,
What makes you come so soon?
You used to come at ten o'clock
But now you come at noon.

THERE was a little man,
And he had a little gun,
And his bullets were made of lead, lead, lead;
He shot Johnny Sprig
Through the middle of his wig,
And knocked it right off his head, head, head.

THERE was an old woman, and what do you think?
She lived upon nothing but victuals and drink:
Victuals and drink were the chief of her diet:
Yet this little old woman could never be quiet.

She went to a baker to buy her some bread,
And when she came home, her husband was dead;
She went to the clerk to toll the bell,
And when she came back her husband was well.

IF I had as much money as I could spend,
I never would cry old chairs to mend;
Old chairs to mend, old chairs to mend;
I never would cry old chairs to mend.

If I had as much money as I could tell,
I never would cry old clothes to sell;
Old clothes to sell, old clothes to sell;
I never would cry old clothes to sell.

ONE misty, moisty morning,
When cloudy was the weather,
I met a little old man
Clothed all in leather;
He began to bow and scrape,
And I began to grin,—
How do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again?

IF all the world were apple-pie,
And all the sea were ink,
And all the trees were bread and cheese,
What should we have to drink?

PEASE-PUDDING hot,
Pease-pudding cold,
Pease-pudding in the pot,
Nine days old.
Some like it hot,
Some like it cold,
Some like it in the pot,
Nine days old.

HEY, diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon;
The little dog laughed
To see such sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

LITTLE Jack Horner sat in the corner
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb, and pulled out a plum,
And said, "What a good boy am I!"

LITTLE Miss Muffet,
Sat on a tuffet,
Eating of curds and whey;
There came a great spider
That sat down beside her,
And frightened Miss Muffet away.

THERE was a crooked man, and he went a crooked mile.
He found a crooked sixpence against a crooked stile:
He bought a crooked cat, which caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together in a little crooked house.

LITTLE Polly Flinders,
Sat among the cinders,
Warming her pretty little toes;
Her mother came and caught her,
And whipped her little daughter
For spoiling her nice new clothes.

BARBER, barber, shave a pig,
How many hairs will make a wig?
"Four-and-twenty, that's enough."
Give the barber a pinch of snuff.

LITTLE Boy Blue, come blow up your horn,
The sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn;
But where is the boy that looks after the sheep?
He's under a hay-cock, fast asleep.
Will you awake him? No, not I;
For if I do, he'll be sure to cry.

THERE was a man of our town,
And he was wondrous wise,
He jumped into a bramble bush,
And scratched out both his eyes:

But when he saw his eyes were out,
With all his might and main,
He jumped into another bush,
And scratched 'em in again.

THE north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will poor Robin do then,
Poor thing?
He'll sit in a barn,
And to keep himself warm,
Will hide his head under his wing,
Poor thing!

HIGGLEBY, piggleby, my black hen,
She lays eggs for gentlemen;
Sometimes nine, and sometimes ten,
Higgleby, piggleby, my black hen.

THREE wise men of Gotham
Went to sea in a bowl;
If the bowl had been stronger,
My song had been longer.

THERE was an old woman lived under a hill,
And if she's not gone, she lives there still.

PUSSY-CAT, pussy-cat, where have you been?
I've been to London to look at the Queen.
Pussy-cat, pussy-cat, what did you there?
I frightened a little mouse under the chair.

THERE were two blackbirds sitting on a hill,
The one named Jack, the other named Jill;
Fly away, Jack! Fly away, Jill!
Come again, Jack! Come again, Jill!

Goosey, goosey, gander,
Whither shall I wander,
Up stairs, down stairs,
And in my lady's chamber.
There I met an old man
Who would not say his prayers;
I took him by his left leg
And threw him down the stairs.

Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?
Yes, sir; yes, sir, three bags full.
One for my master, one for my dame,
And one for the little boy that lives in the lane.

Bye, baby bunting,
Daddy's gone a-hunting
To get a little rabbit-skin
To wrap the baby bunting in.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe, and he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.
Every fiddler, he had a fiddle, and a very fine fiddle had he;
Twee tweedle dee, tweedle dee, went the fiddlers.
Oh, there's none so rare, as can compare
With King Cole and his fiddlers three!

Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,
To see a fine lady ride on a white horse,
Rings on her fingers, and bells on her toes,
She shall have music wherever she goes.

Hector Protector was dressed all in green;
Hector Protector was sent to the Queen.
The Queen did not like him, no more did the King;
So Hector Protector was sent back again.

PETER PIPER picked a peck of pickled peppers;
A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked;
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

JACK SPRAT could eat no fat,
His wife could eat no lean,
And so, betwixt them both, you see,
They licked the platter clean.

THE lion and the unicorn
Were fighting for the crown;
The lion beat the unicorn
All round about the town.
Some gave them white bread,
And some gave them brown;
Some gave them plum cake,
And sent them out of town.

As Tommy Snooks and Bessy Brooks
Were walking out one Sunday,
Says Tommy Snooks to Bessy Brooks,
"To-morrow will be Monday."

CURLY locks! Curly locks!
Wilt thou be mine?
Thou shalt not wash dishes
Nor yet feed the swine;
But sit on a cushion
And sew a fine seam,
And feed upon strawberries,
Sugar and cream.

BLOW, wind, blow! and go, mill, go!
That the miller may grind his corn;
That the baker may take it and into rolls make it,
And send us some hot in the morn.

Six little mice sat down to spin,
Pussy passed by, and she peeped in.
"What are you at, my little men?"
"Making coats for gentlemen."
"Shall I come in and bite off your threads?"
"No, no, Miss Pussy, you'll snip off our heads."
"Oh, no, I'll not, I'll help you to spin."
"That may be so, but you don't come in!"

Bobby Shaftoe's gone to sea,
Silver buckles at his knee;
When he comes back, he'll marry me,
Bonny Bobby Shaftoe.

Bobby Shaftoe's fat and fair,
Combing down his yellow hair;
He's my love for evermair,
Bonny Bobby Shaftoe.

Rock-a-bye, baby, thy cradle is green;
Father's a nobleman, mother's a queen;
And Betty's a lady, and wears a gold ring;
And Johnny's a drummer, and drums for the King.

Hush-a-bye, baby, on the tree-top,
When the wind blows the cradle will rock;
When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall,
Down will come baby, bough, cradle, and all.

To market, to market, to buy a fat pig,
Home again, home again, jiggety-jig;
To market, to market, to buy a fat hog,
Home again, home again, jiggety-jog;
To market, to market, to buy a plum bun,
Home again, home again, market is done.

JACK AND JILL

JACK and Jill went up the hill,
To fetch a pail of water;
Jack fell down and broke his crown
And Jill came tumbling after.

Up Jack got and home did trot
As fast as he could caper,
And went to bed to mend his head
With vinegar and brown paper.

THE QUEEN OF HEARTS

THE Queen of Hearts
She made some tarts,
All on a summer's day;
The Knave of Hearts
He stole those tarts,
And with them ran away.

The King of Hearts
Called for the tarts,
And beat the Knave full sore;
The Knave of Hearts
Brought back the tarts,
And vowed he'd steal no more!

LITTLE BO-PEEP

LITTLE Bo-peep has lost her sheep,
And can't tell where to find them;
Leave them alone, and they'll come home,
And bring their tails behind them.

Little Bo-peep fell fast asleep,
And dreamed she heard them bleating;
But when she awoke, she found it a joke,
For they were still a-fleeting.

Then up she took her little crook,
Determined for to find them;
She found them indeed, but it made her heart bleed,
For they'd left their tails behind them!

It happened one day, as Bo-peep did stray,
Unto a meadow hard by,
There she espied their tails side by side,
All hung on a tree to dry.

She heaved a sigh, and wiped her eye,
And over the hillocks she raced;
And tried what she could, as a shepherdess should,
That each tail should be properly placed.

MARY'S LAMB

MARY had a little lamb,
Its fleece was white as snow;
And everywhere that Mary went,
The lamb was sure to go.

He followed her to school one day,
Which was against the rule;
It made the children laugh and play
To see a lamb at school.

And so the teacher turned him out,
But still he lingered near,
And waited patiently about
Till Mary did appear.

Then he ran to her, and laid
His head upon her arm,
As if he said, "I'm not afraid—
You'll keep me from all harm."

"What makes the lamb love Mary so?"
The eager children cried.
"Oh, Mary loves the lamb, you know,"
The teacher quick replied.

And you each gentle animal
  In confidence may bind,
And make them follow at your will,
  If you are only kind.

THE STAR

TWINKLE, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the blazing sun is set,
And the grass with dew is wet,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

Then the traveler in the dark
Thanks you for your tiny spark,
He could not see where to go
If you did not twinkle so.

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveler in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

Jane Taylor [1783–1824]

"SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE"

SING a song of sixpence,
  A pocket full of rye;
Four-and-twenty blackbirds
  Baked in a pie;

When the pie was opened
The birds began to sing;
Wasn't that a dainty dish
To set before the King?

The King was in his counting-house,
Counting out his money;
The Queen was in the parlor,
Eating bread and honey;

The maid was in the garden
Hanging out the clothes;
When down came a blackbird,
And nipped off her nose.

SIMPLE SIMON

Simple Simon met a pieman
Going to the fair;
Says Simple Simon to the pieman,
"Let me taste your ware."

Says the pieman to Simple Simon,
"Show me first your penny";
Says Simple Simon to the pieman,
"Indeed I have not any."

Simple Simon went a-fishing
For to catch a whale;
All the water he had got
Was in his mother's pail.

Simple Simon went to look
If plums grew on a thistle;
He pricked his fingers very much,
Which made poor Simon whistle.

THE BREAKFAST SONG

At five o'clock he milks the cow,
The busy farmer's man.
At six o'clock he strains the milk
And pours it in the can.

At seven o'clock the milkman's horse
Must go to town—"get up!"
At eight o'clock Nurse Karen pours
The milk in Baby's cup.

At five o'clock the Baby sleeps
As sound as sound can be.
At six o'clock he laughs and shouts,
So wide awake is he.

At seven o'clock he's in his bath,
At eight o'clock he's dressed,
Just when the milk is ready, too,
So you can guess the rest.

Emilie Poulsson [1853–

"I HAD A LITTLE HUSBAND"

I HAD a little husband
No bigger than my thumb;
I put him in a pint pot,
And there I bade him drum.

I bought a little horse,
That galloped up and down;
I bridled him and saddled him,
And sent him out of town.

I gave him some garters,
To garter up his hose,
And a little handkerchief,
To wipe his pretty nose.

"WHEN I WAS A BACHELOR"

WHEN I was a bachelor
I lived by myself;
And all the bread and cheese I got
I put upon the shelf.

The rats and the mice
They made such a strife,
I was forced to go to London
To buy me a wife.

The streets were so bad,
And the lanes were so narrow,
I was forced to bring my wife home
In a wheelbarrow.

The wheelbarrow broke,
And my wife had a fall,
Down came wheelbarrow,
Little wife and all.

"JOHNNY SHALL HAVE A NEW BONNET"

Johnny shall have a new bonnet,
And Johnny shall go to the fair,
And Johnny shall have a blue ribbon
To tie up his bonny brown hair.

And why may not I love Johnny,
And why may not Johnny love me?
And why may not I love Johnny
As well as another body?

And here's a leg for a stocking,
And here's a foot for a shoe;
And he has a kiss for his daddy,
And one for his mammy, too.

And why may not I love Johnny,
And why may not Johnny love me?
And why may not I love Johnny,
As well as another body?

THE CITY MOUSE AND THE GARDEN MOUSE

The city mouse lives in a house;—
The garden mouse lives in a bower,
He's friendly with the frogs and toads,
And sees the pretty plants in flower.

The city mouse eats bread and cheese;—
The garden mouse eats what he can;
We will not grudge him seeds and stocks,
Poor little timid furry man.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

ROBIN REDBREAST

Little Robin Redbreast sat upon a tree,
Up went pussy-cat, and down went he;
Down came pussy-cat, and away Robin ran;
Said little Robin Redbreast, "Catch me if you can."

Little Robin Redbreast jumped upon a wall,
Pussy-cat jumped after him, and almost got a fall;
Little Robin chirped and sang, and what did pussy say?
Pussy-cat said naught but "Mew," and Robin flew away.

SOLOMON GRUNDY

Solomon Grundy,
Born on a Monday,
Christened on Tuesday,
Married on Wednesday,
Took ill on Thursday,
Worse on Friday,
Died on Saturday,
Buried on Sunday,
This is the end of
Solomon Grundy.

"MERRY ARE THE BELLS"

Merry are the bells, and merry would they ring,
Merry was myself, and merry could I sing;
With a merry ding-dong, happy, gay, and free,
And a merry sing-song, happy let us be!

Waddle goes your gait, and hollow are your hose:
Noddle goes your pate, and purple is your nose:
Merry is your sing-song, happy, gay, and free;
With a merry ding-dong, happy let us be!

Merry have we met, and merry have we been;
Merry let us part, and merry meet again;
With our merry sing-song, happy, gay, and free,
With a merry ding-dong, happy let us be!

"WHEN GOOD KING ARTHUR RULED THIS LAND"

WHEN good King Arthur ruled this land,
He was a goodly king;
He stole three pecks of barley meal,
To make a bag-pudding.

A bag-pudding the queen did make,
And stuffed it well with plums:
And in it put great lumps of fat,
As big as my two thumbs.

The king and queen did eat thereof,
And noblemen beside;
And what they could not eat that night,
The queen next morning fried.

"I HAD A LITTLE DOGGY"

I HAD a little Doggy that used to sit and beg;
But Doggy tumbled down the stairs and broke his little leg.
Oh! Doggy, I will nurse you, and try to make you well,
And you shall have a collar with a little silver bell.

Ah! Doggy, don't you think that you should very faithful be,
For having such a loving friend to comfort you as me?
And when your leg is better, and you can run and play,
We'll have a scamper in the fields and see them making hay.

But, Doggy, you must promise (and mind your word you keep)
Not once to tease the little lambs, or run among the sheep;
And then the little yellow chicks that play upon the grass,
You must not even wag your tail to scare them as you pass.

"A FARMER WENT TROTTING"

A FARMER went trotting upon his gray mare;
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
With his daughter behind him, so rosy and fair;
Lumpety, lumpety, lump!

A raven cried croak! and they all tumbled down;
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
The mare broke her knees, and the farmer his crown;
Lumpety, lumpety, lump!

The mischievous raven flew laughing away;
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
And vowed he would serve them the same the next day;
Lumpety, lumpety, lump!

"THE OWL AND THE EEL AND THE WARMING PAN"

THE owl and the eel and the warming-pan,
They went to call on the soap-fat man.
The soap-fat man he was not within:
He'd gone for a ride on his rolling-pin.
So they all came back by the way of the town,
And turned the meeting-house upside down.

Laura E. Richards [1850–

THE COW

THANK you, pretty cow, that made
Pleasant milk to soak my bread,
Every day, and every night,
Warm, and fresh, and sweet, and white.

Do not chew the hemlock rank,
Growing on the weedy bank;
But the yellow cowslips eat,
They will make it very sweet.

Where the purple violet grows,
Where the bubbling water flows,
Where the grass is fresh and fine,
Pretty cow, go there and dine.

Ann Taylor [1782–1866]

THE LAMB

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee,
Gave thee life, and bade thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
    Little Lamb, who made thee?
    Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee;
He is callèd by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and He is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by His name.
    Little Lamb, God bless thee!
    Little Lamb, God bless thee.

William Blake [1757–1827]

LITTLE RAINDROPS

Oh, where do you come from,
  You little drops of rain,
Pitter patter, pitter patter,
  Down the window-pane?

They won't let me walk,
  And they won't let me play,
And they won't let me go
  Out of doors at all to-day.

They put away my playthings
  Because I broke them all,
And then they locked up all my bricks,
  And took away my ball.

Tell me, little raindrops,
  Is that the way you play,
Pitter patter, pitter patter,
  All the rainy day?

They say I'm very naughty,
  But I've nothing else to do
But sit here at the window;
  I should like to play with you.

The little raindrops cannot speak,
  But "pitter, patter pat"
Means, "We can play on *this* side:
  Why can't you play on *that?*"

"MOON, SO ROUND AND YELLOW"

Moon, so round and yellow,
  Looking from on high,
How I love to see you
  Shining in the sky.
Oft and oft I wonder,
  When I see you there,
How they get to light you,
  Hanging in the air:

Where you go at morning,
  When the night is past,
And the sun comes peeping
  O'er the hills at last.
Sometime I will watch you
  Slyly overhead,
When you think I'm sleeping
  Snugly in my bed.

Matthias Barr [1831–

THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT

This is the house that Jack built.

This is the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the man all tattered and torn
That kissed the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the priest all shaven and shorn
That married the man all tattered and torn
That kissed the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn

That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the cock that crowed in the morn
That waked the priest all shaven and shorn
That married the man all tattered and torn
That kissed the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

This is the farmer sowing his corn
That kept the cock that crowed in the morn
That waked the priest all shaven and shorn
That married the man all tattered and torn
That kissed the maiden all forlorn
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
That tossed the dog
That worried the cat
That killed the rat
That ate the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.

OLD MOTHER HUBBARD

Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard,
To get her poor dog a bone:
But when she got there
The cupboard was bare,
And so the poor dog had none.

She went to the baker's
To buy him some bread,
But when she came back
The poor dog was dead.

She went to the joiner's
To buy him a coffin,
But when she came back
The poor dog was laughing.

She took a clean dish
To get him some tripe,
But when she came back
He was smoking a pipe.

She went to the fishmonger's
To buy him some fish,
But when she came back
He was licking the dish.

She went to the tavern
For white wine and red,
But when she came back
The dog stood on his head.

She went to the hatter's
To buy him a hat,
But when she came back
He was feeding the cat.

She went to the barber's
To buy him a wig,
But when she came back
He was dancing a jig.

She went to the fruiterer's
To buy him some fruit,
But when she came back
He was playing the flute.

She went to the tailor's
To buy him a coat,
But when she came back
He was riding a goat.

She went to the cobbler's
To buy him some shoes,
But when she came back
He was reading the news.

She went to the seamstress
To buy him some linen,
But when she came back
The dog was spinning.

She went to the hosier's
To buy him some hose,
But when she came back
He was dressed in his clothes.

The dame made a curtesy,
The dog made a bow,
The dame said, "Your servant,"
The dog said, "Bow-wow."

This wonderful dog
Was Dame Hubbard's delight;
He could sing, he could dance,
He could read, he could write.

She gave him rich dainties
Whenever he fed,
And built him a monument
When he was dead.

THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF COCK ROBIN

Who killed Cock Robin?
"I," said the Sparrow,
"With my bow and arrow,
I killed Cock Robin."

Who saw him die?
"I," said the Fly,
"With my little eye,
I saw him die."

Who caught his blood?
"I," said the Fish,
"With my little dish,
I caught his blood."

Who'll make his shroud?
"I," said the Beetle,
"With my thread and needle,
I'll make his shroud."

Who'll dig his grave?
"I," said the Owl,
"With my spade and trowel,
I'll dig his grave."

Who'll be the parson?
"I," said the Rook,
"With my little book.
I'll be the parson."

Who'll be the clerk?
"I," said the Lark,
"I'll say Amen in the dark;
I'll be the clerk."

Who'll be chief mourner?
"I," said the Dove,
"I mourn for my love;
I'll be chief mourner."

Who'll bear the torch?
"I," said the Linnet,
"I'll come in a minute,
I'll bear the torch."

Who'll sing his dirge?
"I," said the thrush,
"As I sing in the bush
I'll sing his dirge."

Who'll bear the pall?
"We," said the Wren,
Both the Cock and the Hen;
"We'll bear the pall."

Who'll carry his coffin?
"I," said the Kite,
"If it be in the night,
I'll carry his coffin."

Who'll toll the bell?
"I," said the Bull,
"Because I can pull,
I'll toll the bell."

All the birds of the air
Fell to sighing and sobbing
When they heard the bell toll
For poor Cock Robin.

BABY-LAND

"Which is the way to Baby-land?"
"Any one can tell;
Up one flight,
To your right;
Please to ring the bell."

"What can you see in Baby-land?"
"Little folks in white—
Downy heads,
Cradle-beds,
Faces pure and bright!"

"What do they do in Baby-land?"
"Dream and wake and play,
Laugh and crow,
Shout and grow;
Jolly times have they!"

"What do they say in Baby-land?"
"Why, the oddest things;
Might as well
Try to tell
What a birdie sings!"

"Who is the Queen of Baby-land?"
"Mother, kind and sweet;
And her love,
Born above,
Guides the little feet."

George Cooper [1840–

THE FIRST TOOTH

THERE once was a wood, and a very thick wood,
So thick that to walk was as much as you could;
But a sunbeam got in, and the trees understood.

I went to this wood, at the end of the snows,
And as I was walking I saw a primrose;
Only one! Shall I show you the place where it grows?

There once was a house, and a very dark house,
As dark, I believe, as the hole of a mouse,
Or a tree in my wood, at the thick of the boughs.

I went to this house, and I searched it aright,
I opened the chambers, and I found a light;
Only one! Shall I show you this little lamp bright?

There once was a cave, and this very dark cave
One day took a gift from an incoming wave;
And I made up my mind to know what the sea gave.

I took a lit torch, I walked round the ness
When the water was lowest; and in a recess
In my cave was a jewel. Will nobody guess?

O there was a baby, he sat on my knee,
With a pearl in his mouth that was precious to me,
His little dark mouth like my cave of the sea!

I said to my heart, "And my jewel is bright!
He blooms like a primrose! He shines like a light!"
Put your hand in his mouth! Do you feel? He can bite!

William Brighty Rands [1823–1882]

BABY'S BREAKFAST

BABY wants his breakfast,
Oh! what shall I do?
Said the cow, "I'll give him
Nice fresh milk—moo-*oo!*"

Said the hen, "Cut-*dah* cut!
I have laid an egg
For the Baby's breakfast—
Take it now, I beg!"

And the buzzing bee said,
"Here is honey sweet.
Don't you think the Baby
Would like that to eat?"

Then the baker kindly
Brought the Baby's bread.
"Breakfast is all ready,"
Baby's mother said;

"But before the Baby
Eats his dainty food,
Will he not say 'Thank you!'
To his friends so good?"

Then the bonny Baby
Laughed and laughed away.
That was all the "Thank you"
He knew how to say.

Emilie Poulsson [1853–

THE MOON

O, LOOK at the moon!
She is shining up there;
O mother, she looks
Like a lamp in the air.

Last week she was smaller,
And shaped like a bow;
But now she's grown bigger,
And round as an O.

Pretty moon, pretty moon,
How you shine on the door,
And make it all bright
On my nursery floor!

You shine on my playthings,
And show me their place,
And I love to look up
At your pretty bright face.

And there is a star
Close by you, and maybe
That small twinkling star
Is your little baby.

Eliza Lee Follen [1787–1859]

BABY AT PLAY

Brow bender, Eye peeper,
Nose smeller, Mouth eater,
Chin chopper,
Knock at the door—peep in,
Lift up the latch—walk in.

Here sits the Lord Mayor, here sit his two men,
Here sits the cock, and here sits the hen;
Here sit the chickens, and here they go in,
Chippety, chippety, chippety, chin.

This little pig went to market;
This little pig stayed at home;
This little pig got roast beef;
This little pig got none;
This little pig cried wee, wee, all the way home.

One, two,
Buckle my shoe;
Three, four,
Shut the door;
Five, six,
Pick up sticks;
Seven, eight,
Lay them straight;
Nine, ten,
A good fat hen;
Eleven, twelve,
Who will delve?

Thirteen, fourteen,
Maids a-courting;
Fifteen, sixteen,
Maids a-kissing;
Seventeen, eighteen,
Maids a-waiting;
Nineteen, twenty,
My stomach's empty.

THE DIFFERENCE

Eight fingers,
Ten toes,
Two eyes,
And one nose.
Baby said
When she smelt the rose,
"Oh! what a pity
I've only one nose!"

Ten teeth
In even rows,
Three dimples,
And one nose.
Baby said
When she smelt the snuff,
"Deary me!
One nose is enough."

Laura E. Richards [1850–

FOOT SOLDIERS

'Tis all the way to Toe-town,
Beyond the Knee-high hill,
That Baby has to travel down
To see the soldiers drill.

One, two, three, four, five, a-row—
A captain and his men—
And on the other side, you know,
Are six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

John Banister Tabb [1845–1909]

TOM THUMB'S ALPHABET

A was an Archer, who shot at a frog;
B was a Butcher, who had a great dog;
C was a Captain, all covered with lace;
D was a Drunkard, and had a red face;
E was an Esquire, with pride on his brow;
F was a Farmer, and followed the plow;
G was a Gamester, who had but ill luck;
H was a Hunter, who hunted a buck;
I was an Innkeeper, who loved to bouse;
J was a Joiner, who built up a house;
K was a King, so mighty and grand;
L was a Lady, who had a white hand;
M was a Miser, and hoarded his gold;
N was a Nobleman, gallant and bold;
O was an Oysterman, who went about town;
P was a Parson, and wore a black gown;
Q was a Quack, with a wonderful pill;
R was a Robber, who wanted to kill;
S was a Sailor, who spent all he got;
T was a Tinker, and mended a pot;
U was an Usurer, a miserable elf;
V was a Vintner, who drank all himself;
W was a Watchman, who guarded the door;
X was Expensive, and so became poor;
Y was a Youth, that did not love school;
Z was a Zany, a poor harmless fool.

GRAMMAR IN RHYME

Three little words, you often see,
Are articles A, An, and The.
A Noun is the name of anything,
As School, or Garden, Hoop, or Swing.
Adjectives tell the kind of Noun,
As Great, Small, Pretty, White, or Brown.
Instead of Nouns the Pronouns stand,
Her head, His face, Your arm, My hand.

Verbs tell of something being done—
To Read, Count, Laugh, Sing, Jump, or Run.
How things are done the Adverbs tell,
As Slowly, Quickly, Ill, or Well.
Conjunctions join the words together—
As men And women, wind And weather.
The Preposition stands before
A noun, as In or Through a door,
The Interjection shows surprise,
As Oh! how pretty! Ah! how wise!
The Whole are called nine parts of speech,
Which reading, writing, speaking teach.

DAYS OF THE MONTH

THIRTY days hath September,
April, June, and November;
All the rest have thirty-one;
February twenty-eight alone,—
Except in leap year, at which time
February's days are twenty-nine.

THE GARDEN YEAR

JANUARY brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow.

February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen lake again.

March brings breezes, loud and shrill,
To stir the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs
Skipping by their fleecy dams.

June brings tulips, lilies, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.

Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots, and gillyflowers.

August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the harvest home is borne.

Warm September brings the fruit;
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

Fresh October brings the pheasant;
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.

Dull November brings the blast;
Then the leaves are whirling fast.

Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire, and Christmas treat.

Sara Coleridge [1802–1852]

RIDDLES

THERE was a girl in our town,
Silk an' satin was her gown,
Silk an' satin, gold an' velvet,
Guess her name, three times I've telled it. (Ann.)

As soft as silk, as white as milk,
As bitter as gall, a thick green wall,
And a green coat covers me all. (A walnut.)

Make three fourths of a cross,
And a circle complete;
And let two semicircles
On a perpendicular meet;
Next add a triangle
That stands on two feet;
Next two semicircles,
And a circle complete. (TOBACCO.)

Flour of England, fruit of Spain,
Met together in a shower of rain;
Put in a bag tied round with a string,
If you'll tell me this riddle, I'll give you a ring.
(A plum-pudding.)

In marble walls as white as milk,
Lined with a skin as soft as silk,
Within a fountain crystal clear,
A golden apple doth appear.
No doors there are to this stronghold,
Yet thieves break in and steal the gold. (An egg.)

Little Nanny Etticoat,
In a white petticoat,
And a red nose;
The longer she stands,
The shorter she grows. (A candle.)

Long legs, crooked thighs,
Little head and no eyes. (A pair of tongs.)

Thirty white horses upon a red hill,
Now they tramp, now they champ, now they stand still.
(The teeth.)

Formed long ago, yet made to-day,
Employed while others sleep;
What few would like to give away,
Nor any wish to keep. (A bed.)

Lives in winter,
Dies in summer,
And grows with its root upwards. (An icicle.)

Elizabeth, Lizzy, Betsy and Bess,
All went together to seek a bird's nest;
They found a nest with five eggs in it;
They each took one and left four in it.

Thomas a Tattamus took two T's,
To tie two tups to two tall trees,
To frighten the terrible Thomas a Tattamus!
Tell me how many T's there are in all THAT!

Old Mother Twitchett had but one eye,
And a long tail which she let fly;
And every time she went over a gap,
She left a bit of her tail in a trap. (A needle and thread.)

As I went through a garden gap,
Who should I meet but Dick Red-Cap!
A stick in his hand, a stone in his throat,
If you'll tell me this riddle, I'll give you a groat.
(A cherry).

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Cannot put Humpty Dumpty together again. (An egg.)

As I was going to St. Ives,
I met a man with seven wives,
Every wife had seven sacks,
Every sack had seven cats,
Every cat had seven kits—
Kits, cats, sacks, and wives,
How many were going to St. Ives? (One.)

Two legs sat upon three legs,
With one leg in his lap;
In comes four legs
And runs away with one leg;
Up jumps two legs,
Catches up three legs,
Throws it after four legs,
And makes him drop one leg.
(A man, a stool, a leg of mutton, and a dog.)

PROVERBS

If wishes were horses,
Beggars would ride;
If turnips were watches,
I'd wear one by my side.

A man of words, and not of deeds,
Is like a garden full of weeds;
For when the weeds begin to grow,
Then doth the garden overflow.

He that would thrive
Must rise at five;
He that hath thriven
May lie till seven;
And he that by the plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.

A swarm of bees in May
Is worth a load of hay;
A swarm of bees in June
Is worth a silver spoon;
A swarm of bees in July
Is not worth a fly.

They that wash on Monday
Have all the week to dry;
They that wash on Tuesday
Are not so much awry;
They that wash on Wednesday
Are not so much to blame;
They that wash on Thursday,
Wash for shame;
They that wash on Friday,
Wash in need;
And they that wash on Saturday,
Oh, they are slovens, indeed.

Needles and pins, needles and pins,
When a man marries, his trouble begins.

For every evil under the sun,
There is a remedy, or there is none.
If there be one, try and find it;
If there be none, never mind it.

Tommy's tears, and Mary's fears,
Will make them old before their years.

If "ifs" and "ands"
Were pots and pans,
There would be no need for tinkers!

For want of a nail, the shoe was lost;
For want of the shoe, the horse was lost;
For want of the horse, the rider was lost;
For want of the rider, the battle was lost;
For want of the battle, the kingdom was lost;
And all from the want of a horseshoe nail.

WEATHER WISDOM

A sunshiny shower
Won't last half an hour.

Rain before seven,
Fair by eleven.

The South wind brings wet weather,
The North wind wet and cold together;
The West wind always brings us rain,
The East wind blows it back again.

March winds and April showers
Bring forth May flowers.

Evening red and morning gray
Set the traveller on his way,
But evening gray and morning red,
Bring the rain upon his head.

Rainbow at night
Is the sailor's delight;
Rainbow at morning,
Sailors, take warning.

OLD SUPERSTITIONS

See a pin and pick it up,
All the day you'll have good luck;
See a pin and let it lay,
Bad luck you will have all day.

Cut your nails on Monday, cut them for news;
Cut them on Tuesday, a pair of new shoes;
Cut them on Wednesday, cut them for health;
Cut them on Thursday, cut them for wealth;
Cut them on Friday, cut them for woe;
Cut them on Saturday, a journey you'll go;
Cut them on Sunday, you'll cut them for evil,
For all the next week you'll be ruled by the devil.

Marry Monday, marry for wealth;
Marry Tuesday, marry for health;
Marry Wednesday, the best day of all;
Marry Thursday, marry for crosses,
Marry Friday, marry for losses,
Marry Saturday, no luck at all.

Sneeze on a Monday, you sneeze for danger;
Sneeze on a Tuesday, you'll kiss a stranger;
Sneeze on a Wednesday, you sneeze for a letter;
Sneeze on a Thursday, for something better;
Sneeze on a Friday, you sneeze for sorrow;
Sneeze on a Saturday, your sweetheart to-morrow;
Sneeze on a Sunday, your safety seek—
The devil will have you the whole of the week.

Monday's child is fair of face,
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loving and giving,
Saturday's child works hard for its living,
And a child that's born on the Sabbath day
Is fair and wise and good and gay.

THE ROAD TO SLUMBERLAND

WYNKEN, BLYNKEN, AND NOD

DUTCH LULLABY

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe,—
Sailed on a river of crystal light
Into a sea of dew.
"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"
The old moon asked the three.
"We have come to fish for the herring fish
That live in this beautiful sea;
Nets of silver and gold have we!"
Said Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe;
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew.
The little stars were the herring fish
That lived in that beautiful sea—
"Now cast your nets wherever you wish,—
Never afeard are we!"
So cried the stars to the fishermen three,
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
To the stars in the twinkling foam,—
Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe,
Bringing the fishermen home:

'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
As if it could not be;
And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
Of sailing that beautiful sea;
But I shall name you the fishermen three:
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
Is a wee one's trundle-bed;
So shut your eyes while Mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock in the misty sea
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three:—
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

Eugene Field [1850–1895]

THE SUGAR-PLUM TREE

HAVE you ever heard of the Sugar-Plum Tree?
'Tis a marvel of great renown!
It blooms on the shore of the Lollypop sea
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town;
The fruit that it bears is so wondrously sweet
(As those who have tasted it say)
That good little children have only to eat
Of that fruit to be happy next day.

When you've got to the tree, you would have a hard time
To capture the fruit which I sing;
The tree is so tall that no person could climb
To the boughs where the sugar-plums swing!
But up in that tree sits a chocolate cat,
And a gingerbread dog prowls below—
And this is the way you contrive to get at
Those sugar-plums tempting you so:

You say but the word to that gingerbread dog
And he barks with such terrible zest
That the chocolate cat is at once all agog,
As her swelling proportions attest.
And the chocolate cat goes cavorting around
From this leafy limb unto that,
And the sugar-plums tumble, of course, to the ground—
Hurrah for that chocolate cat!

There are marshmallows, gumdrops, and peppermint canes,
With stripings of scarlet or gold,
And you carry away of the treasure that rains,
As much as your apron can hold!
So come, little child, cuddle closer to me
In your dainty white nightcap and gown,
And I'll rock you away to that Sugar-Plum Tree
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town.

Eugene Field [1850–1895]

WHEN THE SLEEPY MAN COMES

When the Sleepy Man comes with the dust on his eyes,
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
He shuts up the earth, and he opens the skies.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

He smiles through his fingers, and shuts up the sun;
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
The stars that he loves he lets out one by one.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

He comes from the castles of Drowsy-boy Town;
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
At the touch of his hand the tired eyelids fall down.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

He comes with a murmur of dream in his wings;
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
And whispers of mermaids and wonderful things.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

Then the top is a burden, the bugle a bane;
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
When one would be faring down Dream-a-way Lane.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

When one would be wending in Lullaby Wherry,
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)
To Sleepy Man's Castle, by Comforting Ferry.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie!)

Charles G. D. Roberts [1860–

AULD DADDY DARKNESS

Auld Daddy Darkness creeps frae his hole,
Black as a blackamoor, blin' as a mole:
Stir the fire till it lowes, let the bairnie sit,
Auld Daddy Darkness is no wantit yit.

See him in the corners hidin' frae the licht,
See him at the window gloomin' at the nicht;
Turn up the gas licht, close the shutters a',
An' Auld Daddy Darkness will flee far awa'.

Awa' to hide the birdie within its cosy nest,
Awa' to lap the wee flooers on their mither's breast,
Awa' to loosen Gaffer Toil frae his daily ca',
For Auld Daddy Darkness is kindly to a'.

He comes when we're weary to wean's frae oor waes,
He comes when the bairnies are getting aff their claes;
To cover them sae cosy, an' bring bonnie dreams,
So Auld Daddy Darkness is better than he seems.

Steek yer een, my wee tot, ye'll see Daddy then;
He's in below the bed claes, to cuddle ye he's fain;
Noo nestle to his bosie, sleep and dream yer fill,
Till Wee Davie Daylicht comes keekin' owre the hill.

James Ferguson [18 – ?]

WILLIE WINKIE

Wee Willie Winkie rins through the town,
Upstairs and doon stairs, in his nicht-gown,
Tirlin' at the window, cryin' at the lock,
"Are the weans in their bed?—for it's noo ten o'clock."

Hey, Willie Winkie! are ye comin' ben?
The cat's singin' gay thrums to the sleepin' hen,
The doug's speldered on the floor, and disna gie a cheep;
But here's a waukrife laddie, that winna fa' asleep.

Onything but sleep, ye rogue!—glowrin' like the moon,
Rattlin' in an airn jug wi' an airn spoon,
Rumblin', tumblin' roun' about, crawin' like a cock,
Skirlin' like a kenna-what—wauknin' sleepin' folk!

Hey, Willie Winkie! the wean's in a creel!
Waumblin' aff a bodie's knee like a vera eel,
Ruggin' at the cat's lug, and ravellin' a' her thrums:
Hey, Willie Winkie!—See, there he comes!

William Miller [1810–1872]

THE SANDMAN

The rosy clouds float overhead,
The sun is going down;
And now the sandman's gentle tread
Comes stealing through the town.
"White sand, white sand," he softly cries,
And as he shakes his hand,
Straightway there lies on babies' eyes
His gift of shining sand.
Blue eyes, gray eyes, black eyes, and brown,
As shuts the rose, they softly close, when he goes through the town.

From sunny beaches far away—
Yes, in another land—
He gathers up at break of day
His store of shining sand.

No tempests beat that shore remote,
No ships may sail that way;
His little boat alone may float
Within that lovely bay.
Blue eyes, gray eyes, black eyes, and brown,
As shuts the rose, they softly close, when he goes through the town.

He smiles to see the eyelids close
Above the happy eyes;
And every child right well he knows,—
Oh, he is very wise!
But if, as he goes through the land,
A naughty baby cries,
His other hand takes dull gray sand
To close the wakeful eyes.
Blue eyes, gray eyes, black eyes, and brown,
As shuts the rose, they softly close, when he goes through the town.

So when you hear the sandman's song
Sound through the twilight sweet,
Be sure you do not keep him long
A-waiting in the street.
Lie softly down, dear little head,
Rest quiet, busy hands,
Till, by your bed his good-night said,
He strews the shining sands.
Blue eyes, gray eyes, black eyes, and brown,
As shuts the rose, they softly close, when he goes through the town.

Margaret Thomson Janvier [1845–1913]

THE DUSTMAN

When the toys are growing weary,
And the twilight gathers in;
When the nursery still echoes
With the children's merry din;

Then unseen, unheard, unnoticed
Comes an old man up the stair,
Lightly to the children passes,
Lays his hand upon their hair.

Softly smiles the good old Dustman;
In their eyes the dust he throws,
Till their little heads are falling,
And their weary eyes must close.
Then the Dustman very gently
Takes each little dimpled hand
Leads them through the sweet green shadows,
Far away in slumberland.

Frederic Edward Weatherly [1848–

SEPHESTIA'S LULLABY

From "Menaphon"

WEEP not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
Mother's wag, pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy;
When thy father first did see
Such a boy by him and me,
He was glad, I was woe;
Fortune changèd made him so,
When he left his pretty boy,
Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
Streaming tears that never stint,
Like pearl-drops from a flint,
Fell by course from his eyes,
That one another's place supplies;
Thus he grieved in every part,
Tears of blood fell from his heart,
When he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
The wanton smiled, father wept,
Mother cried, baby leapt;
More he crowed, more we cried,
Nature could not sorrow hide:
He must go, he must kiss
Child and mother, baby bliss,
For he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.
Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.

Robert Greene [1560?–1592]

"GOLDEN SLUMBERS KISS YOUR EYES"

From "Patient Grissel"

Golden slumbers kiss your eyes,
Smiles awake you when you rise.
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby.
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

Care is heavy, therefore sleep you,
You are care, and care must keep you.
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby.
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

Thomas Dekker [1570?–1641?]

"SLEEP, BABY, SLEEP"

Sleep, baby, sleep! what ails my dear,
What ails my darling thus to cry?
Be still, my child, and lend thine ear,
To hear me sing thy lullaby.
My pretty lamb, forbear to weep;
Be still, my dear; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou blessed soul, what canst thou fear?
What thing to thee can mischief do?
Thy God is now thy father dear,
His holy Spouse thy mother too.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

Though thy conception was in sin,
A sacred bathing thou hast had;
And though thy birth unclean hath been,
A blameless babe thou art now made.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

While thus thy lullaby I sing,
For thee great blessings ripening be;
Thine Eldest Brother is a king,
And hath a kingdom bought for thee.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

Sweet baby, sleep, and nothing fear;
For whosoever thee offends
By thy protector threatened are,
And God and angels are thy friends.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

When God with us was dwelling here,
In little babes He took delight;
Such innocents as thou, my dear,
Are ever precious in His sight.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

A little infant once was He;
And strength in weakness then was laid
Upon His Virgin Mother's knee,
That power to thee might be conveyed.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

In this thy frailty and thy need
He friends and helpers doth prepare,
Which thee shall cherish, clothe, and feed,
For of thy weal they tender are.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

The King of Kings when He was born,
Had not so much for outward ease;
By Him such dressings were not worn,
Nor such like swaddling-clothes as these.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby sleep.

Within a manger lodged thy Lord,
Where oxen lay and asses fed:
Warm rooms we do to thee afford,
An easy cradle for a bed.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

The wants that He did then sustain
Have purchased wealth, my babe, for thee,
And by His torments and His pain
Thy rest and ease secured be.
My baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou hast, yet more, to perfect this
A promise and an earnest got
Of gaining everlasting bliss,
Though thou, my babe, perceiv'st it not.
Sweet baby, then forbear to weep;
Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

George Wither [1588–1667]

MOTHER'S SONG

My heart is like a fountain true
That flows and flows with love to you.
As chirps the lark unto the tree
So chirps my pretty babe to me.
And it's O! sweet, sweet! and a lullaby.

There's not a rose where'er I seek,
As comely as my baby's cheek.
There's not a comb of honey-bee,
So full of sweets as babe to me.
And it's O! sweet, sweet! and a lullaby.

There's not a star that shines on high,
Is brighter than my baby's eye.
There's not a boat upon the sea,
Can dance as baby does to me.
And it's O! sweet, sweet! and a lullaby.

No silk was ever spun so fine
As is the hair of baby mine.
My baby smells more sweet to me
Than smells in spring the elder tree.
And it's O! sweet, sweet! and a lullaby.

A little fish swims in the well,
So in my heart does baby dwell.
A little flower blows on the tree,
My baby is the flower to me.
And it's O! sweet, sweet! and a lullaby.

The Queen has sceptre, crown and ball,
You are my sceptre, crown and all.
For all her robes of royal silk,
More fair your skin, as white as milk.
And it's O! sweet, sweet! and a lullaby.

Ten thousand parks where deer do run,
Ten thousand roses in the sun,
Ten thousand pearls beneath the sea,
My babe more precious is to me.
And it's O! sweet, sweet! and a lullaby.

Unknown

A LULLABY

Upon my lap my sovereign sits
And sucks upon my breast;
Meanwhile his love sustains my life
And gives my body rest.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

When thou hast taken thy repast,
Repose, my babe, on me;
So may thy mother and thy nurse
Thy cradle also be.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

I grieve that duty doth not work
All that my wishing would,
Because I would not be to thee
But in the best I should.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

Yet as I am, and as I may,
I must and will be thine,
Though all too little for thy self
Vouchsafing to be mine.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

Richard Rowlands [fl. 1565–1620]

A CRADLE HYMN

Hush! my dear, lie still and slumber,
Holy angels guard thy bed!
Heavenly blessings without number
Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe; thy food and raiment,
House and home, thy friends provide;
All without thy care or payment:
All thy wants are well supplied.

How much better thou'rt attended
Than the Son of God could be,
When from heaven He descended
And became a child like thee!

Soft and easy is thy cradle:
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay,
When His birthplace was a stable
And His softest bed was hay.

Blessèd babe! what glorious features—
  Spotless fair, divinely bright!
Must He dwell with brutal creatures?
  How could angels bear the sight?

Was there nothing but a manger
  Cursèd sinners could afford
To receive the heavenly stranger?
  Did they thus affront their Lord?

Soft, my child: I did not chide thee,
  Though my song might sound too hard;
'Tis thy mother sits beside thee,
  And her arms shall be thy guard.

Yet to read the shameful story
  How the Jews abused their King,
How they served the Lord of Glory,
  Makes me angry while I sing.

See the kinder shepherds round Him,
  Telling wonders from the sky!
Where they sought Him, there they found Him,
  With His Virgin mother by.

See the lovely babe a-dressing;
  Lovely infant, how He smiled!
When He wept, the mother's blessing
  Soothed and hushed the holy child.

Lo, He slumbers in His manger,
  Where the hornèd oxen fed;
Peace, my darling; here's no danger,
  Here's no ox anear thy bed.

'Twas to save thee, child, from dying,
  Save my dear from burning flame,
Bitter groans and endless crying,
  That thy blest Redeemer came.

May'st thou live to know and fear Him,
Trust and love Him all thy days;
Then go dwell forever near Him,
See His face, and sing His praise!

Isaac Watts [1674–1748]

CRADLE SONG

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming in the joys of night;
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
Where thy little heart doth rest.

O the cunning wiles that creep
In thy little heart asleep!
When thy little heart doth wake,
Then the dreadful night shall break.

William Blake [1757–1827]

LULLABY

Baloo, loo, lammy, now baloo, my dear,
Does wee lammy ken that its daddy's no here?
Ye're rocking full sweetly on mammy's warm knee,
But daddy's a-rocking upon the salt sea.

Now hushaby, lammy, now hushaby, dear;
Now hushaby, lammy, for mother is near.
The wild wind is raving, and mammy's heart's sair;
The wild wind is raving, and ye dinna care.

Sing baloo, loo, lammy, sing baloo, my dear;
Sing baloo, loo, lammy, for mother is here.
My wee bairnie's dozing, it's dozing now fine,
And O may its wakening be blither than mine!

Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]

LULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF

O, HUSH thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens, from the towers which we see,
They are all belonging, dear babie, to thee.
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo.

O, fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard thy repose;
Their bows would be bended, their blades would be red,
Ere the step of a foeman draws near to thy bed.
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo.

O, hush thee, my babie, the time soon will come,
When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and drum;
Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood, and waking with day.
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo.

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

GOOD-NIGHT

LITTLE baby, lay your head
On your pretty cradle-bed;
Shut your eye-peeps, now the day
And the light are gone away;
All the clothes are tucked in tight;
Little baby dear, good-night.

Yes, my darling, well I know
How the bitter wind doth blow;
And the winter's snow and rain
Patter on the window-pane:
But they cannot come in here,
To my little baby dear;

For the window shutteth fast,
Till the stormy night is past;
And the curtains warm are spread
Round about her cradle bed:
So till morning shineth bright,
Little baby dear, good-night.

Jane Taylor [1783–1824]

"LULLABY, O LULLABY"

LULLABY! O lullaby!
Baby, hush that little cry!
Light is dying,
Bats are flying,
Bees to-day with work have done;
So, till comes the morrow's sun,
Let sleep kiss those bright eyes dry!
Lullaby! O lullaby.

Lullaby! O lullaby!
Hushed are all things far and nigh;
Flowers are closing,
Birds reposing,
All sweet things with life are done.
Sweet, till dawns the morning sun,
Sleep, then kiss those blue eyes dry.
Lullaby! O lullaby!

William Cox Bennett [1820–1895]

LULLABY

From "The Princess"

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE COTTAGER TO HER INFANT

The days are cold, the nights are long,
The north-wind sings a doleful song;
Then hush again upon my breast;
All merry things are now at rest,
Save thee, my pretty love!

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth;
The crickets long have ceased their mirth;
There's nothing stirring in the house
Save one *wee*, hungry, nibbling mouse;
Then why so busy thou?

Nay! start not at that sparkling light;
'Tis but the moon that shines so bright
On the window-pane bedropped with rain:
There, little darling! sleep again,
And wake when it is day!

Dorothy Wordsworth [1804–1847]

TROT, TROT!

Every evening Baby goes
Trot, trot, to town,
Across the river, through the fields,
Up hill and down.

Trot, trot, the Baby goes,
Up hill and down,

To buy a feather for her hat,
To buy a woolen gown.

Trot, trot, the Baby goes;
The birds fly down, alack!
"You cannot have our feathers, dear,"
They say, "so please trot back."

Trot, trot, the Baby goes;
The lambs come bleating near.
"You cannot have our wool," they say,
"But we are sorry, dear."

Trot, trot, the Baby goes,
Trot, trot, to town;
She buys a red rose for her hat,
She buys a cotton gown.

Mary F. Butts [1836–

HOLY INNOCENTS

Sleep, little Baby, sleep;
The holy Angels love thee,
And guard thy bed, and keep
A blessed watch above thee.
No spirit can come near
Nor evil beast to harm thee:
Sleep, Sweet, devoid of fear
Where nothing need alarm thee.

The Love which doth not sleep,
The eternal Arms surround thee:
The Shepherd of the sheep
In perfect love hath found thee.
Sleep through the holy night,
Christ-kept from snare and sorrow,
Until thou wake to light
And love and warmth to-morrow.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

LULLABY

From "The Mistress of the Manse"

ROCKABY, lullaby, bees in the clover!
Crooning so drowsily, crying so low,
Rockaby, lullaby, dear little rover!
Down into wonderland,
Down to the under-land
Go, oh go!
Down into wonderland go!

Rockaby, lullaby, rain on the clover!
(Tears on the eyelids that waver and weep!)
Rockaby, lullaby—bending it over!
Down on the mother-world,
Down on the other world,
Sleep, oh sleep!
Down on the mother-world sleep!

Rockaby, lullaby, dew on the clover!
Dew on the eyes that will sparkle at dawn!
Rockaby, lullaby, dear little rover!
Into the stilly world,
Into the lily world,
Gone! oh gone!
Into the lily world gone!

Josiah Gilbert Holland [1819–1881]

CRADLE SONG

From "Bitter-Sweet"

WHAT is the little one thinking about?
Very wonderful things, no doubt!
Unwritten history!
Unfathomed mystery!
Yet he laughs and cries, and eats and drinks,
And chuckles and crows, and nods and winks,

As if his head were as full of kinks
And curious riddles as any sphinx!
  Warped by colic, and wet by tears,
  Punctured by pins, and tortured by fears,
  Our little nephew will lose two years;
    And he'll never know
    Where the summers go;—
He need not laugh, for he'll find it so!

Who can tell what a baby thinks?
Who can follow the gossamer links
  By which the mannikin feels his way
Out from the shore of the great unknown,
Blind, and wailing, and alone,
  Into the light of day?—
Out from the shore of the unknown sea,
Tossing in pitiful agony;—
Of the unknown sea that reels and rolls,
Specked with the barks of little souls,—
Barks that were launched on the other side,
And slipped from Heaven on an ebbing tide!
  What does he think of his mother's eyes?
What does he think of his mother's hair?
  What of the cradle-roof, that flies
Forward and backward through the air?
  What does he think of his mother's breast,
Bare and beautiful, smooth and white,
Seeking it ever with fresh delight,—
  Cup of his life, and couch of his rest?
What does he think when her quick embrace
Presses his hand and buries his face
Deep where the heart-throbs sink and swell
With a tenderness she can never tell,
  Though she murmur the words
  Of all the birds,—
Words she has learned to murmur well?
  Now he thinks he'll go to sleep!
  I can see the shadow creep
  Over his eyes, in soft eclipse,
  Over his brow, and over his lips,

Out to his little finger-tips!
Softly sinking, down he goes!
Down he goes! down he goes!
See! he is hushed in sweet repose!

Josiah Gilbert Holland [1819–1881]

AN IRISH LULLABY

I've found my bonny babe a nest
On Slumber Tree,
I'll rock you there to rosy rest,
Asthore Machree!
Oh, lulla lo! sing all the leaves
On Slumber Tree,
Till everything that hurts or grieves
Afar must flee.

I've put my pretty child to float
Away from me,
Within the new moon's silver boat
On Slumber Sea.
And when your starry sail is o'er
From Slumber Sea,
My precious one, you'll step to shore
On Mother's knee.

Alfred Perceval Graves [1846–

CRADLE SONG

I

Lord Gabriel, wilt thou not rejoice
When at last a little boy's
Cheek lies heavy as a rose,
And his eyelids close?

Gabriel, when that hush may be,
This sweet hand all heedfully
I'll undo, for thee alone,
From his mother's own.

Then the far blue highways paven
With the burning stars of heaven
  He shall gladden with the sweet
  Hasting of his feet—

Feet so brightly bare and cool,
Leaping, as from pool to pool;
  From a little laughing boy
  Splashing rainbow joy!

Gabriel, wilt thou understand
How to keep his hovering hand—
  Never shut, as in a bond,
  From the bright beyond?—

Nay, but though it cling and close
Tightly as a climbing rose,
  Clasp it only so—aright,
  Lest his heart take fright.

(*Dormi, dormi, tu:*
The dusk is hung with blue.)

II

Lord Michael, wilt not thou rejoice
When at last a little boy's
  Heart, a shut-in murmuring bee,
  Turns him unto thee?

Wilt thou heed thine armor well—
To take his hand from Gabriel,
  So his radiant cup of dream
  May not spill a gleam?

He will take thy heart in thrall,
Telling o'er thy breastplate, all
  Colors, in his bubbling speech,
  With his hand to each.

(*Dormi, dormi, tu.*
Sapphire is the blue:
Pearl and beryl, they are called,
Chrysoprase and emerald,

Sard and amethyst.
Numbered so, and kissed.)

Ah, but find some angel word
For thy sharp, subduing sword!
Yea, Lord Michael, make no doubt
He will find it out:

(*Dormi, dormi, tu!*
His eyes will look at you.)

III

Last, a little morning space,
Lead him to that leafy place
Where Our Lady sits awake,
For all mothers' sake.

Bosomed with the Blessèd One,
He shall mind her of her Son,
Once so folded from all harms,
In her shrining arms.

(*In her veil of blue,*
Dormi, dormi, tu.)

So;—and fare thee well.
Softly,—Gabriel . . .
When the first faint red shall come,
Bid the Day-star lead him home,
For the bright world's sake—
To my heart, awake.

Josephine Preston Peabody [1874–

MOTHER-SONG FROM "PRINCE LUCIFER"

White little hands!
Pink little feet!
Dimpled all over,
Sweet, sweet, sweet!
What dost thou wail for?
The unknown? the unseen?
The ills that are coming,
The joys that have been?

Cling to me closer,
Closer and closer,
Till the pain that is purer
Hath banished the grosser.
Drain, drain at the stream, love,
Thy hunger is freeing,
That was born in a dream, love,
Along with thy being!

Little fingers that feel
For their home on my breast,
Little lips that appeal
For their nurture, their rest!
Why, why dost thou weep, dear?
Nay, stifle thy cries,
Till the dew of thy sleep, dear,
Lies soft on thine eyes.

Alfred Austin [1835–1913]

KENTUCKY BABE

'Skeeters am a hummin' on de honeysuckle vine,—
Sleep, Kentucky Babe!
Sandman am a comin' to dis little coon of mine,—
Sleep, Kentucky Babe!
Silv'ry moon am shinin' in de heabens up above,
Bobolink am pinin' fo' his little lady love:
Yo' is mighty lucky,
Babe of old Kentucky,—
Close yo' eyes in sleep.

Fly away,
Fly away, Kentucky Babe, fly away to rest,
Fly away,
Lay yo' kinky, woolly head on yo' mammy's breast,—
Um—Um—,
Close yo' eyes in sleep.

Daddy's in de cane-brake wid his little dog and gun,—
Sleep, Kentucky Babe!
'Possum fo' yo' breakfast when yo' sleepin' time is done,—
Sleep, Kentucky Babe!

Bogie man'll catch yo' sure unless yo' close yo' eyes,
Waitin' jes outside de doo' to take yo' by surprise:
Bes' be keepin' shady,
Little colored lady,—
Close yo' eyes in sleep.

Richard Henry Buck [1869–

MINNIE AND WINNIE

Minnie and Winnie slept in a shell.
Sleep, little ladies! And they slept well.

Pink was the shell within, silver without;
Sounds of the great sea wandered about.

Sleep, little ladies! Wake not soon!
Echo on echo dies to the moon.

Two bright stars peeped into the shell.
"What are they dreaming of? Who can tell?"

Started a green linnet out of the croft;
Wake, little ladies! The sun is aloft.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

BED-TIME SONG

Sleep, my baby, while I sing
Bed-time news of everything.
Chickens run to mother hen;
Piggy curls up in the pen.
In the field, all tired with play,
Quiet now the lambkins stay.
Kittens cuddle in a heap—
Baby, too, must go to sleep!

Sleep, my baby, while I sing
Bed-time news of everything.
Now the cows from pasture come;
Bees fly home with drowsy hum.
Little birds are in the nest,
Under mother-bird's soft breast.
Over all soft shadows creep—
Baby now must go to sleep.

Sleep, my baby, while I sing
Bed-time news of everything.
Sleepy flowers seem to nod,
Drooping toward the dewy sod;
While the big sun's fading light
Bids my baby dear good-night.
Mother loving watch will keep;
Baby now must go to sleep.

Emilie Poulsson [1853–

TUCKING THE BABY IN

The dark-fringed eyelids slowly close
On eyes serene and deep;
Upon my breast my own sweet child
Has gently dropped to sleep;
I kiss his soft and dimpled cheek,
I kiss his rounded chin,
Then lay him on his little bed,
And tuck my baby in.

How fair and innocent he lies;
Like some small angel strayed,
His face still warmed by God's own smile,
That slumbers unafraid;
Or like some new embodied soul,
Still pure from taint of sin—
My thoughts are reverent as I stoop
To tuck my baby in.

What toil must stain these tiny hands
That now lie still and white?
What shadows creep across the face
That shines with morning light?
These wee pink shoeless feet—how far
Shall go their lengthening tread,
When they no longer cuddled close
May rest upon this bed?

O what am I that I should train
An angel for the skies;
Or mix the potent draught that feeds
The soul within these eyes?

I reach him up to the sinless Hands
Before his cares begin,—
Great Father, with Thy folds of love,
O tuck my baby in.

Curtis May [18 -

"JENNY WI' THE AIRN TEETH"

WHAT a plague is this o' mine,
Winna steek an e'e;
Though I hap him o'er the heid,
As cosy as can be.
Sleep an' let me to my wark—
A' thae claes to airn—
Jenny wi' the airn teeth,
Come an' tak' the bairn!

Tak' him to your ain den,
Whaur the bogie bides,
But first put baith your big teeth
In his wee plump sides;
Gie your auld gray pow a shake,
Rive him frae my grup,
Tak' him whaur nae kiss is gaun
When he waukens up.

Whatna noise is that I hear
Coomin' doon the street?
Weel I ken the dump, dump,
O' her beetle feet;
Mercy me! she's at the door!
Hear her lift the sneck;
Wheesht, an' cuddle mammy noo,
Closer roun' the neck.

Jenny wi' the airn teeth,
The bairn has aff his claes;
Sleepin' safe an' soun', I think—
Dinna touch his taes.

Sleepin' bairns are no for you,
Ye may turn aboot,
An' tak' awa' wee Tam next door—
I hear him screichin' oot.

Dump, dump, awa' she gangs
Back the road she cam',
I hear her at the ither door,
Speirin' after Tam;
He's a crabbit, greetin' thing—
The warst in a' the toon,
Little like my ain wee wean—
Losh, he's sleepin' soun'!

Mithers hae an awfu' wark
Wi' their bairns at nicht,
Chappin' on the chair wi' tangs,
To gie the rogues a fricht;
Aulder bairns are fleyed wi' less,
Weel eneuch we ken,
Bigger bogies, bigger Jennies,
Frichten muckle men.

Alexander Anderson [1845–1909]

CUDDLE DOON

The bairnies cuddle doon at nicht
Wi' muckle faucht an' din;
"O, try an' sleep, ye waukrife rogues,
Your father's comin' in."
They never heed a word I speak;
I try to gie a froon,
But aye I hap them up, an' cry,
"O bairnies, cuddle doon."

Wee Jamie wi' the curly heid—
He aye sleeps next the wa'—
Bangs up an' cries, "I want a piece;"
The rascal starts them a'.

I rin an' fetch them pieces, drinks,
They stop awee the soun';
Then draw the blankets up an' cry,
"Noo, weanies, cuddle doon."

But ere five minutes gang, wee Rab
Cries oot, frae 'neath the claes,
"Mither, mak' Tam gie ower at once—
He's kittlin' wi' his taes."
The mischief's in that Tam for tricks,
He'd bother half the toon;
But aye I hap them up an' cry,
"O bairnies, cuddle doon."

At length they hear their father's fit,
An', as he steeks the door,
They turn their faces to the wa',
While Tam pretends to snore.
"Hae a' the weans been gude?" he asks,
As he pits aff his shoon;
"The bairnies, John, are in their beds,
An' lang since cuddled doon."

An' just afore we bed oorsel's,
We look at oor wee lambs;
Tam has his airm roun' wee Rab's neck,
An' Rab his airm roun' Tam's.
I lift wee Jamie up the bed,
An' as I straik each croon,
I whisper, till my heart fills up,
"O bairnies, cuddle doon."

The bairnies cuddle doon at nicht
Wi' mirth that's dear to me;
But sune the big warl's cark an' care
Will quaten doon their glee.
Yet, come what will to ilka ane,
May He who sits aboon
Aye whisper, though their pows be bauld,
"O bairnies, cuddle doon."

Alexander Anderson [1845–1909]

BEDTIME

'Tis bedtime; say your hymn, and bid "Good-night;
God bless Mamma, Papa, and dear ones all."
Your half-shut eyes beneath your eyelids fall,
Another minute, you will shut them quite.
Yes, I will carry you, put out the light,
And tuck you up, although you are so tall!
What will you give me, sleepy one, and call
My wages, if I settle you all right?

I laid her golden curls upon my arm,
I drew her little feet within my hand,
Her rosy palms were joined in trustful bliss,
Her heart next mine beat gently, soft and warm
She nestled to me, and, by Love's command,
Paid me my precious wages—"Baby's Kiss."

Francis Robert St. Clair Erskine [1833–1890]

THE DUTY OF CHILDREN

HAPPY THOUGHT

THE world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

WHOLE DUTY OF CHILDREN

A CHILD should always say what's true
And speak when he is spoken to,
And behave mannerly at table;
At least as far as he is able.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

POLITENESS

GOOD little boys should never say
"I will," and "Give me these";
O, no! that never is the way,
But "Mother, if you please."

And "If you please," to Sister Ann
Good boys to say are ready;
And, "Yes, sir," to a Gentleman,
And, "Yes, ma'am," to a Lady.

Elizabeth Turner [? –1846]

RULES OF BEHAVIOR

HEARTS, like doors, will ope with ease
To very, very little keys,
And don't forget that two of these
Are "I thank you" and "If you please."

Come when you're called,
Do what you're bid,
Close the door after you,
Never be chid.

Seldom "can't,"
Seldom "don't;"
Never "shan't,"
Never "won't."

LITTLE FRED

When little Fred
Was called to bed,
He always acted right;
He kissed Mama,
And then Papa,
And wished them all good-night.

He made no noise,
Like naughty boys,
But gently up the stairs
Directly went,
When he was sent,
And always said his prayers.

THE LOVABLE CHILD

Frisky as a lambkin,
Busy as a bee—
That's the kind of little girl
People like to see.

Modest as a violet,
As a rosebud sweet—
That's the kind of little girl
People like to meet.

Bright as is a diamond,
Pure as any pearl—
Everyone rejoices in
Such a little girl.

Happy as a robin,
Gentle as a dove—
That's the kind of little girl
Everyone will love.

Fly away and seek her,
Little song of mine,
For I choose that very girl
As my Valentine.

Emilie Poulsson [1853–

GOOD AND BAD CHILDREN

Children, you are very little,
And your bones are very brittle;
If you would grow great and stately,
You must try to walk sedately.

You must still be bright and quiet,
And content with simple diet;
And remain, through all bewild'ring,
Innocent and honest children.

Happy hearts and happy faces,
Happy play in grassy places—
That was how, in ancient ages,
Children grew to kings and sages.

But the unkind and the unruly,
And the sort who eat unduly,
They must never hope for glory—
Theirs is quite a different story!

Cruel children, crying babies,
All grow up as geese and gabies,
Hated, as their age increases,
By their nephews and their nieces.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

REBECCA'S AFTER-THOUGHT

Yesterday, Rebecca Mason,
In the parlor by herself,
Broke a handsome china basin,
Placed upon the mantel-shelf.

Quite alarmed, she thought of going
Very quietly away,
Not a single person knowing,
Of her being there that day.

But Rebecca recollected
She was taught deceit to shun;
And the moment she reflected,
Told her mother what was done;

Who commended her behavior,
Loved her better, and forgave her.

Elizabeth Turner [? –1846]

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

Little children, never give
Pain to things that feel and live;
Let the gentle robin come
For the crumbs you save at home,—
As his meat you throw along
He'll repay you with a song;
Never hurt the timid hare
Peeping from her green grass lair,
Let her come and sport and play
On the lawn at close of day;
The little lark goes soaring high
To the bright windows of the sky,
Singing as if 'twere always spring,
And fluttering on an untired wing,—
Oh! let him sing his happy song,
Nor do these gentle creatures wrong.

A RULE FOR BIRDS' NESTERS

The robin and the red-breast,
The sparrow and the wren;
If ye take out o' their nest,
Ye'll never thrive again!

The robin and the red-breast,
The martin and the swallow;
If ye touch one o' their eggs,
Bad luck will surely follow!

"SING ON, BLITHE BIRD"

I'VE plucked the berry from the bush, the brown nut from the tree,
But heart of happy little bird ne'er broken was by me.
I saw them in their curious nests, close couching, slyly peer
With their wild eyes, like glittering beads, to note if harm were near;
I passed them by, and blessed them all; I felt that it was good
To leave unmoved the creatures small whose home was in the wood.

And here, even now, above my head, a lusty rogue doth sing;
He pecks his swelling breast and neck, and trims his little wing.
He will not fly; he knows full well, while chirping on that spray,
I would not harm him for the world, or interrupt his lay.
Sing on, sing on, blithe bird! and fill my heart with summer gladness;
It has been aching many a day with measures full of sadness!

William Motherwell [1797–1835]

"I LIKE LITTLE PUSSY"

I LIKE little Pussy, her coat is so warm;
And if I don't hurt her she'll do me no harm.
So I'll not pull her tail, nor drive her away,
But Pussy and I very gently will play.

She shall sit by my side, and I'll give her some food;
And she'll love me because I am gentle and good.
I'll pat little Pussy and then she will purr,
And thus show her thanks for my kindness to her.

I'll not pinch her ears, nor tread on her paw,
Lest I should provoke her to use her sharp claw;
I never will vex her, nor make her displeased,
For Pussy can't bear to be worried or teased.

Jane Taylor [1783–1824]

LITTLE THINGS

Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean
And the pleasant land.

So the little moments,
Humble though they be,
Make the mighty ages
Of eternity.

So our little errors
Lead the soul away
From the path of virtue,
Far in sin to stray.

Little deeds of kindness,
Little words of love,
Help to make earth happy
Like the heaven above.

Julia Fletcher Carney [1823–1908]

THE LITTLE GENTLEMAN

From "Little Derwent's Breakfast"

Take your meals, my little man,
Always like a gentleman;
Wash your face and hands with care,
Change your shoes, and brush your hair;
Then so fresh, and clean, and neat,
Come and take your proper seat:
Do not loiter and be late,
Making other people wait;

Do not rudely point or touch:
Do not eat and drink too much:
Finish what you have, before
You even ask, or send for more:
Never crumble or destroy
Food that others might enjoy;
They who idly *crumbs* will waste
Often want a loaf to taste!
Never spill your milk or tea,
Never rude or noisy be;
Never choose the daintiest food,
Be content with what is good:
Seek in all things that you can
To be a little gentleman.

THE CRUST OF BREAD

I MUST not throw upon the floor
The crust I cannot eat;
For many little hungry ones
Would think it quite a treat.

My parents labor very hard
To get me wholesome food;
Then I must never waste a bit
That would do others good.

For wilful waste makes woeful want,
And I may live to say,
Oh! how I wish I had the bread
That once I threw away!

"HOW DOTH THE LITTLE BUSY BEE"

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower!

How skilfully she builds her cell!
How neat she spreads the wax!
And labors hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

In works of labor or of skill,
I would be busy too;
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

In books, or work, or healthful play,
Let my first years be passed,
That I may give for every day
Some good account at last.

Isaac Watts [1674–1748]

THE BROWN THRUSH

THERE'S a merry brown thrush sitting up in the tree.
"He's singing to me! He's singing to me!"
And what does he say, little girl, little boy?
"Oh, the world's running over with joy!
Don't you hear? Don't you see?
Hush! Look! In my tree,
I'm as happy as happy can be!"

And the brown thrush keeps singing, "A nest do you see,
And five eggs, hid by me in the juniper-tree?
Don't meddle! Don't touch! little girl, little boy,
Or the world will lose some of its joy!
Now I'm glad! Now I'm free!
And I always shall be,
If you never bring sorrow to me."

So the merry brown thrush sings away in the tree,
To you and to me, to you and to me;
And he sings all the day, little girl, little boy,
"Oh, the world's running over with joy!
But long it won't be,
Don't you know? Don't you see?
Unless we're as good as can be."

Lucy Larcom [1824–1893]

THE SLUGGARD

'Tis the voice of a sluggard; I heard him complain,
"You have waked me too soon; I must slumber again";
As the door on its hinges, so he on his bed
Turns his sides, and his shoulders, and his heavy head.

"A little more sleep, and a little more slumber";
Thus he wastes half his days, and his hours without number;
And when he gets up, he sits folding his hands
Or walks about saunt'ring, or trifling he stands.

I passed by his garden, and saw the wild brier
The thorn and the thistle grow broader and higher;
The clothes that hang on him are turning to rags;
And his money still wastes till he starves or he begs.

I made him a visit, still hoping to find
That he took better care for improving his mind;
He told me his dreams, talked of eating and drinking,
But he scarce reads his Bible, and never loves thinking.

Said I then to my heart, "Here's a lesson for me;
That man's but a picture of what I might be;
But thanks to my friends for their care in my breeding,
Who taught me betimes to love working and reading."

Isaac Watts [1674–1748]

THE VIOLET

Down in a green and shady bed
A modest violet grew;
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head,
As if to hide from view.

And yet it was a lovely flower,
Its colors bright and fair;
It might have graced a rosy bower,
Instead of hiding there.

Yet there it was content to bloom,
In modest tints arrayed;
And there diffused a sweet perfume,
Within the silent shade.

Then let me to the valley go,
This pretty flower to see;
That I may also learn to grow
In sweet humility.

Jane Taylor [1783–1824]

DIRTY JIM

THERE was one little Jim,
'Tis reported of him,
And must be to his lasting disgrace,
That he never was seen
With hands at all clean,
Nor yet ever clean was his face.

His friends were much hurt
To see so much dirt,
And often they made him quite clean;
But all was in vain,
He got dirty again,
And not at all fit to be seen.

It gave him no pain
To hear them complain,
Nor his own dirty clothes to survey;
His indolent mind
No pleasure could find
In tidy and wholesome array.

The idle and bad,
Like this little lad,
May love dirty ways, to be sure;
But good boys are seen,
To be decent and clean,
Although they are ever so poor.

Jane Taylor [1783–1824]

THE PIN

"Dear me! what signifies a pin,
Wedged in a rotten board?
I'm certain that I won't begin,
At ten years old, to hoard;
I never will be called a miser,
That I'm determined," said Eliza.

So onward tripped the little maid,
And left the pin behind,
Which very snug and quiet lay,
To its hard fate resigned;
Nor did she think (a careless chit)
'Twas worth her while to stoop for it.

Next day a party was to ride,
To see an air balloon;
And all the company beside
Were dressed and ready soon;
But she a woeful case was in,
For want of just a single pin.

In vain her eager eyes she brings,
To every darksome crack;
There was not one, and yet her things
Were dropping off her back:
She cut her pincushion in two,
But no, not one had fallen through.

At last, as hunting on the floor,
Over a crack she lay,
The carriage rattled to the door,
Then rattled fast away;
But poor Eliza was not in,
For want of just—a single pin!

There's hardly anything so small,
So trifling or so mean,
That we may never want at all,
For service unforeseen;

And wilful waste, depend upon't,
Brings, almost always, woeful want!

Ann Taylor [1782–1866]

JANE AND ELIZA

THERE were two little girls, neither handsome nor plain,
One's name was Eliza, the other's was Jane;
They were both of one height, as I've heard people say,
And both of one age, I believe, to a day.

'Twas fancied by some, who but slightly had seen them,
There was not a pin to be chosen between them;
But no one for long in this notion persisted,
So great a distinction there *really* existed.

Eliza knew well that she could not be pleasing,
While fretting and fuming, while sulking or teasing;
And therefore in company artfully tried,
Not to *break* her bad habits, but only to *hide*.

So, when she was out, with much labor and pain,
She contrived to look *almost* as pleasant as Jane;
But then you might see that, in forcing a smile,
Her mouth was uneasy, and ached all the while.

And in spite of her care it would sometimes befall
That some cross event happened to ruin it all;
And because it might chance that her share was the worst,
Her temper broke loose, and her dimples dispersed.

But Jane, who had nothing she wanted to hide,
And therefore these troublesome arts never tried,
Had none of the care and fatigue of concealing,
But her face always showed what her bosom was feeling.

At home or abroad there was peace in her smile,
A cheerful good nature that needed no guile.
And Eliza worked hard, but could never obtain
The affection that freely was given to Jane.

Ann Taylor [1782–1866]

MEDDLESOME MATTY

One ugly trick has often spoiled
The sweetest and the best;
Matilda, though a pleasant child,
One ugly trick possessed,
Which, like a cloud before the skies,
Hid all her better qualities.

Sometimes she'd lift the tea-pot lid,
To peep at what was in it;
Or tilt the kettle, if you did
But turn your back a minute.
In vain you told her not to touch,
Her trick of meddling grew so much.

Her grandmamma went out one day,
And by mistake she laid
Her spectacles and snuff-box gay
Too near the little maid;
"Ah! well," thought she, "I'll try them on,
As soon as grandmamma is gone."

Forthwith she placed upon her nose
The glasses large and wide;
And looking round, as I suppose,
The snuff-box too she spied:
"Oh! what a pretty box is that;
I'll open it," said little Matt.

"I know that grandmamma would say,
'Don't meddle with it, dear';
But then, she's far enough away,
And no one else is near:
Besides, what can there be amiss
In opening such a box as this?"

So thumb and finger went to work
To move the stubborn lid,
And presently a mighty jerk
The mighty mischief did;

For all at once, ah! woeful case,
The snuff came puffing in her face.

Poor eyes, and nose, and mouth, beside,
A dismal sight presented;
In vain, as bitterly she cried,
Her folly she repented.
In vain she ran about for ease;
She could do nothing now but sneeze.

She dashed the spectacles away,
To wipe her tingling eyes,
And as in twenty bits they lay,
Her grandmamma she spies.
"Heydey! and what's the matter now?"
Cried grandmamma, with lifted brow.

Matilda, smarting with the pain,
And tingling still, and sore,
Made many a promise to refrain
From meddling evermore.
And 'tis a fact, as I have heard,
She ever since has kept her word.

Ann Taylor [1782–1866]

CONTENTED JOHN

One honest John Tomkins, a hedger and ditcher,
Although he was poor, did not want to be richer;
For all such vain wishes in him were prevented
By a fortunate habit of being contented.

Though cold were the weather, or dear were the food,
John never was found in a murmuring mood;
For this he was constantly heard to declare,—
What he could not prevent he would cheerfully bear.

"For why should I grumble and murmur?" he said;
"If I cannot get meat, I'll be thankful for bread;
And, though fretting may make my calamities deeper,
It can never cause bread and cheese to be cheaper."

If John was afflicted with sickness or pain,
He wished himself better, but did not complain,
Nor lie down to fret in despondence and sorrow,
But said that he hoped to be better to-morrow.

If any one wronged him or treated him ill,
Why, John was good-natured and sociable still;
For he said that revenging the injury done
Would be making two rogues when there need be but one.

And thus honest John, though his station was humble,
Passed through this sad world without even a grumble;
And I wish that some folks, who are greater and richer,
Would copy John Tomkins, the hedger and ditcher.

Jane Taylor [1783–1824]

FRIENDS

How good to lie a little while
And look up through the tree!
The Sky is like a kind big smile
Bent sweetly over me.

The Sunshine flickers through the lace
Of leaves above my head,
And kisses me upon the face
Like Mother, before bed.

The Wind comes stealing o'er the grass
To whisper pretty things;
And though I cannot see him pass,
I feel his careful wings.

So many gentle Friends are near
Whom one can scarcely see,
A child should never feel a fear,
Wherever he may be.

Abbie Farwell Brown [18

ANGER

Anger in its time and place
May assume a kind of grace.
It must have some reason in it,
And not last beyond a minute.
If to further lengths it go,
It does into malice grow.
'Tis the difference that we see
'Twixt the serpent and the bee.
If the latter you provoke,
It inflicts a hasty stroke,
Puts you to some little pain,
But it *never stings again.*
Close in tufted bush or brake
Lurks the poison-swellèd snake
Nursing up his cherished wrath;
In the purlieus of his path,
In the cold, or in the warm,
Mean him good, or mean him harm,
Wheresoever fate may bring you,
The vile snake will *always sting you.*

Charles and Mary Lamb

"THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL"

There was a little girl, who had a little curl
Right in the middle of her forehead,
And when she was good, she was very, very good,
But when she was bad she was horrid.

She stood on her head, on her little trundle-bed,
With nobody by for to hinder;
She screamed and she squalled, she yelled and she bawled,
And drummed her little heels against the winder.

Her mother heard the noise, and thought it was the boys
Playing in the empty attic,
She rushed upstairs, and caught her unawares,
And spanked her, most emphatic.

Unknown

THE REFORMATION OF GODFREY GORE

Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore—
No doubt you have heard the name before—
Was a boy who never would shut a door!

The wind might whistle, the wind might roar,
And teeth be aching and throats be sore,
But still he never would shut the door.

His father would beg, his mother implore,
"Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,
We really *do* wish you would shut the door!"

Their hands they wrung, their hair they tore;
But Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore
Was deaf as the buoy out at the Nore.

When he walked forth the folks would roar,
"Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,
Why don't you think to shut the door?"

They rigged out a Shutter with sail and oar,
And threatened to pack off Gustavus Gore
On a voyage of penance to Singapore.

But he begged for mercy, and said, "No more!
Pray do not send me to Singapore
On a Shutter, and then I will shut the door!"

"You will?" said his parents; "then keep on shore!
But mind you do! For the plague is sore
Of a fellow that never will shut the door,
Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore!"

William Brighty Rands [1823–1882]

THE BEST FIRM

A pretty good firm is "Watch & Waite,"
And another is "Attit, Early & Layte;"
And still another is "Doo & Dairet;"
But the best is probably "Grinn & Barrett."

Walter G. Doty [1876–

A LITTLE PAGE'S SONG

(13th Century)

God's lark at morning I would be!
I'd set my heart within a tree
Close to His bed and sing to Him
  Right merrily
  A sunrise hymn.

At night I'd be God's troubadour!
Beneath His starry walls I'd pour
Across the moat such roundelays
  He'd love me sure—
  And maybe praise!

William Alexander Percy [1885–

HOW THE LITTLE KITE LEARNED TO FLY

"I never can do it," the little kite said,
As he looked at the others high over his head;
"I know I should fall if I tried to fly."
"Try," said the big kite; "only try!
Or I fear you never will learn at all."
But the little kite said, "I'm afraid I'll fall."

The big kite nodded: "Ah well, goodby;
I'm off;" and he rose toward the tranquil sky.
Then the little kite's paper stirred at the sight,
And trembling he shook himself free for flight.
First whirling and frightened, then braver grown,
Up, up he rose through the air alone,
Till the big kite looking down could see
The little one rising steadily.

Then how the little kite thrilled with pride,
As he sailed with the big kite side by side!
While far below he could see the ground,
And the boys like small spots moving round.
They rested high in the quiet air,
And only the birds and the clouds were there.
"Oh, how happy I am!" the little kite cried,
"And all because I was brave, and tried."

Unknown

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE BEE

Methought I heard a butterfly
Say to a laboring bee:
"Thou hast no colors of the sky
On painted wings like me."

"Poor child of vanity! those dyes,
And colors bright and rare,"
With mild reproof, the bee replies,
"Are all beneath my care.

"Content I toil from morn till eve,
And, scorning idleness,
To tribes of gaudy sloth I leave
The vanity of dress."

William Lisle Bowles [1762–1850]

THE BUTTERFLY

The butterfly, an idle thing,
Nor honey makes, nor yet can sing,
As do the bee and bird;
Nor does it, like the prudent ant,
Lay up the grain for times of want,
A wise and cautious hoard.

My youth is but a summer's day:
Then like the bee and ant I'll lay
A store of learning by;
And though from flower to flower I rove,
My stock of wisdom I'll improve,
Nor be a butterfly.

Adelaide O'Keefe [1776–1855]

MORNING

The lark is up to meet the sun,
The bee is on the wing,
The ant her labor has begun,
The woods with music ring.

Shall birds and bees and ants be wise,
While I my moments waste?
Oh, let me with the morning rise,
And to my duties haste.

Why should I sleep till beams of morn
Their light and glory shed?
Immortal beings were not born
To waste their time in bed.

Jane Taylor [1783–1824]

BUTTERCUPS AND DAISIES

Buttercups and daisies,
Oh, the pretty flowers;
Coming ere the spring time,
To tell of sunny hours,
While the trees are leafless,
While the fields are bare,
Buttercups and daisies
Spring up here and there.

Ere the snow-drop peepeth,
Ere the crocus bold,
Ere the early primrose
Opes its paly gold,—
Somewhere on the sunny bank
Buttercups are bright;
Somewhere midst the frozen grass
Peeps the daisy white.

Little hardy flowers,
Like to children poor,
Playing in their sturdy health
By their mother's door.
Purple with the north-wind,
Yet alert and bold;
Fearing not, and caring not,
Though they be a-cold!

What to them is winter!
What are stormy showers!
Buttercups and daisies
Are these human flowers!
He who gave them hardships
And a life of care,
Gave them likewise hardy strength
And patient hearts to bear.

Mary Howitt [1799–1888]

THE ANT AND THE CRICKET

A SILLY young cricket, accustomed to sing
Through the warm, sunny months of gay summer and spring,
Began to complain, when he found that at home
His cupboard was empty and winter was come.
Not a crumb to be found
On the snow-covered ground;
Not a flower could he see,
Not a leaf on a tree:
"Oh, what will become," says the cricket, "of me?"

At last by starvation and famine made bold,
All dripping with wet and all trembling with cold,
Away he set off to a miserly ant,
To see if, to keep him alive, he would grant
Him shelter from rain:
A mouthful of grain
He wished only to borrow,
He'd repay it to-morrow:
If not, he must die of starvation and sorrow.

Says the ant to the cricket, "I'm your servant and friend,
But we ants never borrow, we ants never lend;
But tell me, dear sir, did you lay nothing by
When the weather was warm?" Said the cricket, "Not I.
My heart was so light
That I sang day and night,
For all nature looked gay."
"You sang, sir, you say?
Go then," said the ant, "and dance winter away."

Thus ending, he hastily lifted the wicket
And out of the door turned the poor little cricket.
Though this is a fable, the moral is good:
If you live without work, you must live without food.

Unknown

AFTER WINGS

This was your butterfly, you see,—
His fine wings made him vain:
The caterpillars crawl, but he
Passed them in rich disdain.—
My pretty boy says, "Let him be
Only a worm again!"

O child, when things have learned to wear
Wings once, they must be fain
To keep them always high and fair:
Think of the creeping pain
Which even a butterfly must bear
To be a worm again!

Sarah M. B. Piatt [1836–

DEEDS OF KINDNESS

Suppose the little Cowslip
Should hang its golden cup
And say, "I'm such a little flower
I'd better not grow up!"
How many a weary traveller
Would miss its fragrant smell,
How many a little child would grieve
To lose it from the dell!

Suppose the glistening Dewdrop
Upon the grass should say,
"What can a little dewdrop do?
I'd better roll away!"
The blade on which it rested,
Before the day was done,
Without a drop to moisten it,
Would wither in the sun.

Suppose the little Breezes,
Upon a summer's day,
Should think themselves too small to cool
The traveller on his way:
Who would not miss the smallest
And softest ones that blow,
And think they made a great mistake
If they were acting so?

How many deed of kindness
A little child can do,
Although it has but little strength
And little wisdom too!
It wants a loving spirit
Much more than strength, to prove
How many things a child may do
For others by its love.

Epes Sargent [1813–1880]

THE LION AND THE MOUSE

A LION with the heat oppressed,
One day composed himself to rest:
But while he dozed as he intended,
A mouse, his royal back ascended;
Nor thought of harm, as Æsop tells,
Mistaking him for someone else;
And travelled over him, and round him,
And might have left him as she found him
Had she not—tremble when you hear—
Tried to explore the monarch's ear!
Who straightway woke, with wrath immense,
And shook his head to cast her thence.
"You rascal, what are you about?"
Said he, when he had turned her out,
"I'll teach you soon," the lion said,
"To make a mouse-hole in my head!"
So saying, he prepared his foot
To crush the trembling tiny brute;

But she (the mouse) with tearful eye,
Implored the lion's clemency,
Who thought it best at last to give
His little prisoner a reprieve.

'Twas nearly twelve months after this,
The lion chanced his way to miss;
When pressing forward, heedless yet,
He got entangled in a net.
With dreadful rage, he stamped and tore,
And straight commenced a lordly roar;
When the poor mouse, who heard the noise,
Attended, for she knew his voice.
Then what the lion's utmost strength
Could not effect, she did at length;
With patient labor she applied
Her teeth, the network to divide;
And so at last forth issued he,
A *lion*, by a mouse set free.

Few are so small or weak, I guess,
But may assist us in distress,
Nor shall we ever, if we're wise,
The meanest, or the least despise.

Jeffreys Taylor [1792–1853]

THE BOY AND THE WOLF

A LITTLE Boy was set to keep
A little flock of goats or sheep;
He thought the task too solitary,
And took a strange perverse vagary:
To call the people out of fun,
To see them leave their work and run,
He cried and screamed with all his might,—
"Wolf! wolf!" in a pretended fright.
Some people, working at a distance,
Came running in to his assistance.
They searched the fields and bushes round,
The Wolf was nowhere to be found.

The Boy, delighted with his game,
A few days after did the same,
And once again the people came.
The trick was many times repeated,
At last they found that they were cheated.
One day the Wolf appeared in sight,
The Boy was in a real fright,
He cried, "Wolf! wolf!"—the neighbors heard,
But not a single creature stirred.
"We need not go from our employ,—
'Tis nothing but that idle boy."
The little Boy cried out again,
"Help, help! the Wolf!" he cried in vain.
At last his master came to beat him.
He came too late, the Wolf had eat him.

This shows the bad effect of lying,
And likewise of continual crying.
If I had heard you scream and roar,
For nothing, twenty times before,
Although you might have broke your arm,
Or met with any serious harm,
Your cries could give me no alarm;
They would not make me move the faster,
Nor apprehend the least disaster;
I should be sorry when I came,
But you yourself would be to blame.

John Hookham Frere [1769–1846]

THE STORY OF AUGUSTUS, WHO WOULD NOT HAVE ANY SOUP

Augustus was a chubby lad;
Fat, ruddy cheeks Augustus had;
And everybody saw with joy
The plump and hearty, healthy boy.
He ate and drank as he was told,
And never let his soup get cold.

But one day, one cold winter's day,
He screamed out—"Take the soup away!
O take the nasty soup away!
I won't have any soup to-day."

Next day begins his tale of woes;
Quite lank and lean Augustus grows.
Yet, though he feels so weak and ill,
The naughty fellow cries out still—
"Not any soup for me, I say:
O take the nasty soup away!
I won't have any soup to-day."

The third day comes; O what a sin!
To make himself so pale and thin.
Yet, when the soup is put on table,
He screams, as loud as he is able,—
"Not any soup for me, I say:
O take the nasty soup away!
I won't have any soup to-day."

Look at him, now the fourth day's come!
He scarcely weighs a sugar-plum;
He's like a little bit of thread,
And on the fifth day, he was—dead!

From the German of Heinrich Hoffman [1798–1874]

THE STORY OF LITTLE SUCK-A-THUMB

One day, mamma said: "Conrad dear,
I must go out and leave you here.
But mind now, Conrad, what I say,
Don't suck your thumb while I'm away.
The great tall tailor always comes
To little boys that suck their thumbs;
And ere they dream what he's about,
He takes his great sharp scissors out
And cuts their thumbs clean off,—and then,
You know, they never grow again."

Mamma had scarcely turned her back,
The thumb was in, alack! alack!
The door flew open, in he ran,
The great, long, red-legged scissors-man.
Oh, children, see! the tailor's come
And caught our little Suck-a-Thumb.
Snip! snap! snip! the scissors go;
And Conrad cries out— "Oh! oh! oh!"

Snip! snap! snip! They go so fast,
That both his thumbs are off at last.
Mamma comes home; there Conrad stands,
And looks quite sad, and shows his hands;—
"Ah!" said mamma, "I knew he'd come
To naughty little Suck-a-Thumb."

From the German of Heinrich Hoffman [1798–1874]

WRITTEN IN A LITTLE LADY'S LITTLE ALBUM

Hearts good and true
Have wishes few
In narrow circles bounded,
And hope that lives
On what God gives
Is Christian hope well founded.

Small things are best;
Grief and unrest
To rank and wealth are given;
But little things
On little wings
Bear little souls to heaven.

Frederick William Faber [1814–1863]

MY LADY WIND

My Lady Wind, my Lady Wind,
Went round about the house to find
A chink to set her foot in;
She tried the keyhole in the door,
She tried the crevice in the floor,
And drove the chimney soot in.

And then one night when it was dark
She blew up such a tiny spark
That all the town was bothered;
From it she raised such flame and smoke
That many in great terror woke,
And many more were smothered.

And thus when once, my little dears,
A whisper reaches itching ears—
The same will come, you'll find:
Take my advice, restrain the tongue,
Remember what old nurse has sung
Of busy Lady Wind.

Unknown

TO A CHILD

Small service is true service while it lasts:
Of humblest friends, bright creature! scorn not one:
The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dewdrop from the sun.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

A FAREWELL

My fairest child, I have no song to give you;
No lark could pipe to skies so dull and gray:
Yet, if you will, one quiet hint I'll leave you
For every day.

I'll tell you how to sing a clearer carol
Than lark who hails the dawn on breezy down;
To earn yourself a purer poet's laurel
Than Shakespeare's crown.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;
Do noble things, not dream them, all day long:
And so make Life, and Death, and that For Ever
One grand sweet song.

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

RHYMES OF CHILDHOOD

REEDS OF INNOCENCE

Piping down the valleys wild,
  Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
  And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a lamb!"
  So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again;"
  So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
  Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"
So I sang the same again,
  While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
  In a book that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight;
  And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
  And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
  Every child may joy to hear.

William Blake [1757–1827]

THE WONDERFUL WORLD

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast,
World, you are beautifully dressed.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree—
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the tops of the hills.

You friendly Earth, how far do you go,
With the wheat-fields that nod and the rivers that flow,
With cities and gardens, and cliffs and isles,
And people upon you for thousands of miles?

Ah! you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all;
And yet, when I said my prayers to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say,
"You are more than the Earth, though you are such a dot:
You can love and think, and the Earth cannot!"

William Brighty Rands [1823–1882]

THE WORLD'S MUSIC

The world's a very happy place,
Where every child should dance and sing,
And always have a smiling face,
And never sulk for anything.

I waken when the morning's come,
And feel the air and light alive
With strange sweet music like the hum
Of bees about their busy hive.

The linnets play among the leaves
At hide-and-seek, and chirp and sing;
While, flashing to and from the eaves,
The swallows twitter on the wing.

The twigs that shake, and boughs that sway;
And tall old trees you could not climb;
And winds that come, but cannot stay,
Are gaily singing all the time.

From dawn to dark the old mill-wheel
Makes music, going round and round;
And dusty-white with flour and meal,
The miller whistles to its sound.

And if you listen to the rain
When leaves and birds and bees are dumb,
You hear it pattering on the pane
Like Andrew beating on his drum.

The coals beneath the kettle croon,
And clap their hands and dance in glee;
And even the kettle hums a tune
To tell you when it's time for tea.

The world is such a happy place,
That children, whether big or small,
Should always have a smiling face,
And never, never sulk at all.

Gabriel Setoun [1861–

A BOY'S SONG

WHERE the pools are bright and deep,
Where the gray trout lies asleep,
Up the river and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
There to track the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little sweet maidens from the play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That 's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play
Through the meadow, among the hay;
Up the water and over the lea,
That 's the way for Billy and me.

James Hogg [1770–1835]

GOING DOWN HILL ON A BICYCLE

A BOY'S SONG

With lifted feet, hands still,
I am poised, and down the hill
Dart, with heedful mind;
The air goes by in a wind.

Swifter and yet more swift,
Till the heart with a mighty lift
Makes the lungs laugh, the throat cry:—
"O bird, see; see, bird, I fly.

"Is this, is this your joy?
O bird, then I, though a boy,
For a golden moment share
Your feathery life in air!"

Say, heart, is there aught like this
In a world that is full of bliss?
'Tis more than skating, bound
Steel-shod to the level ground.

Speed slackens now, I float
Awhile in my airy boat;
Till, when the wheels scarce crawl,
My feet to the treadles fall.

Alas, that the longest hill
Must end in a vale; but still,
Who climbs with toil, wheresoe'er,
Shall find wings waiting there.

Henry Charles Beeching [1859–

PLAYGROUNDS

In summer I am very glad
We children are so small,
For we can see a thousand things
That men can't see at all.

They don't know much about the moss
And all the stones they pass:
They never lie and play among
The forests in the grass:

They walk about a long way off;
And, when we're at the sea,
Let father stoop as best he can
He can't find things like me.

But, when the snow is on the ground
And all the puddles freeze,
I wish that I were very tall,
High up above the trees.

Laurence Alma-Tadema [18 –

"WHO HAS SEEN THE WIND?"

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you:
But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I:
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

THE WIND'S SONG

O WINDS that blow across the sea,
  What is the story that you bring?
Leaves clap their hands on every tree
  And birds about their branches sing.

You sing to flowers and trees and birds
  Your sea-songs over all the land.
Could you not stay and whisper words
  A little child might understand?

The roses nod to hear you sing;
  But though I listen all the day,
You never tell me anything
  Of father's ship so far away.

Its masts are taller than the trees;
  Its sails are silver in the sun;
There's not a ship upon the seas
  So beautiful as father's one.

With wings spread out it flies so fast
  It leaves the waves all white with foam.
Just whisper to me, blowing past,
  If you have seen it sailing home.

I feel your breath upon my cheek,
  And in my hair, and on my brow.
Dear winds, if you could only speak,
  I know that you would tell me now.

My father's coming home, you'd say,
  With precious presents, one, two, three;
A shawl for mother, beads for May,
  And eggs and shells for Rob and me.

The winds sing songs where'er they roam;
  The leaves all clap their little hands;
For father's ship is coming home
  With wondrous things from foreign lands.

Gabriel Setoun [1861–

THE PIPER ON THE HILL

A CHILD'S SONG

THERE sits a piper on the hill
  Who pipes the livelong day,
And when he pipes both loud and shrill,
  The frightened people say:
"The wind, the wind is blowing up
  'Tis rising to a gale."
The women hurry to the shore
  To watch some distant sail.
The wind, the wind, the wind, the wind,
  Is blowing to a gale.

But when he pipes all sweet and low,
  The piper on the hill,
I hear the merry women go
  With laughter, loud and shrill:
"The wind, the wind is coming south
  'Twill blow a gentle day."
They gather on the meadow-land
  To toss the yellow hay.
The wind, the wind, the wind, the wind,
  Is blowing south to-day.

And in the morn, when winter comes,
  To keep the piper warm,
The little Angels shake their wings
  To make a feather storm:
"The snow, the snow has come at last!"
  The happy children call,
And "ring around" they dance in glee,
  And watch the snowflakes fall.
The wind, the wind, the wind, the wind,
  Has spread a snowy pall.

But when at night the piper plays,
  I have not any fear,
Because God's windows open wide
  The pretty tune to hear;

And when each crowding spirit looks,
From its star window-pane,
A watching mother may behold
Her little child again.
The wind, the wind, the wind, the wind,
May blow her home again.

Dora Sigerson Shorter [18 –

THE WIND AND THE MOON

Said the Wind to the Moon, "I will blow you out;
You stare
In the air
Like a ghost in a chair,
Always looking what I am about—
I hate to be watched; I'll blow you out."

The Wind blew hard, and out went the Moon.
So, deep
On a heap
Of clouds to sleep,
Down lay the Wind, and slumbered soon,
Muttering low, "I've done for that Moon."

He turned in his bed; she was there again!
On high
In the sky,
With her one ghost eye,
The Moon shone white and alive and plain.
Said the Wind, "I will blow you out again."

The Wind blew hard, and the Moon grew dim.
"With my sledge,
And my wedge,
I have knocked off her edge!
If only I blow right fierce and grim,
The creature will soon be dimmer than dim."

He blew and he blew, and she thinned to a thread.
"One puff
More 's enough
To blow her to snuff!
One good puff more where the last was bred,
And glimmer, glimmer, glum will go the thread."

He blew a great blast, and the thread was gone.
In the air
Nowhere
Was a moonbeam bare;
Far off and harmless the shy stars shone—
Sure and certain the Moon was gone!

The Wind he took to his revels once more;
On down,
In town,
Like a merry-mad clown,
He leaped and halloed with whistle and roar—
"What 's that?" The glimmering thread once more!

He flew in a rage—he danced and blew;
But in vain
Was the pain
Of his bursting brain;
For still the broader the Moon-scrap grew,
The broader he swelled his big cheeks and blew.

Slowly she grew—till she filled the night,
And shone
On her throne
In the sky alone,
A matchless, wonderful silvery light,
Radiant and lovely, the queen of the night.

Said the Wind: "What a marvel of power am I!
With my breath,
Good faith!
I blew her to death—
First blew her away right out of the sky—
Then blew her in; what strength have I!"

But the Moon she knew nothing about the affair;
For high
In the sky,
With her one white eye,
Motionless, miles above the air,
She had never heard the great Wind blare.

George Macdonald [1824–1905]

CHILD'S SONG IN SPRING

The silver birch is a dainty lady,
She wears a satin gown;
The elm tree makes the old churchyard shady,
She will not live in town.

The English oak is a sturdy fellow,
He gets his green coat late;
The willow is smart in a suit of yellow,
While brown the beech trees wait.

Such a gay green gown God gives the larches—
As green as He is good!
The hazels hold up their arms for arches
When Spring rides through the wood.

The chestnut's proud, and the lilac's pretty,
The poplar's gentle and tall,
But the plane tree's kind to the poor dull city—
I love him best of all!

Edith Nesbit [1858–

BABY SEED SONG

Little brown brother, oh! little brown brother,
Are you awake in the dark?
Here we lie cosily, close to each other:
Hark to the song of the lark—
"Waken!" the lark says, "waken and dress you;
Put on your green coats and gay,
Blue sky will shine on you, sunshine caress you—
Waken! 'tis morning—'tis May!"

Little brown brother, oh! little brown brother,
What kind of flower will you be?
I'll be a poppy—all white, like my mother;
Do be a poppy like me.
What! you're a sun-flower? How I shall miss you
When you're grown golden and high!
But I shall send all the bees up to kiss you;
Little brown brother, good-bye.

Edith Nesbit [1858–

LITTLE DANDELION

Gay little Dandelion
Lights up the meads,
Swings on her slender foot,
Telleth her beads,
Lists to the robin's note
Poured from above;
Wise little Dandelion
Asks not for love.

Cold lie the daisy banks
Clothed but in green,
Where, in the days agone,
Bright hues were seen.
Wild pinks are slumbering,
Violets delay;
True little Dandelion
Greeteth the May.

Brave little Dandelion!
Fast falls the snow,
Bending the daffodil's
Haughty head low.
Under that fleecy tent,
Careless of cold,
Blithe little Dandelion
Counteth her gold.

Meek little Dandelion
Groweth more fair,
Till dies the amber dew
Out from her hair.

High rides the thirsty sun,
Fiercely and high;
Faint little Dandelion
Closeth her eye.

Pale little Dandelion,
In her white shroud,
Heareth the angel-breeze
Call from the cloud;
Tiny plumes fluttering
Make no delay;
Little winged Dandelion
Soareth away.

Helen Barron Bostwick [1826–

LITTLE WHITE LILY

From "Within and Without"

Little White Lily sat by a stone,
Drooping and waiting till the sun shone.
Little White Lily sunshine has fed;
Little White Lily is lifting her head.

Little White Lily said: "It is good,
Little White Lily's clothing and food."
Little White Lily dressed like a bride!
Shining with whiteness, and crownèd beside!

Little White Lily drooping with pain,
Waiting and waiting for the wet rain,
Little White Lily holdeth her cup;
Rain is fast falling and filling it up.

Little White Lily said: "Good again,
When I am thirsty to have the nice rain.
Now I am stronger, now I am cool;
Heat cannot burn me, my veins are so full."

Little White Lily smells very sweet;
On her head sunshine, rain at her feet.
Thanks to the sunshine, thanks to the rain,
Little White Lily is happy again.

George Macdonald [1824–1905]

WISHING

RING-TING! I wish I were a Primrose,
A bright yellow Primrose, blowing in the Spring!
The stooping bough above me,
The wandering bee to love me,
The fern and moss to creep across,
And the Elm-tree for our King!

Nay,—stay! I wish I were an Elm-tree,
A great lofty Elm-tree, with green leaves gay!
The winds would set them dancing,
The sun and moonshine glance in,
The Birds would house among the boughs,
And sweetly sing!

O—no! I wish I were a Robin,
A Robin or a little Wren, everywhere to go;
Through forest, field, or garden,
And ask no leave or pardon,
Till Winter comes with icy thumbs
To ruffle up our wing.

Well—tell! Where should I fly to,
Where go to sleep in the dark wood or dell?
Before a day was over,
Home comes the rover,
For Mother's kiss,—sweeter this
Than any other thing!

William Allingham [1824–1889]

IN THE GARDEN

I SPIED beside the garden bed
A tiny lass of ours,
Who stopped and bent her sunny head
Above the red June flowers.

Pushing the leaves and thorns apart,
She singled out a rose,
And in its inmost crimson heart,
Enraptured, plunged her nose.

"O dear, dear rose, come, tell me true—
Come, tell me true," said she,
"If I smell just as sweet to you
As you smell sweet to me!"

Ernest Crosby [1856–1907]

THE GLADNESS OF NATURE

Is this a time to be cloudy and sad,
When our mother Nature laughs around;
When even the deep blue heavens look glad,
And gladness breathes from the blossoming ground?

There are notes of joy from the hang-bird and wren,
And the gossip of swallows through all the sky;
The ground-squirrel gaily chirps by his den,
And the wilding bee hums merrily by.

The clouds are at play in the azure space
And their shadows at play on the bright-green vale,
And here they stretch to the frolic chase,
And there they roll on the easy gale.

There's a dance of leaves in that aspen bower,
There's a titter of winds in that beechen tree,
There's a smile on the fruit, and a smile on the flower,
And a laugh from the brook that runs to the sea.

And look at the broad-faced sun, how he smiles
On the dewy earth that smiles in his ray,
On the leaping waters and gay young isles;
Ay, look, and he'll smile thy gloom away.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

GLAD DAY

Here's another day, dear,
Here's the sun again
Peeping in his pleasant way
Through the window pane.

Rise and let him in, dear,
Hail him "hip hurray!"
Now the fun will all begin.
Here's another day!

Down the coppice path, dear,
Through the dewy glade,
(When the Morning took her bath
What a splash she made!)
Up the wet wood-way, dear,
Under dripping green
Run to meet another day,
Brightest ever seen.

Mushrooms in the field, dear,
Show their silver gleam.
What a dainty crop they yield
Firm as clouted cream,
Cool as balls of snow, dear,
Sweet and fresh and round!
Ere the early dew can go
We must clear the ground.

Such a lot to do, dear,
Such a lot to see!
How we ever can get through
Fairly puzzles me.
Hurry up and out, dear,
Then—away! away!
In and out and round about,
Here's another day!

W. Graham Robertson [1867–

THE TIGER

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright,
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the Lamb, make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright,
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake [1757–1827]

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION

Do you ask what the birds say? The Sparrow, the Dove,
The Linnet and Thrush say, "I love and I love!"
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong;
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back together.
But the Lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings, and for ever sings he—
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me!"

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

HOW THE LEAVES CAME DOWN

I'LL tell you how the leaves came down.
The great Tree to his children said:
"You're getting sleepy, Yellow and Brown,
Yes, very sleepy, little Red.
It is quite time to go to bed."

"Ah!" begged each silly, pouting leaf,
"Let us a little longer stay;
Dear Father Tree, behold our grief!
'Tis such a very pleasant day,
We do not want to go away."

So, just for one more merry day
To the great Tree the leaflets clung,
Frolicked and danced, and had their way,
Upon the autumn breezes swung,
Whispering all their sports among—

"Perhaps the great Tree will forget,
And let us stay until the spring,
If we all beg, and coax, and fret."
But the great Tree did no such thing;
He smiled to hear them whispering.

"Come, children, all to bed," he cried;
And ere the leaves could urge their prayer,
He shook his head, and far and wide,
Fluttering and rustling everywhere,
Down sped the leaflets through the air.

I saw them; on the ground they lay,
Golden and red, a huddled swarm,
Waiting till one from far away,
White bedclothes heaped upon her arm,
Should come to wrap them safe and warm.

The great bare Tree looked down and smiled.
"Goodnight, dear little leaves," he said.
And from below each sleepy child
Replied, "Goodnight," and murmured,
"It is *so* nice to go to bed!"

Susan Coolidge [1845-1905]

A LEGEND OF THE NORTHLAND

Away, away in the Northland,
Where the hours of the day are few,
And the nights are so long in winter
That they cannot sleep them through;

Where they harness the swift reindeer
To the sledges, when it snows;
And the children look like bear's cubs
In their funny, furry clothes:

They tell them a curious story—
I don't believe 'tis true;
And yet you may learn a lesson
If I tell the tale to you.

Once, when the good Saint Peter
Lived in the world below,
And walked about it, preaching,
Just as he did, you know,

He came to the door of a cottage,
In traveling round the earth,
Where a little woman was making cakes,
And baking them on the hearth;

And being faint with fasting,
For the day was almost done,
He asked her, from her store of cakes,
To give him a single one.

So she made a very little cake,
But as it baking lay,
She looked at it, and thought it seemed
Too large to give away.

Therefore she kneaded another,
And still a smaller one;
But it looked, when she turned it over,
As large as the first had done.

Then she took a tiny scrap of dough,
And rolled and rolled it flat;
And baked it thin as a wafer—
But she couldn't part with that.

For she said, "My cakes that seem too small
When I eat of them myself,
Are yet too large to give away."
So she put them on the shelf.

Then good Saint Peter grew angry,
For he was hungry and faint;
And surely such a woman
Was enough to provoke a saint.

And he said, "You are far too selfish
To dwell in a human form,
To have both food and shelter,
And fire to keep you warm.

"Now, you shall build as the birds do,
And shall get your scanty food
By boring, and boring, and boring,
All day in the hard, dry wood."

Then up she went through the chimney,
Never speaking a word,
And out of the top flew a woodpecker,
For she was changed to a bird.

She had a scarlet cap on her head,
And that was left the same,
But all the rest of her clothes were burned
Black as a coal in the flame.

And every country school-boy
Has seen her in the wood,
Where she lives in the trees till this very day,
Boring and boring for food.

And this is the lesson she teaches:
Live not for yourself alone,
Lest the needs you will not pity
Shall one day be your own.

Give plenty of what is given to you,
  Listen to pity's call;
Don't think the little you give is great,
  And the much you get is small.

Now, my little boy, remember that,
  And try to be kind and good,
When you see the woodpecker's sooty dress,
  And see her scarlet hood.

You mayn't be changed to a bird though you live
  As selfishly as you can;
But you will be changed to a smaller thing—
  A mean and selfish man.

Phœbe Cary [1824–1871]

THE CRICKET'S STORY

The high and mighty lord of Glendare,
The owner of acres both broad and fair,
Searched, once on a time, his vast domains,
His deep, green forest, and yellow plains,
For some rare singer, to make complete
The studied charms of his country-seat;
But found, for all his pains and labors,
No sweeter songster than had his neighbors.

Ah, what shall my lord of the manor do?
He pondered the day and the whole night through.
He called on the gentry of hill-top and dale;
And at last on Madame the Nightingale,—
Inviting, in his majestical way,
Her pupils to sing at his grand soiree,
That perchance among them my lord might find
Some singer to whom his heart inclined.
What wonder, then, when the evening came,
And the castle gardens were all aflame
With the many curious lights that hung
O'er the ivied porches, and flared among
The grand old trees and the banners proud,
That many a heart beat high and loud,

While the famous choir of Glendare Bog,
Established and led by the Brothers Frog,
Sat thrumming as hoarsely as they were able,
In front of the manager's mushroom table!

The overture closed with a crash—then, hark!
Across the stage comes the sweet-voiced Lark.
She daintily sways, with an airy grace,
And flutters a bit of gossamer lace,
While the leafy alcove echoes and thrills
With her liquid runs and lingering trills.
Miss Goldfinch came next, in her satin gown,
And shaking her feathery flounces down,
With much expression and feeling sung
Some "Oh's" and "Ah's" in a foreign tongue;
While to give the affair a classic tone,
Miss Katydid rendered a song of her own,
In which each line closed as it had begun,
With some wonderful deed which she had done.
Then the Misses Sparrow, so prim and set,
Twittered and chirped through a long duet;
And poor little Wren, who tried with a will,
But who couldn't tell "Heber" from "Ortonville,"
Unconscious of sarcasm, piped away
And courtesied low o'er a huge bouquet
Of crimson clover-heads, culled by the dozen,
By some brown-coated, plebeian cousin.

But you should have heard the red Robin sing
His English ballad, "Come, beautiful Spring!"
And Master Owlet's melodious tune,
"O, meet me under the silvery moon!"
Then, as flighty Miss Humming-bird didn't care
To sing for the high and mighty Glendare,
The close of the evening's performance fell
To the fair young Nightingale, Mademoiselle.
Ah! the wealth of each wonderful note
That came from the depths of her tiny throat!
She carolled, she trilled, and she held her breath,
Till she seemed to hang at the point of death:

She ran the chromatics through every key,
And ended triumphant on upper C;
Airing the graces her mother had taught her
In a manner quite worthy of Madame's daughter.

But his lordship glared down the leafy aisle
With never so much as a nod or smile,
Till, out in the shade of a blackberry thicket,
He all of a sudden spied little Miss Cricket;
And, roused from his gloom, like an angry bat,
He sternly demanded, "Who is that?"
"Miss Cricket, my lord, may it please you so,
A charity scholar—ahem!—you know—
Quite worthy, of course, but we couldn't bring"—
Thundered His Mightiness, "Let her sing!"
The Nightingale opened her little eyes
Extremely wide in her blank surprise;
But catching a glimpse of his lordship's rage,
Led little Miss Cricket upon the stage,
Where she modestly sang, in her simple measures,
Of "Home, sweet Home," and its humble pleasures.
And the lord of Glendare cried out in his glee,
"This little Miss Cricket shall sing for me!"

Of course, of comment there was no need;
But the world said, "Really!" and "Ah, indeed!"
Yet, notwithstanding, we find it true
As his lordship does will the neighbors do;
So this is the way, as the legends tell,
In the very beginning it befell
That the Crickets came, in the evening's gloom,
To sing at our hearths of "Home, sweet Home."

Emma Huntington Nason [1845–

THE SINGING-LESSON

A NIGHTINGALE made a mistake;
  She sang a few notes out of tune;
Her heart was ready to break,
  And she hid away from the moon.

She wrung her claws, poor thing!
But was far too proud to weep;
She tucked her head under her wing,
And pretended to be asleep.

A lark, arm in arm with a thrush,
Came sauntering up to the place;
The nightingale felt herself blush,
Though feathers hid her face.
She knew they had heard her song,
She felt them snicker and sneer;
She thought that life was too long,
And wished she could skip a year.

"Oh, Nightingale," cooed a dove—
"Oh, Nightingale, what's the use?
You bird of beauty and love,
Why behave like a goose?
Don't skulk away from our sight,
Like a common, contemptible fowl;
You bird of joy and delight,
Why behave like an owl?

"Only think of all you have done,
Only think of all you can do;
A false note is really fun
From such a bird as you!
Lift up your proud little crest,
Open your musical beak;
Other birds have to do their best—
You need only to speak."

The nightingale shyly took
Her head from under her wing,
And, giving the dove a look,
Straightway began to sing.
There was never a bird could pass;
The night was divinely calm,
And the people stood on the grass
To hear that wonderful psalm.

The nightingale did not care;
She only sang to the skies;
Her song ascended there,
And there she fixed her eyes.
The people that stood below
She knew but little about;
And this tale has a moral, I know,
If you'll try to find it out.

Jean Ingelow [1820–1897]

CHANTICLEER

Of all the birds from East to West
That tuneful are and dear,
I love that farmyard bird the best,
They call him Chanticleer.

Gold plume and copper plume,
Comb of scarlet gay;
'Tis he that scatters night and gloom,
And whistles back the day!

He is the sun's brave herald
That, ringing his blithe horn,
Calls round a world dew-pearled
The heavenly airs of morn.

O clear gold, shrill and bold!
He calls through creeping mist
The mountains from the night and cold
To rose and amethyst.

He sets the birds to singing,
And calls the flowers to rise;
The morning cometh, bringing
Sweet sleep to heavy eyes.

Gold plume and silver plume,
Comb of coral gay;
'Tis he packs off the night and gloom,
And summons home the day!

Black fear he sends it flying,
  Black care he drives afar;
And creeping shadows sighing
  Before the morning star.

The birds of all the forest
  Have dear and pleasant cheer,
But yet I hold the rarest
  The farmyard Chanticleer.

Red cock or black cock,
  Gold cock or white,
The flower of all the feathered flock,
  He whistles back the light!

Katharine Tynan [1861–

"WHAT DOES LITTLE BIRDIE SAY?"

From "Sea Dreams"

What does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
Let me fly, says little birdie,
Mother, let me fly away.
Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
Let me rise and fly away.
Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger,
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

NURSE'S SONG

When the voices of children are heard on the green
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast,
And everything else is still.

"Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
And the dews of the night arise;
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away
Till the morning appears in the skies."

"No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,
And we cannot go to sleep;
Besides in the sky the little birds fly,
And the hills are all covered with sheep."

"Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,
And then go home to bed."
The little ones leaped and shouted and laughed;
And all the hills echoèd.

William Blake [1757–1827]

JACK FROST

The door was shut, as doors should be,
Before you went to bed last night;
Yet Jack Frost has got in, you see,
And left your window silver white.

He must have waited till you slept;
And not a single word he spoke,
But pencilled o'er the panes and crept
Away again before you woke.

And now you cannot see the hills
Nor fields that stretch beyond the lane;
But there are fairer things than these
His fingers traced on every pane.

Rocks and castles towering high;
Hills and dales, and streams and fields;
And knights in armor riding by,
With nodding plumes and shining shields.

And here are little boats, and there
Big ships with sails spread to the breeze;
And yonder, palm trees waving fair
On islands set in silver seas.

And butterflies with gauzy wings;
And herds of cows and flocks of sheep;
And fruit and flowers and all the things
You see when you are sound asleep.

For creeping softly underneath
The door when all the lights are out,
Jack Frost takes every breath you breathe,
And knows the things you think about.

He paints them on the window pane
In fairy lines with frozen steam;
And when you wake you see again
The lovely things you saw in dream.

Gabriel Setoun [1861–

OCTOBER'S PARTY

October gave a party;
The leaves by hundreds came—
The Chestnuts, Oaks, and Maples,
And leaves of every name.
The Sunshine spread a carpet,
And everything was grand,
Miss Weather led the dancing,
Professor Wind the band.

The Chestnuts came in yellow,
The Oaks in crimson dressed;
The lovely Misses Maple
In scarlet looked their best;

All balanced to their partners,
And gaily fluttered by;
The sight was like a rainbow
New fallen from the sky.

Then, in the rustic hollow,
At hide-and-seek they played,
The party closed at sundown,
And everybody stayed.
Professor Wind played louder;
They flew along the ground;
And then the party ended
In jolly "hands around."

George Cooper [1840–

THE SHEPHERD

How sweet is the Shepherd's sweet lot!
From the morn to the evening he strays;
He shall follow his sheep all the day,
And his tongue shall be fillèd with praise.
For he hears the lamb's innocent call,
And he hears the ewe's tender reply;
He is watchful, while they are in peace,
For they know when their Shepherd is nigh.

William Blake [1757–1827]

NIKOLINA

O TELL me, little children, have you seen her—
The tiny maid from Norway, Nikolina?
O, her eyes are blue as cornflowers, mid the corn,
And her cheeks are rosy red as skies of morn!

Nikolina! swift she turns if any call her,
As she stands among the poppies, hardly taller,
Breaking off their scarlet cups for you,
With spikes of slender larkspur, burning blue.

In her little garden many a flower is growing—
Red, gold, and purple in the soft wind blowing,
But the child that stands amid the blossoms gay
Is sweeter, quainter, brighter e'en than they.

Celia Thaxter [1835–1894]

LITTLE GUSTAVA

Little Gustava sits in the sun,
Safe in the porch, and the little drops run
From the icicles under the eaves so fast,
For the bright spring sun shines warm at last,
And glad is little Gustava.

She wears a quaint little scarlet cap,
And a little green bowl she holds in her lap,
Filled with bread and milk to the brim,
And a wreath of marigolds round the rim:
"Ha! ha!" laughs little Gustava.

Up comes her little gray coaxing cat
With her little pink nose, and she mews, "What's that?"
Gustava feeds her,—she begs for more;
And a little brown hen walks in at the door:
"Good day!" cries little Gustava.

She scatters crumbs for the little brown hen.
There comes a rush and a flutter, and then
Down fly her little white doves so sweet,
With their snowy wings and crimson feet:
"Welcome!" cries little Gustava.

So dainty and eager they pick up the crumbs.
But who is this through the doorway comes?
Little Scotch terrier, little dog Rags,
Looks in her face, and his funny tail wags:
"Ha! ha!" laughs little Gustava.

"You want some breakfast too?" and down
She sets her bowl on the brick floor brown;
And little dog Rags drinks up her milk,
While she strokes his shaggy locks like silk:
"Dear Rags!" says little Gustava.

Waiting without stood sparrow and crow,
Cooling their feet in the melting snow:
"Won't you come in, good folk?" she cried.
But they were too bashful, and stood outside
Though "Pray come in!" cried Gustava.

So the last she threw them, and knelt on the mat
With doves and biddy and dog and cat.
And her mother came to the open house-door:
"Dear little daughter, I bring you some more.
My merry little Gustava!"

Kitty and terrier, biddy and doves,
All things harmless Gustava loves.
The shy, kind creatures 'tis joy to feed,
And oh, her breakfast is sweet indeed
To happy little Gustava!

Celia Thaxter [1835–1894]

PRINCE TATTERS

Little Prince Tatters has lost his cap!
Over the hedge he threw it;
Into the river it fell "kerslap!"
Stupid old thing to do it!
Now Mother may sigh and Nurse may fume
For the gay little cap with its eagle plume.
"One cannot be thinking all day of such matters!
Trifles are trifles!" says little Prince Tatters.

Little Prince Tatters has lost his coat!
Playing, he did not need it;
"Left it *right there*, by the nanny-goat,
And nobody never seed it!"
Now Mother and Nurse may search till night
For the little new coat with its buttons bright;
But—"Coat-sleeves or shirt-sleeves, how little it matters!
Trifles are trifles!" says little Prince Tatters.

Little Prince Tatters has LOST HIS BALL!
Rolled away down the street!
Somebody'll *have to find it*, that's all,
Before he can sleep or eat.
Now raise the neighborhood, quickly, do!
And send for the crier and constable too!
"Trifles are trifles; but serious matters,
They must be *seen to*," says little Prince Tatters.

Laura E. Richards [1850–

THE LITTLE BLACK BOY

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but oh, my soul is white!
White as an angel is the English child,
But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
And, sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissèd me,
And, pointing to the East, began to say:

"Look on the rising sun,—there God does live,
And gives His light, and gives His heat away;
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

"And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Are but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

"For, when our souls have learned the heat to bear,
The cloud will vanish, we shall hear His voice,
Saying: 'Come out from the grove, My love and care,
And round My golden tent like lambs rejoice.'"

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd me;
And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black, and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our Father's knee;
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him, and he will then love me.

William Blake [1757–1827]

THE BLIND BOY

O say what is that thing called Light,
  Which I must ne'er enjoy;
What are the blessings of the sight,
  O tell your poor blind boy!

You talk of wondrous things you see,
  You say the sun shines bright;
I feel him warm, but how can he,
  Or make it day or night?

My day or night myself I make
  Whene'er I sleep or play;
And could I ever keep awake
  With me 'twere always day.

With heavy sighs I often hear
  You mourn my hapless woe;
But sure with patience I can bear
  A loss I ne'er can know.

Then let not what I cannot have
  My cheer of mind destroy:
Whilst thus I sing, I am a king,
  Although a poor blind boy.

Colley Cibber [1671–1757]

THE WITCH IN THE GLASS

"My mother says I must not pass
  Too near that glass;
She is afraid that I will see
A little witch that looks like me,
With a red, red mouth, to whisper low
The very thing I should not know!"

Alack for all your mother's care!
A bird of the air,
A wistful wind, or (I suppose
Sent by some hapless boy) a rose,
With breath too sweet, will whisper low
The very thing you should not know!

Sarah M. B. Piatt [1836–

MY SHADOW

I HAVE a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an India-rubber ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE

WHEN I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes, through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow-hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

THE LAND OF STORY-BOOKS

At evening when the lamp is lit,
Around the fire my parents sit;
They sit at home and talk and sing,
And do not play at anything.

Now, with my little gun, I crawl
All in the dark along the wall,
And follow round the forest track
Away behind the sofa back.

There, in the night, where none can spy,
All in my hunter's camp I lie,
And play at books that I have read
Till it is time to go to bed.

These are the hills, these are the woods,
These are my starry solitudes;
And there the river by whose brink
The roaring lions come to drink.

I see the others far away
As if in firelit camp they lay,
And I, like to an Indian scout,
Around their party prowled about.

So, when my nurse comes in for me,
Home I return across the sea,
And go to bed with backward looks
At my dear land of Story-books.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

THE GARDENER

The gardener does not love to talk,
He makes me keep the gravel walk;
And when he puts his tools away,
He locks the door and takes the key.

Away behind the currant row
Where no one else but cook may go,
Far in the plots, I see him dig,
Old and serious, brown and big.

He digs the flowers, green, red, and blue,
Nor wishes to be spoken to.
He digs the flowers and cuts the hay,
And never seems to want to play.

Silly gardener! summer goes,
And winter comes with pinching toes,
When in the garden bare and brown
You must lay your barrow down.

Well now, and while the summer stays,
To profit by these garden days
O how much wiser you would be
To play at Indian wars with me!

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

FOREIGN LANDS

Up into the cherry tree
Who should climb but little me?
I held the trunk with both my hands
And looked abroad on foreign lands.

I saw the next door garden lie,
Adorned with flowers, before my eye,
And many pleasant places more
That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass
And be the sky's blue looking-glass;
The dusty roads go up and down
With people tramping in to town.

If I could find a higher tree,
Farther and farther I should see,
To where the grown-up river slips
Into the sea among the ships;

To where the roads on either hand
Lead onward into fairy land,
Where all the children dine at five,
And all the playthings come alive.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

MY BED IS A BOAT

My bed is like a little boat;
Nurse helps me in when I embark;
She girds me in my sailor's coat
And starts me in the dark.

At night, I go on board and say
Good night to all my friends on shore;
I shut my eyes and sail away
And see and hear no more.

And sometimes things to bed I take,
As prudent sailors have to do;
Perhaps a slice of wedding-cake,
Perhaps a toy or two.

All night across the dark we steer;
But when the day returns at last,
Safe in my room, beside the pier,
I find my vessel fast.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

THE PEDDLER'S CARAVAN

I WISH I lived in a caravan,
With a horse to drive, like a peddler-man!
Where he comes from nobody knows,
Or where he goes to, but on he goes!

His caravan has windows two,
And a chimney of tin, that the smoke comes through;
He has a wife, with a baby brown,
And they go riding from town to town.

Chairs to mend, and delf to sell!
He clashes the basins like a bell;
Tea-trays, baskets ranged in order,
Plates, with alphabets round the border!

The roads are brown, and the sea is green,
But his house is like a bathing-machine;
The world is round, and he can ride,
Rumble and slash, to the other side!

With the peddler-man I should like to roam,
And write a book when I came home;
All the people would read my book,
Just like the Travels of Captain Cook!

William Brighty Rands [1823–1882]

MR. COGGS

A WATCH will tell the time of day,
Or tell it nearly, any way,
Excepting when it's overwound,
Or when you drop it on the ground.

If any of our watches stop,
We haste to Mr. Coggs's shop;
For though to scold us he pretends,
He's quite among our special friends.

He fits a dice-box in his eye,
And takes a long and thoughtful spy,
And prods the wheels, and says, "Dear, dear!
More carelessness, I greatly fear."

And then he lays the dice-box down
And frowns a most prodigious frown;
But if we ask him what's the time,
He'll make his gold repeater chime.

Edward Verrall Lucas [1868–

THE BUILDING OF THE NEST

They'll come again to the apple tree—
Robin and all the rest—
When the orchard branches are fair to see,
In the snow of the blossoms dressed;
And the prettiest thing in the world will be
The building of the nest.

Weaving it well, so round and trim,
Hollowing it with care,—
Nothing too far away for him,
Nothing for her too fair,—
Hanging it safe on the topmost limb,
Their castle in the air.

Ah! mother bird, you'll have weary days
When the eggs are under your breast,
And shadow may darken the dancing rays
When the wee ones leave the nest;
But they'll find their wings in a glad amaze,
And God will see to the rest.

So come to the trees with all your train
When the apple blossoms blow;
Through the April shimmer of sun and rain,
Go flying to and fro;
And sing to our hearts as we watch again
Your fairy building grow.

Margaret Sangster [1838-1912]

"THERE WAS A JOLLY MILLER"

From "Love in a Village"

There was a jolly miller once lived on the river Dee;
He danced and sang from morn till night, no lark so blithe as he;
And this the burden of his song forever used to be:—
"I care for nobody, no not I, if nobody cares for me.

"I live by my mill, God bless her! she's kindred, child, and wife;
I would not change my station for any other in life;
No lawyer, surgeon, or doctor e'er had a groat from me;
I care for nobody, no not I, if nobody cares for me."

When spring begins his merry career, oh, how his heart grows gay;
No summer's drought alarms his fear, nor winter's cold decay;
No foresight mars the miller's joy, who's wont to sing and say,
"Let others toil from year to year, I live from day to day."

Thus, like the miller, bold and free, let us rejoice and sing;
The days of youth are made for glee, and time is on the wing;
This song shall pass from me to thee, along the jovial ring;
Let heart and voice and all agree to say, "Long live the king."

Isaac Bickerstaff [? –1812?]

ONE AND ONE

Two little girls are better than one,
Two little boys can double the fun,
Two little birds can build a fine nest,
Two little arms can love mother best.
Two little ponies must go to a span;
Two little pockets has my little man;
Two little eyes to open and close,
Two little ears and one little nose,
Two little elbows, dimpled and sweet,
Two little shoes on two little feet,
Two little lips and one little chin,
Two little cheeks with a rose shut in;
Two little shoulders, chubby and strong,
Two little legs running all day long.
Two little prayers does my darling say,
Twice does he kneel by my side each day,
Two little folded hands, soft and brown,
Two little eyelids cast meekly down,

And two little angels guard him in bed,
"One at the foot, and one at the head."

Mary Mapes Dodge [1838–1905]

A NURSERY SONG

Oh, Peterkin Pout and Gregory Grout
Are two little goblins black.
Full oft from my house I've driven them out,
But somehow they still come back.

They clamber up to the baby's mouth,
And pull the corners down;
They perch aloft on the baby's brow,
And twist it into a frown.

Chorus:

And one says "Must!" and t'other says "Can't!"
And one says "Shall!" and t'other says "Shan't!"
Oh, Peterkin Pout and Gregory Grout,
I pray you now from my house keep out!

But Samuel Smile and Lemuel Laugh
Are two little fairies bright;
They're always ready for fun and chaff,
And sunshine is their delight.

And when they creep into Baby's eyes,
Why, there the sunbeams are;
And when they peep through her rosy lips,
Her laughter rings near and far.

Chorus:

And one says "Please!" and t'other says "Do!"
And both together say "I love you!"
So, Lemuel Laugh and Samuel Smile,
Come in, my dears, and tarry awhile!

Laura E. Richards [1850–

A MORTIFYING MISTAKE

I STUDIED my tables over and over, and backward and forward, too;
But I couldn't remember six times nine, and I didn't know what to do,
Till sister told me to play with my doll, and not to bother my head.
"If you call her 'Fifty-four' for a while, you'll learn it by heart," she said.

So I took my favorite, Mary Ann (though I thought 'twas a dreadful shame
To give such a perfectly lovely child such a perfectly horrid name),
And I called her my dear little "Fifty-four" a hundred times, till I knew
The answer of six times nine as well as the answer of two times two.

Next day Elizabeth Wigglesworth, who always acts so proud,
Said, "Six times nine is fifty-two," and I nearly laughed aloud!
But I wished I hadn't when teacher said, "Now, Dorothy, tell if you can."
For I thought of my doll and—sakes alive!—I answered, "*Mary Ann!*"

Anna Maria Pratt [18 –

THE RAGGEDY MAN

O THE Raggedy Man! He works fer Pa;
An' he's the goodest man ever you saw!
He comes to our house every day,
An' waters the horses, an' feeds 'em hay;
An' he opens the shed—an' we all ist laugh
When he drives out our little old wobble-ly calf;

An' nen—ef our hired girl says he can—
He milks the cow fer 'Lizabuth Ann.—
Ain't he a' awful good Raggedy Man?
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

W'y, the Raggedy Man— he's ist so good
He splits the kindlin' an' chops the wood;
An' nen he spades in our garden, too,
An' does most things 'at boys can't do.—
He clumbed clean up in our big tree
An' shooked a' apple down fer me—
An' nother'n', too, fer 'Lizabuth Ann—
An' nother'n', too, fer the Raggedy Man.—
Ain't he a' awful kind Raggedy Man?
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

An' the Raggedy Man, he knows most rhymes
An' tells 'em, ef I be good, sometimes:
Knows 'bout Giunts, an' Griffuns, an' Elves,
An' the Squidgicum-Squees 'at swallers therselves!
An', wite by the pump in our pasture-lot,
He showed me the hole 'at the Wunks is got,
'At lives 'way deep in the ground, an' can
Turn into me, er 'Lizabuth Ann!
Er Ma, er Pa, er the Raggedy Man!
Ain't he a funny old Raggedy Man?
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

The Raggedy Man—one time when he
Was makin' a little bow-n'-orry fer me,
Says, "When *you're* big like your Pa is,
Air you go' to keep a fine store like his—
An' be a rich merchunt—an' wear fine clothes?—
Er what *air* you go' to be, goodness knows?"
An' nen he laughed at 'Lizabuth Ann,
An' I says "'M go' to be a Raggedy Man!—
I'm ist go' to be a nice Raggedy Man!"
Raggedy! Raggedy! Raggedy Man!

James Whitcomb Riley [1852–1916]

THE MAN IN THE MOON

Said the Raggedy Man, on a hot afternoon,
"My!
Sakes!
What a lot o' mistakes
Some little folks makes on The Man in the Moon!
But people that's b'en up to *see* him, like *me*,
And calls on him frequent and intimutly,
Might drop a few facts that would interest you
Clean!
Through!—
If you wanted 'em to—
Some *actual* facts that might interest you!

"O The Man in the Moon has a crick in his back;
Whee!
Whimm!
Ain't you sorry for him?
And a mole on his nose that is purple and black;
And his eyes are so weak that they water and run
If he dares to *dream* even he looks at the sun,—
So he jes' dreams of stars, as the doctors advise—
My!
Eyes!
But isn't he wise—
To jes' dream of stars, as the doctors advise?

"And The Man in the Moon has a boil on his ear,—
Whee!
Whing!
What a singular thing!
I know! but these facts are authentic, my dear,—
There's a boil on his ear; and a corn on his chin,—
He calls it a dimple—but dimples stick in—
Yet it might be a dimple turned over, you know!
Whang!
Ho!
Why, certainly so!—
It might be a dimple turned over, you know!

"And The Man in the Moon has a rheumatic knee,—
Gee!
Whizz!
What a pity that is!
And his toes have worked round where his heels ought to be.
So whenever he wants to go North he goes *South*,
And comes back with porridge crumbs all round his mouth,
And he brushes them off with a Japanese fan.
Whing!
Whann!
What a marvelous man!
What a very remarkably marvelous man!

"And The Man in the Moon," sighed the Raggedy Man,
"Gits!
So!
Sullonesome, you know,—
Up there by hisse'f sence creation began!—
That when I call on him and then come away,
He grabs me and holds me and begs me to stay,—
Till—*Well!* if it wasn't fer *Jimmy-cum-Jim*,
Dadd!
Limb!
I'd go pardners with him—
Jes' jump my job here and be pardners with *him!*"

James Whitcomb Riley [1852–1916]

LITTLE ORPHANT ANNIE

Little Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay,
An' wash the cups an' saucers up, an' brush the crumbs away,
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth, an' sweep,
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn her board an'-keep;

An' all us other children, when the supper things is done,
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun
A-list'nin' to the witch-tales 'at Annie tells about,
An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

Onc't they was a little boy wouldn't say his prayers—
An' when he went to bed at night, away up stairs,
His Mammy heered him holler, an' his Daddy heered him bawl,
An' when they turn't the kivvers down, he wasn't there at all!
An' they seeked him in the rafter-room, an' cubby-hole, an' press,
An' seeked him up the chimbly-flue, an' ever'wheres, I guess;
But all they ever found was thist his pants an' roundabout:
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin,
An' make fun of ever' one, an' all her blood-an'-kin;
An' onc't when they was "company," an' ole folks was there,
She mocked 'em an' shocked 'em, an' said she didn't care!
An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to run an' hide,
They was two great big Black Things a-standin' by her side,
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore she knowed what she's about!
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is blue,
An' the lamp-wick sputters, an' the wind goes *woo-oo!*
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is gray,
An' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched away,—
You better mind yer parents, an' yer teachers fond and
dear,
An' churish them 'at loves you, an' dry the orphant's tear,
An' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at clusters all about,
Er the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

James Whitcomb Riley [1852–1916]

OUR HIRED GIRL

Our hired girl, she's 'Lizabuth Ann;
An' she can cook best things to eat!
She ist puts dough in our pie-pan,
An' pours in somepin' 'at's good an' sweet;
An' nen she salts it all on top
With cinnamon; an' nen she'll stop
An' stoop an' slide it, ist as slow,
In th' old cook-stove, so's 'twon't slop
An' git all spilled; nen bakes it, so
It's custard-pie, first thing you know!
An' nen she'll say,
"Clear out o' my way!
They's time fer work, an' time fer play!
Take yer dough, an' run, child, run!
Er I cain't git no cookin' done!"

When our hired girl 'tends like she's mad,
An' says folks got to walk the chalk
When *she's* around, er wisht they had!
I play out on our porch an' talk
To Th' Raggedy Man 'at mows our lawn;
An' he says, "*Whew!*" an' nen leans on
His old crook-scythe, and blinks his eyes,
An' sniffs all 'round an' says, "I swawn!

Ef my old nose don't tell me lies,
It 'pears like I smell custard-pies!"
An' nen *he'll* say,
"Clear out o' my way!
They's time fer work, an' time fer play!
Take yer dough, an' run, child, run!
Er she cain't git no cookin' done!"

Wunst our hired girl, when she
Got the supper, an' we all et,
An' it wuz night, an' Ma an' me
An' Pa went wher' the "Social" met,—
An' nen when we come home, an' see
A light in the kitchen door, an' we
Heerd a maccordeun, Pa says, "Lan'-
O'-Gracious, who can *her* beau be?"
An' I marched in, an' 'Lizabuth Ann
Wuz parchin' corn fer The Raggedy Man!
Better say,
"Clear out o' the way!
They's time fer work, an' time fer play!
Take the hint, an' run, child, run!
Er we cain't git no courtin' done!"

James Whitcomb Riley [1852–1916]

SEEIN' THINGS

I AIN'T afeard uv snakes, or toads, or bugs, or worms, or mice,
An' things 'at girls are skeered uv I think are awful nice!
I'm pretty brave, I guess; an' yet I hate to go to bed,
For, when I'm tucked up warm an' snug an' when my prayers are said,
Mother tells me "Happy Dreams!" an' takes away the light,
An' leaves me lyin' all alone an' seein' things at night!

Sometimes they're in the corner, sometimes they're by the door,
Sometimes they're all a-standin' in the middle uv the floor;
Sometimes they are a-sittin' down, sometimes they're walkin' round
So softly and so creepylike they never make a sound!

Sometimes they are as black as ink, an' other times they're white—
But the color ain't no difference when you see things at night!

Once, when I licked a feller 'at had just moved on our street,
An' father sent me up to bed without a bite to eat,
I woke up in the dark an' saw things standin' in a row,
A-lookin' at me cross-eyed an' p'intin' at me—so!
Oh, my! I wuz so skeered that time I never slep' a mite—
It's almost alluz when I'm bad I see things at night!

Lucky thing I ain't a girl, or I'd be skeered to death!
Bein' I'm a boy, I duck my head an' hold my breath;
An' I am, oh, *so* sorry I'm a naughty boy, an' then
I promise to be better an' I say my prayers again!
Gran'ma tells me that's the only way to make it right
When a feller has been wicked an' sees things at night!

An' so, when other naughty boys would coax me into sin,
I try to skwush the Tempter's voice 'at urges me within;
An' when they's pie for supper, or cakes 'at's big an' nice,
I want to—but I do not pass my plate f'r them things twice!
No, ruther let Starvation wipe me slowly out o' sight
Than I should keep a-livin' on an' seein' things at night!

Eugene Field [1850–1895]

THE DUEL

The gingham dog and the calico cat
Side by side on the table sat;
'Twas half past twelve, and (what do you think!)
Nor one nor t'other had slept a wink!
The old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate
Appeared to know as sure as fate
There was going to be a terrible spat.
(*I wasn't there: I simply state*
What was told to me by the Chinese plate!)

The gingham dog went, "Bow-wow-wow!"
And the calico cat replied, "Mee-ow!"
The air was littered, an hour or so,

With bits of gingham and calico,
While the old Dutch clock in the chimney-place
Up with its hands before its face,
For it always dreaded a family row!
(*Now mind; I'm only telling you*
What the old Dutch clock declares is true!)

The Chinese plate looked very blue,
And wailed, "Oh, dear! what shall we do!"
But the gingham dog and the calico cat
Wallowed this way and tumbled that,
Employing every tooth and claw
In the awfullest way you ever saw—
And, oh! how the gingham and calico flew!
(*Don't fancy I exaggerate—*
I got my news from the Chinese plate!)

Next morning, where the two had sat
They found no trace of dog or cat:
And some folks think unto this day
That burglars stole that pair away!
But the truth about the cat and pup
Is this: they ate each other up!
Now what do you really think of that!
(*The old Dutch clock it told me so,*
And that is how I came to know.)

Eugene Field [1850–1895]

HOLY THURSDAY

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
Came children walking two and two, in red, and blue, and green;
Gray-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white as snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters flow.

Oh what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of London town!
Seated in companies they sit, with radiance all their own.

The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent hands.

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song,
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among:
Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of the poor.
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

William Blake [1757–1827]

A STORY FOR A CHILD

Little one, come to my knee!
Hark, how the rain is pouring
Over the roof, in the pitch-black night,
And the wind in the woods a-roaring!

Hush, my darling, and listen,
Then pay for the story with kisses;
Father was lost in the pitch-black night,
In just such a storm as this is!

High up on the lonely mountains,
Where the wild men watched and waited;
Wolves in the forest, and bears in the bush,
And I on my path belated.

The rain and the night together
Came down, and the wind came after,
Bending the props of the pine-tree roof,
And snapping many a rafter.

I crept along in the darkness,
Stunned, and bruised, and blinded,—
Crept to a fir with thick-set boughs,
And a sheltering rock behind it.

There, from the blowing and raining,
Crouching, I sought to hide me:
Something rustled, two green eyes shone,
And a wolf lay down beside me.

Little one, be not frightened;
I and the wolf together,
Side by side, through the long, long night,
Hid from the awful weather.

His wet fur pressed against me;
Each of us warmed the other;
Each of us felt, in the stormy dark,
That beast and man was brother.

And when the falling forest
No longer crashed in warning,
Each of us went from our hiding-place
Forth in the wild, wet morning.

Darling, kiss me payment!
Hark, how the wind is roaring;
Father's house is a better place
When the stormy rain is pouring!

Bayard Taylor [1825–1878]

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY

"Will you walk into my parlor?" said the Spider to the Fly.
"'Tis the prettiest little parlor that ever you did spy;
The way into my parlor is up a winding stair,
And I have many curious things to show when you are there."
"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "to ask me is in vain;
For who goes up your winding stair can ne'er come down again."

"I'm sure you must be weary, dear, with soaring up so high;
Will you rest upon my little bed?" said the Spider to the Fly.
"There are pretty curtains drawn around, the sheets are fine and thin;
And if you like to rest a while, I'll snugly tuck you in!"
"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "for I've often heard it said,
They never, never wake again, who sleep upon your bed!"

Said the cunning Spider to the Fly, "Dear friend, what can
I do
To prove the warm affection I've always felt for you?
I have, within my pantry, good store of all that's nice;
I'm sure you're very welcome—will you please to take a
slice?"
"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "kind sir, that cannot be,
I've heard what's in your pantry, and I do not wish to see!"

"Sweet creature," said the Spider, "you're witty and
you're wise;
How handsome are your gauzy wings, how brilliant are
your eyes!
I have a little looking-glass upon my parlor shelf;
If you'll step in one moment, dear, you shall behold your-
self."
"I thank you, gentle sir," she said, "for what you're
pleased to say,
And bidding you good morning now, I'll call another day."

The Spider turned him round about, and went into his den,
For well he knew the silly Fly would soon be back again;
So he wove a subtle web in a little corner sly,
And set his table ready to dine upon the Fly.
Then he came out to his door again, and merrily did sing,—
"Come hither, hither, pretty Fly, with the pearl and silver
wing;
Your robes are green and purple, there's a crest upon your
head;
Your eyes are like the diamond bright, but mine are dull as
lead."

Alas, alas! how very soon this silly little Fly,
Hearing his wily, flattering words, came slowly flitting by:
With buzzing wings she hung aloft, then near and nearer
drew,—
Thinking only of her brilliant eyes, and green and purple
hue;
Thinking only of her crested head—poor foolish thing! At
last,
Up jumped the cunning Spider, and fiercely held her fast.

He dragged her up his winding stair, into his dismal den
Within his little parlor—but she ne'er came out again!

And now, dear little children, who may this story read,
To idle, silly, flattering words, I pray you ne'er give heed;
Unto an evil counsellor close heart, and ear, and eye,
And take a lesson from this tale of the Spider and the Fly.

Mary Howitt [1799–1888]

THE CAPTAIN'S DAUGHTER

We were crowded in the cabin,
Not a soul would dare to sleep,—
It was midnight on the waters,
And a storm was on the deep.

'Tis a fearful thing in winter
To be shattered by the blast,
And to hear the rattling trumpet
Thunder, "Cut away the mast!"

So we shuddered there in silence,—
For the stoutest held his breath,
While the hungry sea was roaring
And the breakers talked with death.

As thus we sat in darkness,
Each one busy with his prayers,
"We are lost!" the captain shouted,
As he staggered down the stairs.

But his little daughter whispered,
As she took his icy hand,
"Isn't God upon the ocean,
Just the same as on the land?"

Then we kissed the little maiden,
And we spake in better cheer,
And we anchored safe in harbor
When the morn was shining clear.

James Thomas Fields [1816–1881]

THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM

A NIGHTINGALE, that all day long
Had cheered the village with his song,
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,
Nor yet when eventide was ended,
Began to feel, as well he might,
The keen demands of appetite;
When, looking eagerly around,
He spied far off, upon the ground,
A something shining in the dark,
And knew the glow-worm by his spark;
So, stooping down from hawthorn top,
He thought to put him in his crop.
The worm, aware of his intent,
Harangued him thus, right eloquent:
"Did you admire my lamp," quoth he,
"As much as I your minstrelsy,
You would abhor to do me wrong,
As much as I to spoil your song;
For 'twas the self-same Power Divine
Taught you to sing, and me to shine;
That you with music, I with light,
Might beautify and cheer the night."
The songster heard his short oration,
And warbling out his approbation,
Released him, as my story tells,
And found a supper somewhere else.

Hence jarring sectaries may learn
Their real interest to discern;
That brother should not war with brother,
And worry and devour each other;
But sing and shine by sweet consent,
Till life's poor transient night is spent,
Respecting in each other's case
The gifts of nature and of grace.

Those Christians best deserve the name
Who studiously make peace their aim;

Peace both the duty and the prize
Of him that creeps and him that flies.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

SIR LARK AND KING SUN: A PARABLE

From "Adela Cathcart"

"Good morrow, my lord!" in the sky alone,
Sang the lark, as the sun ascended his throne.
"Shine on me, my lord; I only am come,
Of all your servants, to welcome you home.
I have flown right up, a whole hour, I swear,
To catch the first shine of your golden hair."

"Must I thank you, then," said the king, "Sir Lark,
For flying so high and hating the dark?
You ask a full cup for half a thirst:
Half was love of me, and half love to be first.
There's many a bird makes no such haste,
But waits till I come: that's as much to my taste."

And King Sun hid his head in a turban of cloud,
And Sir Lark stopped singing, quite vexed and cowed;
But he flew up higher, and thought, "Anon
The wrath of the king will be over and gone;
And his crown, shining out of its cloudy fold,
Will change my brown feathers to a glory of gold."

So he flew—with the strength of a lark he flew;
But, as he rose, the cloud rose too;
And not one gleam of the golden hair
Came through the depths of the misty air;
Till, weary with flying, with sighing sore,
The strong sun-seeker could do no more.

His wings had had no chrism of gold:
And his feathers felt withered and worn and old;
He faltered, and sank, and dropped like a stone.
And there on her nest, where he left her, alone
Sat his little wife on her little eggs,
Keeping them warm with wings and legs.

Did I say alone? Ah, no such thing!
Full in her face was shining the king.
"Welcome, Sir Lark! You look tired," said he;
"*Up* is not always the best way to me.
While you have been singing so high and away,
I've been shining to your little wife all day."

He had set his crown all about the nest,
And out of the midst shone her little brown breast;
And so glorious was she in russet gold,
That for wonder and awe Sir Lark grew cold.
He popped his head under her wing, and lay
As still as a stone, till King Sun was away.

George Macdonald [1824–1905]

THE COURTSHIP, MERRY MARRIAGE, AND PICNIC DINNER OF COCK ROBIN AND JENNY WREN

It was a merry time
When Jenny Wren was young,
So neatly as she danced,
And so sweetly as she sung,
Robin Redbreast lost his heart:
He was a gallant bird;
He doffed his hat to Jenny,
And thus to her he said:—

"My dearest Jenny Wren,
If you will but be mine,
You shall dine on cherry pie,
And drink nice currant wine.
I'll dress you like a Goldfinch,
Or like a Peacock gay;
So if you'll have me, Jenny,
Let us appoint the day."

Jenny blushed behind her fan,
And thus declared her mind:
"Then let it be to-morrow, Bob,
I take your offer kind—

Cherry pie is very good!
So is currant wine!
But I will wear my brown gown,
And never dress too fine."

Robin rose up early
At the break of day;
He flew to Jenny Wren's house,
To sing a roundelay.
He met the Cock and Hen,
And bid the Cock declare,
This was his wedding-day
With Jenny Wren, the fair.

The Cock then blew his horn,
To let the neighbors know,
This was Robin's wedding-day,
And they might see the show.
And first came Parson Rook,
With his spectacles and band,
And one of Mother Hubbard's books
He held within his hand.

Then followed him the Lark,
For he could sweetly sing,
And he was to be clerk
At Cock Robin's wedding.
He sang of Robin's love
For little Jenny Wren;
And when he came unto the end,
Then he began again.

Then came the bride and bridegroom;
Quite plainly was she dressed,
And blushed so much, her cheeks were
As red as Robin's breast.
But Robin cheered her up;
"My pretty Jen," said he,
"We're going to be married
And happy we shall be."

The Goldfinch came on next,
To give away the bride;
The Linnet, being bride's maid,
Walked by Jenny's side;
And, as she was a-walking,
She said, "Upon my word,
I think that your Cock Robin
Is a very pretty bird."

The Bulfinch walked by Robin,
And thus to him did say,
"Pray, mark, friend Robin Redbreast,
That Goldfinch, dressed so gay;
What though her gay apparel
Becomes her very well,
Yet Jenny's modest dress and look
Must bear away the bell."

The Blackbird and the Thrush,
And charming Nightingale,
Whose sweet jug sweetly echoes
Through every grove and dale;
The Sparrow and Tom Tit,
And many more, were there:
All came to see the wedding
Of Jenny Wren, the fair.

"O then," says Parson Rook,
"Who gives this maid away?"
"I do," says the Goldfinch,
"And her fortune I will pay:
Here's a bag of grain of many sorts,
And other things beside;
Now happy be the bridegroom,
And happy be the bride!"

"And will your have her, Robin,
To be your wedded wife?"
"Yes, I will," says Robin,
"And love her all my life."

"And will you have him, Jenny,
Your husband now to be?"
"Yes, I will," says Jenny,
"And love him heartily."

Then on her finger fair
Cock Robin put the ring;
"You're married now," says Parson Rook,
While the Lark aloud did sing:
"Happy be the bridegroom,
And happy be the bride!
And may not man, nor bird, nor beast,
This happy pair divide."

The birds were asked to dine;
Not Jenny's friends alone,
But every pretty songster
That had Cock Robin known.
They had a cherry pie,
Beside some currant wine,
And every guest brought something,
That sumptuous they might dine.

Now they all sat or stood
To eat and to drink;
And every one said what
He happened to think:
They each took a bumper,
And drank to the pair:
Cock Robin, the bridegroom,
And Jenny Wren, the fair.

The dinner-things removed,
They all began to sing;
And soon they made the place
Near a mile round to ring.
The concert it was fine;
And every bird tried
Who best could sing for Robin
And Jenny Wren, the bride.

Then in came the Cuckoo and made a great rout;
He caught hold of Jenny and pulled her about.
Cock Robin was angry, and so was the Sparrow,
Who fetched in a hurry his bow and his arrow.

His aim then he took, but he took it not right;
His skill was not good, or he shot in a fright;
For the Cuckoo he missed, but Cock Robin killed!—
And all the birds mourned that his blood was so spilled.

Unknown

THE BABES IN THE WOOD

Now ponder well, you parents dear,
  These words, which I shall write;
A doleful story you shall hear,
  In time brought forth to light.
A gentleman of good account
  In Norfolk dwelt of late,
Who did in honor far surmount
  Most men of his estate.

Sore sick was he, and like to die,
  No help his life could save;
His wife by him as sick did lie,
  And both possessed one grave.
No love between these two was lost,
  Each was to other kind;
In love they lived, in loved they died,
  And left two babes behind:

The one a fine and pretty boy,
  Not passing three years old;
The other a girl more young than he,
  And framed in beauty's mold.
The father left his little son,
  As plainly does appear,
When he to perfect age should come,
  Three hundred pounds a year.

And to his little daughter Jane
Five hundred pounds in gold,
To be paid down on marriage-day,
Which might not be controlled:
But if the children chance to die,
Ere they to age should come,
Their uncle should possess their wealth;
For so the will did run.

"Now, brother," said the dying man,
"Look to my children dear;
Be good unto my boy and girl,
No friends else have they here:
To God and you I recommend
My children dear this day;
But little while be sure we have
Within this world to stay.

"You must be father and mother both,
And uncle all in one;
God knows what will become of them,
When I am dead and gone."
With that bespake their mother dear,
"O brother kind," quoth she,
"You are the man must bring our babes
To wealth or misery.

"And if you keep them carefully
Then God will you reward;
But if you otherwise should deal,
God will your deeds regard."
With lips as cold as any stone,
They kissed their children small:
"God bless you both, my children dear;"
With that the tears did fall.

These speeches then their brother spake
To this sick couple there,
"The keeping of your little ones,
Sweet sister, do not fear;

God never prosper me nor mine,
Nor aught else that I have,
If I do wrong your children dear,
When you are laid in grave."

The parents being dead and gone,
The children home he takes,
And brings them straight into his house,
Where much of them he makes.
He had not kept these pretty babes
A twelvemonth and a day,
But, for their wealth, he did devise
To make them both away.

He bargained with two ruffians strong,
Which were of furious mood,
That they should take these children young,
And slay them in a wood.
He told his wife an artful tale,
He would the children send
To be brought up in fair London,
With one that was his friend.

Away then went these pretty babes,
Rejoicing at that tide,
Rejoicing with a merry mind,
They should on cock-horse ride.
They prate and prattle pleasantly,
As they rode on the way,
To those that should their butchers be,
And work their lives' decay:

So that the pretty speech they had,
Made Murder's heart relent;
And they that undertook the deed,
Full sore did now repent.
Yet one of them more hard of heart,
Did vow to do his charge,
Because the wretch that hired him,
Had paid him very large.

The other won't agree thereto,
So here they fall to strife;
With one another they did fight,
About the children's life:
And he that was of mildest mood,
Did slay the other there,
Within an unfrequented wood;
The babes did quake for fear!

He took the children by the hand,
Tears standing in their eye,
And bade them straightway follow him,
And look they did not cry:
And two long miles he led them on,
While they for food complain:
"Stay here," quoth he, "I'll bring you bread,
When I come back again."

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,
Went wandering up and down,
But never more could see the man
Approaching from the town;
Their pretty lips with black-berries
Were all besmeared and dyed,
And, when they saw the darksome night,
They sat them down and cried.

Thus wandered these poor innocents,
Till death did end their grief;
In one another's arms they died,
As wanting due relief:
No burial this pretty pair
Of any man receives,
Till Robin-red-breast piously
Did cover them with leaves.

And now the heavy wrath of God
Upon their uncle fell;
Yea, fearful fiends did haunt his house,
His conscience felt an hell:

His barns were fired, his goods consumed,
His lands were barren made,
His cattle died within the field,
And nothing with him stayed.

And in a voyage to Portugal
Two of his sons did die;
And, to conclude, himself was brought
To want and misery:
He pawned and mortgaged all his land
Ere seven years came about,
And now at length his wicked act
Did by this means come out:

The fellow, that did take in hand
These children for to kill,
Was for a robbery judged to die,
Such was God's blessed will:
Who did confess the very truth
As here hath been displayed:
Their uncle having died in jail,
Where he for debt was laid.

You that executors be made,
And overseers eke
Of children that be fatherless,
And infants mild and meek;
Take you example by this thing,
And yield to each his right,
Lest God with such like misery
Your wicked minds requite.

Unknown

GOD'S JUDGMENT ON A WICKED BISHOP

The summer and autumn had been so wet,
That in winter the corn was growing yet:
'Twas a piteous sight to see, all around,
The grain lie rotting on the ground.

Every day the starving poor
Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door;
For he had a plentiful last-year's store,
And all the neighborhood could tell
His granaries were furnished well.

At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day
To quiet the poor without delay;
He bade them to his great barn repair,
And they should have food for the winter there.

Rejoiced such tidings good to hear,
The poor folk flocked from far and near;
The great barn was full as it could hold
Of women and children, and young and old.

Then, when he saw it could hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he made fast the door;
And, while for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the barn, and burnt them all.

"I' faith, 'tis an excellent bonfire!" quoth he;
"And the country is greatly obliged to me
For ridding it, in these times forlorn,
Of rats that only consume the corn."

So then to his palace returnèd he,
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent man;
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning, as he entered the hall,
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat like death all over him came,
For the rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he looked, there came a man from his farm,—
He had a countenance white with alarm:
"My Lord, I opened your granaries this morn,
And the rats had eaten all your corn."

Another came running presently,
And he was pale as pale could be.
"Fly! my Lord Bishop, fly!" quoth he,
"Ten thousand rats are coming this way,—
The Lord forgive you for yesterday!"

"I'll go to my tower in the Rhine," replied he;
"'Tis the safest place in Germany,—
The walls are high, and the shores are steep,
And the tide is strong, and the water deep."

Bishop Hatto fearfully hastened away,
And he crossed the Rhine without delay,
And reached his tower, and barred with care
All the windows, and doors, and loop-holes there.

He laid him down and closed his eyes,
But soon a scream made him arise;
He started, and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow, from whence the screaming came.

He listened and looked,—it was only the cat;
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that,
For she sat screaming, mad with fear,
At the army of rats that were drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climbed the shores so steep,
And now by thousands up they crawl
To the holes and the windows in the wall.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did he tell,
As louder and louder, drawing near,
The saw of their teeth without he could hear.

And in at the windows, and in at the door,
And through the walls by thousands they pour;
And down from the ceiling and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,
From within and without, from above and below,—
And all at once to the Bishop they go.

They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones;
They gnawed the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgment on him!

Robert Southey [1774–1843]

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

A CHILD'S STORY

I

Hamelin Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin was a pity.

II

Rats!
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cooks' own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

III

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking:
"'Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy;
And as for our Corporation,—shocking

To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine
What's best to rid us of our vermin!
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease?
Rouse up, sirs! Give your brains a racking,
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV

An hour they sat in council,—
At length the Mayor broke silence:
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell;
I wish I were a mile hence!
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain,—
I'm sure my poor head aches again,
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap!"
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber-door but a gentle tap?
"Bless us," cried the Mayor, "what's that?"
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)
"Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!"

V

"Come in!" the Mayor cried, looking bigger:
And in did come the strangest figure!
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red,
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,

And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in;
There was no guessing his kith and kin:
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one: "It's as my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone!"

VI

He advanced to the council-table:
And, "Please your honors," said he, "I'm able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep or swim or fly or run,
After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad and newt and viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper."
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same check,
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying
As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)
"Yet," said he, "poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats;
And as for what your brain bewilders,—
If I can rid your town of rats,
Will you give me a thousand guilders?"
"One? fifty thousand!" was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

VII

Into the street the Piper stepped,
  Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
  In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
  Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers;
  Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives,—
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
Wherein all plunged and perished!
—Save one who, stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across and lived to carry
(As he, the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary,
Which was: "At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe,—
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks;

And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, rejoice!
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery!
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!'
And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,
Already staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me!'—
I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

VIII

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple;
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles!
Poke out the nests and block up the holes!
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!"—when suddenly, up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a "First, if you please, my thousand guilders!"

IX

A thousand guilders! the Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.
For council-dinners made rare havoc
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gypsy coat of red and yellow!
"Beside," quoth the Mayor, with a knowing wink,
"Our business was done at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something to drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;

But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty;
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"

X

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,
"No trifling! I can't wait! beside,
I've promised to visit by dinner time
Bagdat, and accept the prime
Of the Head Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor:
With him I proved no bargain-driver;
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe after another fashion."

XI

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think I brook
Being worse treated than a Cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

XII

Once more he stepped into the street;
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)
There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling;
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping, and little tongues chattering;
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scattering,
Out came the children running:

All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

XIII

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by,—
And could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However, he turned from south to west,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
"He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!"
When, lo, as they reached the mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced and the children followed;
And when all were in, to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say, all? No! One was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say,—
"It's dull in our town since my playmates left!
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me;

For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed, and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagles' wings;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more!"

XIV

Alas, alas for Hamelin!
  There came into many a burgher's pate
  A text which says that heaven's gate
  Opes to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in!
The Mayor sent East, West, North and South,
To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,
  Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
  And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavor,
And piper and dancers were gone forever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
  Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
"And so long after what happened here
  On the Twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six:"
And the better in memory to fix

The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it, the Pied Piper's Street—
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor
Was sure for the future to lose his labor.
Nor suffered they hostlery or tavern
To shock with mirth a street so solemn;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away,
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people who ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbors lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why, they don't understand.

XV

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers
Of scores out with all men—especially pipers!
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE GLAD EVANGEL

A CAROL

He came all so still
  Where His mother was,
As dew in April
  That falleth on the grass.

He came all so still
  Where His mother lay,
As dew in April
  That falleth on the spray.

He came all so still
  To His mother's bower,
As dew in April
  That falleth on the flower.

Mother and maiden
  Was never none but she!
Well might such a lady
  God's mother be.

Unknown

"GOD REST YOU, MERRY GENTLEMEN"

God rest you, merry gentlemen,
  Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
  Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
  When we were gone astray.
    O tidings of comfort and joy!
    For Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
    Was born on Christmas Day.

In Bethlehem, in Jewry,
  This blessèd babe was born,
And laid within a manger,
  Upon this blessèd morn;
The which His mother, Mary,
  Nothing did take in scorn.

From God our Heavenly Father,
  A blessèd angel came;
And unto certain shepherds
  Brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born
  The Son of God by name.

"Fear not," then said the angel,
  "Let nothing you affright,
This day is born a Saviour
  Of virtue, power, and might,
So frequently to vanquish all
  The friends of Satan quite."

The shepherds at these tidings
  Rejoicèd much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding
  In tempest, storm, and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway,
  This blessèd babe to find.

But when to Bethlehem they came,
  Whereat this infant lay,
They found Him in a manger,
  Where oxen feed on hay,
His mother Mary kneeling,
  Unto the Lord did pray.

Now to the Lord sing praises,
  All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
  Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
  All others doth deface.

O tidings of comfort and joy!
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
Was born in Christmas Day.

Unknown

"O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM"

O LITTLE town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us to-day.

We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
Oh come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

Phillips Brooks [1835–1893]

A CHRISTMAS HYMN

Old Style: 1837

It was the calm and silent night!
Seven hundred years and fifty-three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was Queen of land and sea.
No sound was heard of clashing wars;
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain;
Apollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars,
Held undisturbed their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

'Twas in the calm and silent night!
The senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight,
From lordly revel rolling home.
Triumphal arches gleaming swell
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway;
What recked the Roman what befell
A paltry province far away,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

Within that province far away
Went plodding home a weary boor:
A streak of light before him lay,
Fall'n through a half-shut stable door
Across his path. He passed—for naught
Told what was going on within;
How keen the stars! his only thought;
The air how calm and cold and thin,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago!

O strange indifference!—low and high
Drowsed over common joys and cares:
The earth was still—but knew not why;
The world was listening—unawares.
How calm a moment may precede
One that shall thrill the world for ever!
To that still moment none would heed,
Man's doom was linked, no more to sever,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

It *is* the calm and solemn night!
A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
The darkness, charmed and holy now.
The night that erst no name had worn,
To it a happy name is given;
For in that stable lay new-born
The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

Alfred Domett [1811–1887]

"WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT"

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

"Fear not," said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind;
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.

"To you, in David's town, this day
Is born, of David's line,
The Saviour, who is Christ the Lord,
And this shall be the sign:

"The heavenly babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,
And in a manger laid."

Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels, praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

"All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good will henceforth from Heaven to men
Begin and never cease."

Nahum Tate [1652–1715]

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men
From heaven's all-gracious King"—
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel-sounds
The blessèd angels sing.

But with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;

And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;—
Oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing;—
Oh, rest beside the weary road
And hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When Peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Edmund Hamilton Sears [1810–1876]

THE ANGELS

From "Flowers of Sion"

Run, shepherds, run where Bethlehem blest appears.
We bring the best of news; be not dismayed:
A Saviour there is born more old than years,
Amidst heaven's rolling heights this earth who stayed.
In a poor cottage inned, a virgin maid,
A weakling did him bear, who all upbears;
There is he poorly swaddled, in manger laid,
To whom too narrow swaddlings are our spheres:
Run, shepherds, run, and solemnize his birth.
This is that night—no, day, grown great with bliss,
In which the power of Satan broken is:
In heaven be glory, peace unto the earth!

Thus singing, through the air the angels swarm,
And cope of stars re-echoèd the same.

William Drummond [1585–1649]

THE BURNING BABE

As I in hoary winter's night
Stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat
Which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye
To view what fire was near,
A pretty babe all burning bright
Did in the air appear;
Who, scorchèd with excessive heat,
Such floods of tears did shed,
As though His floods should quench His flames,
Which with His tears were bred:
"Alas!" quoth He, "but newly born
In fiery heats I fry,
Yet none approach to warm their hearts
Or feel my fire but I!

"My faultless breast the furnace is;
The fuel, wounding thorns;
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke;
The ashes, shames and scorns;
The fuel Justice layeth on,
And Mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought
Are men's defilèd souls:
For which, as now on fire I am
To work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath,
To wash them in my blood."
With this He vanished out of sight
And swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I callèd unto mind
That it was Christmas Day.

Robert Southwell [1561?–1595]

TRYSTE NOËL

The Ox he openeth wide the Doore,
And from the Snowe he calls her inne,
And he hath seen her Smile therefor,
Our Ladye without Sinne.
Now soone from Sleep
A Starre shall leap,
And soone arrive both King and Hinde:
Amen, Amen:
But O, the Place co'd I but finde!

The Ox hath hushed his voyce and bent
Trewe eyes of Pitty ore the Mow,
And on his lovelie Neck, forspent,
The Blessed layes her Browe.
Around her feet
Full Warme and Sweete
His bowerie Breath doth meeklie dwell:
Amen, Amen:
But sore am I with Vaine Travèl!

The Ox is host in Judah stall
And Host of more than onelie one,
For close she gathereth withal
Our Lorde her littel Sonne.
Glad Hinde and King
Their Gyfte may bring,
But wo'd to-night my Teares were there,
Amen, Amen:
Between her Bosom and His hayre!

Louise Imogen Guiney [1861–

CHRISTMAS CAROL

As Joseph was a-waukin',
He heard an angel sing,
"This night shall be the birthnight
Of Christ our heavenly King.

"His birth-bed shall be neither
In housen nor in hall,
Nor in the place of paradise,
But in the oxen's stall.

"He neither shall be rockèd
In silver nor in gold,
But in the wooden manger
That lieth in the mould.

"He neither shall be washen
With white wine nor with red,
But with the fair spring water
That on you shall be shed.

"He neither shall be clothèd
In purple nor in pall,
But in the fair, white linen
That usen babies all."

As Joseph was a-waukin',
Thus did the angel sing,
And Mary's son at midnight
Was born to be our King.

Then be you glad, good people,
At this time of the year;
And light you up your candles,
For His star it shineth clear.

Unknown

"BRIGHTEST AND BEST OF THE SONS OF THE MORNING"

Brightest and best of the Sons of the morning!
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid!
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our Infant Redeemer is laid!

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining,
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all!

Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion,
Odors of Edom and offerings divine?
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation;
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure:
Richer by far is the heart's adoration;
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the Sons of the morning!
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid!
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our Infant Redeemer is laid!

Reginald Heber [1783–1826]

CHRISTMAS BELLS

I HEARD the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast,
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the kings,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton [1874-

THE HOUSE OF CHRISTMAS

THERE fared a mother driven forth
Out of an inn to roam;
In the place where she was homeless
All men are at home.
The crazy stable close at hand,
With shaking timber and shifting sand,
Grew a stronger thing to abide and stand
Than the square stones of Rome.

For men are homesick in their homes,
And strangers under the sun,
And they lay their heads in a foreign land
Whenever the day is done.
Here we have battle and blazing eyes,
And chance and honor and high surprise,
But our homes are under miraculous skies
Where the yule tale was begun.

A Child in a foul stable,
Where the beasts feed and foam,
Only where He was homeless
Are you and I at home;
We have hands that fashion and heads that know,
But our hearts we lost—how long ago!
In a place no chart nor ship can show
Under the sky's dome.

This world is wild as an old wives' tale,
And strange the plain things are,
The earth is enough and the air is enough
For our wonder and our war;
But our rest is as far as the fire-drake swings
And our peace is put in impossible things
Where clashed and thundered unthinkable wings
Round an incredible star.

To an open house in the evening
Home shall men come,

To an older place than Eden
And a taller town than Rome.
To the end of the way of the wandering star,
To the things that cannot be and that are,
To the place where God was homeless
And all men are at home.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton [1874–

THE FEAST OF THE SNOW

THERE is heard a hymn when the panes are dim,
And never before or again,
When the nights are strong with a darkness long,
And the dark is alive with rain.

Never we know but in sleet and snow
The place where the great fires are,
That the midst of earth is a raging mirth,
And the heart of the earth a star.

And at night we win to the ancient inn,
Where the Child in the frost is furled,
We follow the feet where all souls meet,
At the inn at the end of the world.

The gods lie dead where the leaves lie red,
For the flame of the sun is flown;
The gods lie cold where the leaves are gold,
And a Child comes forth alone.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton [1874–

MARY'S BABY

JOSEPH, mild and noble, bent above the straw:
A pale girl, a frail girl, suffering he saw;
"O my Love, my Mary, my bride, I pity thee!"
"Nay, Dear," said Mary, "all is well with me!"
"*Baby, my baby, O my babe,*" she sang.
Suddenly the golden night all with music rang.

Angels leading shepherds, shepherds leading sheep:
The silence of worship broke the mother's sleep.
All the meek and lowly of all the world were there;
Smiling, she showed them that her Child was fair,
"*Baby, my baby,*" kissing Him she said.
Suddenly a flaming star through the heavens sped.

Three old men and weary knelt them side by side,
The world's wealth forswearing, majesty and pride;
Worldly might and wisdom before the Babe bent low:
Weeping, maid Mary said, "I love Him so!"
"*Baby, my baby,*" and the Baby slept.
Suddenly on Calvary all the olives wept.

Shaemas OSheel [1886–

GATES AND DOORS

A BALLAD OF CHRISTMAS EVE

THERE was a gentle hostler
(And blessed be his name!)
He opened up the stable
The night Our Lady came.
Our Lady and St. Joseph,
He gave them food and bed,
And Jesus Christ has given him
A glory round his head.

So let the gate swing open
However poor the yard,
Lest weary people visit you
And find their passage barred.
Unlatch the door at midnight
And let your lantern's glow
Shine out to guide the traveler's feet
To you across the snow.

There was a courteous hostler
(He is in Heaven to-night)
He held Our Lady's bridle
And helped her to alight.

He spread clean straw before her
Whereon she might lie down,
And Jesus Christ has given him
An everlasting crown.

Unlock the door this evening
And let your gate swing wide,
Let all who ask for shelter
Come speedily inside.
What if your yard be narrow?
What if your house be small?
There is a Guest is coming
Will glorify it all.

There was a joyous hostler
Who knelt on Christmas morn
Beside the radiant manger
Wherein his Lord was born.
His heart was full of laughter,
His soul was full of bliss
When Jesus, on His Mother's lap,
Gave him His hand to kiss.

Unbar your heart this evening
And keep no stranger out,
Take from your soul's great portal
The barrier of doubt.
To humble folk and weary
Give hearty welcoming,
Your breast shall be to-morrow
The cradle of a King.

Joyce Kilmer [1886–

THE THREE KINGS

THREE Kings came riding from far away,
Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large and clear,
That all the other stars of the sky
Became a white mist in the atmosphere;
And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,
Three caskets of gold with golden keys;
Their robes were of crimson silk, with rows
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,
Through the dusk of night, over hill and dell,
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,
With the people they met at some wayside well.

"Of the child that is born," said Baltasar,
"Good people, I pray you, tell us the news,
For we in the East have seen his star,
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,
To find and worship the King of the Jews."

And the people answered, "You ask in vain;
We know of no king but Herod the Great!"
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,
As they spurred their horses across the plain
Like riders in haste, and who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,
Sent for the Wise Men and questioned them;
And said, "Go down unto Bethlehem,
And bring me tidings of this new king."

So they rode away, and the star stood still,
The only one in the gray of morn;
Yes, it stopped,—it stood still of its own free will,
Right over Bethlehem on the hill,
The city of David, where Christ was born.

And the Three Kings rode through the gate and the guard,
Through the silent street, till their horses turned
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard;
But the windows were closed, and the doors were barred,
And only a light in the stable burned.

And cradled there in the scented hay,
In the air made sweet by the breath of kine,
The little child in the manger lay,
The Child that would be King one day
Of a kingdom not human, but divine.

His mother, Mary of Nazareth,
Sat watching beside his place of rest,
Watching the even flow of his breath,
For the joy of life and the terror of death
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet:
The gold was their tribute to a King;
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete;
The myrrh for the body's burying.

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,
And sat as still as a statue of stone;
Her heart was troubled yet comforted,
Remembering what the Angel had said
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.

Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;
But they went not back to Herod the Great,
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,
And returned to their homes by another way.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

LULLABY IN BETHLEHEM

THERE hath come an host to see Thee,
Baby dear,
Bearded men with eyes of flame
And lips of fear,

For the heavens, they say, have broken
Into blinding gulfs of glory,
And the Lord, they say, hath spoken
In a little wondrous story,
Baby dear.

There have come three kings to greet Thee,
Baby dear,
Crowned with gold, and clad in purple,
They draw near.
They have brought rare silks to bind Thee,
At Thy feet, behold, they spread them,
From their thrones they sprang to find Thee,
And a blazing star hath led them,
Baby dear.

I have neither jade nor jasper,
Baby dear,
Thou art all my hope and glory,
And my fear,
Yet for all the gems that strew Thee,
And the costly gowns that fold Thee,
Yea, though all the world should woo Thee,
Thou art mine—and fast I hold Thee,
Baby dear.

Henry Howarth Bashford [1880–

A CHILD'S SONG OF CHRISTMAS

My counterpane is soft as silk,
My blankets white as creamy milk.
The hay was soft to Him, I know,
Our little Lord of long ago.

Above the roofs the pigeons fly
In silver wheels across the sky.
The stable-doves they cooed to them,
Mary and Christ in Bethlehem.

Bright shines the sun across the drifts,
And bright upon my Christmas gifts.
They brought Him incense, myrrh, and gold,
Our little Lord who lived of old.

Oh, soft and clear our mother sings
Of Christmas joys and Christmas things.
God's holy angels sang to them,
Mary and Christ in Bethlehem.

Our hearts they hold all Christmas dear,
And earth seems sweet and heaven seems near,
Oh, heaven was in His sight, I know,
That little Child of long ago.

Marjorie L. C. Pickthall [1883–

JEST 'FORE CHRISTMAS

FATHER calls me William, sister calls me Will,
Mother calls me Willie, but the fellers call me Bill!
Mighty glad I ain't a girl—ruther be a boy,
Without them sashes, curls, an' things that's worn by Fauntleroy!
Love to chawnk green apples an' go swimmin' in the lake—
Hate to take the castor-ile they give for belly-ache!
'Most all the time, the whole year round, there ain't no flies on me,
But jest 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!

Got a yeller dog named Sport, sick him on the cat;
First thing she knows she doesn't know where she is at!
Got a clipper sled, an' when us kids goes out to slide,
'Long comes the grocery cart, an' we all hook a ride!
But sometimes when the grocery man is worrited an' cross,
He reaches at us with his whip, an' larrups up his hoss,
An' then I laff an' holler, "Oh, ye never teched *me!*"
But jest 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!

Gran'ma says she hopes that when I git to be a man,
I'll be a missionarer like her oldest brother, Dan,
As was et up by the cannibuls that lives in Ceylon's Isle,
Where every prospeck pleases, an' only man is vile!
But gran'ma she has never been to see a Wild West show,
Nor read the Life of Daniel Boone, or else I guess she'd know

That Buff'lo Bill and cow-boys is good enough for me!
Excep' jest 'fore Christmas, when I'm good as I kin be!

And then old Sport he hangs around, so solemn-like an' still,
His eyes they keep a-sayin': "What's the matter, little Bill?"
The old cat sneaks down off her perch an' wonders what's become
Of them two enemies of hern that used to make things hum!
But I am so perlite an' 'tend so earnestly to biz,
That mother says to father: "How improved our Willie is!"
But father, havin' been a boy hisself, suspicions me
When jest 'fore Christmas, I'm as good as I kin be!

For Christmas, with its lots an' lots of candies, cakes an' toys,
Was made, they say, for proper kids an' not for naughty boys;
So wash yer face an' bresh yer hair, an' mind yer p's an' q's,
An' don't bust out yer pantaloons, an' don't wear out yer shoes;
Say "Yessum" to the ladies, an' "Yessur" to the men,
An' when they's company, don't pass yer plate for pie again;
But, thinking of the things yer'd like to see upon that tree,
Jest 'fore Christmas be as good as yer kin be!

Eugene Field [1850–1895]

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, *Dasher!* now, *Dancer!* now, *Prancer* and *Vixen!*
On, *Comet!* on *Cupid!* on, *Donder* and *Blitzen!*
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too.
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,

And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
"*Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night.*"

Clement Clarke Moore [1779–1863]

CEREMONIES FOR CHRISTMAS

Come, bring with a noise,
My merry, merry boys,
The Christmas log to the firing;
While my good dame, she
Bids ye all be free;
And drink to your hearts' desiring.

With the last year's brand
Light the new block, and
For good success in his spending,
On your psaltries play,
That sweet luck may
Come while the log is a-tending.

Drink now the strong beer,
Cut the white loaf here,
The while the meat is a-shredding;
For the rare mince-pie
And the plums stand by
To fill the paste that's a-kneading.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY

This is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;

For so the holy sages once did sing
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty
Wherewith he wont at Heaven's high council-ta
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, Heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

See how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odors sweet!
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
Have thou the honor first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel choir
From out his secret altar touched with hallowed fire.

THE HYMN

It was the winter wild
While the heaven-born Child
All meanly wrapped in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to Him
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air

To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing and amorous clouds dividing;
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;
The hookèd chariot stood
Unstained with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kissed,
Whispering new joys to the mild oceàn—
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new-enlightened world no more should need;
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn
Or ere the point of dawn
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they then
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet
As never was by mortal finger strook—
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringèd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature, that heard such sound
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all heaven and earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light
That with long beams the shamefaced night arrayed;
The helmèd Cherubim
And sworded Seraphim
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,

Harping in loud and solemn choir
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the bass of Heaven's deep organ blow;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould;
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orbed in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says No;
This must not yet be so;

The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychained in sleep
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep;

With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:
The agèd Earth aghast
With terror of that blast
Shall from the surface to the centre shake,
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread His throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for from this happy day
The old Dragon under ground,
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurpèd sway;
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving:
No nightly trance or breathèd spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er
And the resounding shore
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale
Edged with poplar pale
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;

With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth
And on the holy hearth
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-battered god of Palestine;
And moonèd Ashtaroth
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn:
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove, or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Naught but profoundest Hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrelled anthems dark
The sable stolèd sorcerers bear his worshiped ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand;

The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyen;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide
Nor Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in His swaddling bands control the damnèd crew.

So, when the sun in bed
Curtained with cloudy red
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave:
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.

But see! the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
Time is, our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest teemèd star
Hath fixed her polished car,
Her sleeping Lord with hand-maid lamp attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnessed Angels sit in order serviceable.

John Milton [1608–1674]

FAIRYLAND

THE FAIRY BOOK

In summer, when the grass is thick, if mother has the time,
She shows me with her pencil how a poet makes a rhyme,
And often she is sweet enough to choose a leafy nook,
Where I cuddle up so closely when she reads the Fairy-book.

In winter, when the corn's asleep, and birds are not in song,
And crocuses and violets have been away too long,
Dear mother puts her thimble by in answer to my look,
And I cuddle up so closely when she reads the Fairy-book.

And mother tells the servants that of course they must contrive
To manage all the household things from four till half-past five,
For we really cannot suffer interruption from the cook,
When we cuddle close together with the happy Fairy-book.

Norman Gale [1862–

FAIRY SONGS

I

From "A Midsummer-Night's Dream"

Over hill, over dale,
Through bush, through brier,
Over park, over pale,
Through flood, through fire,

I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moonè's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green:
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favors,
In those freckles live their savors:
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

II

From "A Midsummer-Night's Dream"

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong;
Come not near our fairy queen.

Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby!
Never harm,
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

Weaving spiders, come not here;
Hence, you long-legged spinners, hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby!
Never harm,
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good-night, with lullaby.

III

From "The Tempest"

COME unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Court'sied when you have, and kissed,—
The wild waves whist,—
Foot it featly here and there;
And, sweet sprites, the burthen bear.
Hark, hark!
Bow, wow,
The watch-dogs bark:
Bow, wow.
Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry, Cock-a-diddle-dow!

IV

From "The Tempest"

WHERE the bee sucks, there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily:
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

QUEEN MAB

From "The Satyr"

THIS is Mab, the Mistress-Fairy,
That doth nightly rob the dairy
And can hurt or help the churning,
As she please without discerning.

She that pinches country wenches
If they rub not clean their benches,

And with sharper nails remembers
When they rake not up their embers:
But if so they chance to feast her,
In a shoe she drops a tester.

This is she that empties cradles,
Takes out children, puts in ladles:
Trains forth old wives in their slumber
With a sieve the holes to number;
And then leads them from her burrows,
Home through ponds and water-furrows.

She can start our Franklins' daughters,
In their sleep, with shrieks and laughters:
And on sweet Saint Anna's night
Feed them with a promised sight,
Some of husbands, some of lovers,
Which an empty dream discovers.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

THE ELF AND THE DORMOUSE

Under a toadstool crept a wee Elf,
Out of the rain, to shelter himself.

Under the toadstool sound asleep,
Sat a big Dormouse all in a heap.

Trembled the wee Elf, frightened, and yet
Fearing to fly away lest he get wet.

To the next shelter—maybe a mile!
Sudden the wee Elf smiled a wee smile,

Tugged till the toadstool toppled in two.
Holding it over him, gayly he flew.

Soon he was safe home, dry as could be.
Soon woke the Dormouse—"Good gracious me!

"Where is my toadstool?" loud he lamented.
—And that's how umbrellas first were invented.

Oliver Herford [1863–

"OH! WHERE DO FAIRIES HIDE THEIR HEADS?"

Oh! where do fairies hide their heads,
When snow lies on the hills,
When frost has spoiled their mossy beds,
And crystallized their rills?
Beneath the moon they cannot trip
In circles o'er the plain;
And draughts of dew they cannot sip,
Till green leaves come again.

Perhaps, in small, blue diving-bells
They plunge beneath the waves,
Inhabiting the wreathèd shells
That lie in coral caves.
Perhaps, in red Vesuvius
Carousals they maintain;
And cheer their little spirits thus,
Till green leaves come again.

When they return, there will be mirth
And music in the air.
And fairy wings upon the earth,
And mischief everywhere.
The maids, to keep the elves aloof,
Will bar the doors in vain;
No key-hole will be fairy-proof,
When green leaves come again.

Thomas Haynes Bayly [1797–1839]

FAIRY SONG

From "Amyntas"

We the Fairies, blithe and antic,
Of dimensions not gigantic,
Though the moonshine mostly keep us,
Oft in orchards frisk and peep us.

Stolen sweets are always sweeter,
Stolen kisses much completer,
Stolen looks are nice in chapels,
Stolen, stolen be your apples.

When to bed the world is bobbing,
Then's the time for orchard-robbing;
Yet the fruit were scarce worth peeling
Were it not for stealing, stealing.

Translated by Leigh Hunt from the Latin of Thomas Randolph [1605–1635]

DREAM SONG

I COME from woods enchaunted,
Starlit and pixey-haunted,
  Where 'twixt the bracken and the trees
  The goblins lie and take their ease
By winter moods undaunted.

There down the golden gravel
The laughing rivers travel;
  Elves wake at nights and whisper low
  Between the bracken and the snow
Their dreamings to unravel.

Twisted and lank and hairy,
With wanton eyes and wary,
  They stretch and chuckle in the wind,
  For one has found a mermaid kind,
And one has kissed a fairy.

They know no melancholy,
But fashion crowns of holly,
  And gather sleep within the brake
  To deck a kingdom when they wake,
And bless the dreamer's folly.

Ah! would that I might follow
The servants of Apollo!
  But it is sweet to heap the hours
  With quiet dreams and poppy-flowers,
Down in the pixies' hollow.

Richard Middleton [1882–1911]

FAIRY SONG

Shed no tear! O, shed no tear!
The flower will bloom another year.
Weep no more! O, weep no more!
Young buds sleep in the root's white core.
Dry your eyes! O, dry your eyes!
For I was taught in Paradise
To ease my breast of melodies,—
Shed no tear.

Overhead! look overhead!
'Mong the blossoms white and red,—
Look up, look up! I flutter now
On this flush pomegranate bough.
See me! 'tis this silvery bill
Ever cures the good man's ill,—
Shed no tear! O, shed no tear!
The flower will bloom another year.
Adieu, adieu—I fly—adieu!
I vanish in the heaven's blue,—
Adieu, adieu!

John Keats [1795–1821]

QUEEN MAB

A little fairy comes at night,
Her eyes are blue, her hair is brown,
With silver spots upon her wings,
And from the moon she flutters down.

She has a little silver wand,
And when a good child goes to bed
She waves her hand from right to left,
And makes a circle round its head.

And then it dreams of pleasant things,
Of fountains filled with fairy fish,
And trees that bear delicious fruit,
And bow their branches at a wish:

Of arbors filled with dainty scents
From lovely flowers that never fade;
Bright flies that glitter in the sun,
And glow-worms shining in the shade:

And talking birds with gifted tongues,
For singing songs and telling tales,
And pretty dwarfs to show the way
Through fairy hills and fairy dales.

But when a bad child goes to bed,
From left to right she weaves her rings,
And then it dreams all through the night
Of only ugly horrid things!

Then lions come with glaring eyes,
And tigers growl, a dreadful noise,
And ogres draw their cruel knives,
To shed the blood of girls and boys.

Then stormy waves rush on to drown,
Or raging flames come scorching round,
Fierce dragons hover in the air,
And serpents crawl along the ground.

Then wicked children wake and weep,
And wish the long black gloom away;
But good ones love the dark, and find
The night as pleasant as the day.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

THE FAIRIES OF THE CALDON-LOW

A MIDSUMMER LEGEND

"And where have you been, my Mary,
And where have you been from me?"
"I've been to the top of the Caldon-Low,
The midsummer night to see!"

"And what did you see, my Mary,
All up on the Caldon-Low?"
"I saw the glad sunshine come down,
And I saw the merry winds blow."

"And what did you hear, my Mary,
All up on the Caldon-Hill?"
"I heard the drops of the water made,
And the ears of the green corn fill."

"Oh, tell me all, my Mary—
All—all that ever you know;
For you must have seen the fairies
Last night on the Caldon-Low!"

"Then take me on your knee, mother,
And listen, mother of mine:
A hundred fairies danced last night,
And the harpers they were nine.

"And their harp-strings rang so merrily
To their dancing feet so small;
But, oh! the words of their talking
Were merrier far than all!"

"And what were the words, my Mary,
That you did hear them say?"
"I'll tell you all, my mother,
But let me have my way.

"Some of them played with the water,
And rolled it down the hill;
'And this,' they said, 'shall speedily turn
The poor old miller's mill.

"'For there has been no water
Ever since the first of May;
And a busy man will the miller be
At the dawning of the day!

" 'Oh! the miller, how he will laugh,
When he sees the mill-dam rise!
The jolly old miller, how he will laugh,
Till the tears fill both his eyes!'

"And some they seized the little winds,
That sounded over the hill,
And each put a horn into his mouth,
And blew both loud and shrill:

" 'And there,' said they, 'the merry winds go
Away from every horn;
And they shall clear the mildew dank
From the blind old widow's corn:

" 'Oh, the poor blind widow—
Though she has been blind so long,
She'll be merry enough when the mildew's gone,
And the corn stands tall and strong!'

"And some they brought the brown linseed
And flung it down the Low:
'And this,' said they, 'by the sunrise
In the weaver's croft shall grow!

" 'Oh, the poor lame weaver!
How will he laugh outright
When he sees his dwindling flax-field
All full of flowers by night!'

"And then outspoke a brownie,
With a long beard on his chin:
'I have spun up all the tow,' said he,
'And I want some more to spin.

" 'I've spun a piece of hempen cloth
And I want to spin another—
A little sheet for Mary's bed,
And an apron for her mother!'

"With that I could not help but laugh,
And I laughed out loud and free;
And then on the top of the Caldon-Low
There was no one left but me.

"And all on the top of the Caldon-Low
The mists were cold and gray,
And nothing I saw but the mossy stones
That round about me lay.

"But, coming down from the hill-top,
I heard, afar below,
How busy the jolly miller was,
And how merry the wheel did go!

"And I peeped into the widow's field,
And, sure enough, was seen
The yellow ears of the mildewed corn
All standing stout and green.

"And down the weaver's croft I stole,
To see if the flax were sprung;
And I met the weaver at his gate
With the good news on his tongue!

"Now, this is all I heard, mother,
And all that I did see;
So, prithee, make my bed, mother,
For I'm tired as I can be!"

Mary Howitt [1799–1888]

THE FAIRIES

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkill he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.

If any man so daring
As dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

William Allingham [1824–1889]

THE FAIRY THRALL

On gossamer nights when the moon is low,
And stars in the mist are hiding,
Over the hill where the foxgloves grow
You may see the fairies riding.
Kling! Klang! Kling!
Their stirrups and their bridles ring,
And their horns are loud and their bugles blow,
When the moon is low.

They sweep through the night like a whistling wind,
They pass and have left no traces;
But one of them lingers far behind
The flight of the fairy faces.
She makes no moan,
She sorrows in the dark alone,
She wails for the love of human kind,
Like a whistling wind.

"Ah! why did I roam where the elfins ride,
Their glimmering steps to follow?
They bore me far from my loved one's side,
To wander o'er hill and hollow.

Kling! Klang! Kling!
Their stirrups and their bridles ring,
But my heart is cold in the cold night-tide,
Where the elfins ride."

Mary C. G. Byron [1861–

FAREWELL TO THE FAIRIES

Farewell, rewards and fairies!
Good housewives now may say,
For now foul sluts in dairies
Do fare as well as they.
And though they sweep their hearths no less
Than maids were wont to do,
Yet who of late, for cleanliness,
Finds sixpence in her shoe?

Lament, lament, old abbeys,
The fairies' lost command!
They did but change priests' babies,
But some have changed your land;
And all your children sprung from thence,
Are now grown Puritanes;
Who live as changelings ever since,
For love of your demains.

At morning and at evening both
You merry were and glad;
So little care of sleep or sloth
These pretty ladies had;
When Tom came home from labor,
Or Ciss to milking rose,
Then merrily merrily went their tabor
And nimbly went their toes.

Witness those rings and roundelays
Of theirs, which yet remain,
Were footed in Queen Mary's days
On many a grassy plain;

But since of late, Elizabeth,
And later, James came in,
They never danced on any heath
As when the time hath been.

By which we note the fairies
Were of the old profession;
Their songs were *Ave-Maries*,
Their dances were procession.
But now, alas! they all are dead,
Or gone beyond the seas;
Or farther for religion fled;
Or else they take their ease.

A tell-tale in their company
They never could endure;
And whoso kept not secretly
Their mirth, was punished sure;
It was a just and Christian deed
To pinch such black and blue:
Oh, how the Commonwealth doth need
Such justices as you!

Richard Corbet [1582–1635]

THE FAIRY FOLK

Come cuddle close in daddy's coat
Beside the fire so bright,
And hear about the fairy folk
That wander in the night.
For when the stars are shining clear
And all the world is still,
They float across the silver moon
From hill to cloudy hill.

Their caps of red, their cloaks of green,
Are hung with silver bells,
And when they're shaken with the wind
Their merry ringing swells.
And riding on the crimson moth,
With black spots on her wings,
They guide them down the purple sky
With golden bridle rings.

They love to visit girls and boys
To see how sweet they sleep,
To stand beside their cosy cots
And at their faces peep.
For in the whole of fairy-land
They have no finer sight
Than little children sleeping sound
With faces rosy bright.

On tip-toe crowding round their heads,
When bright the moonlight beams,
They whisper little tender words
That fill their minds with dreams;
And when they see a sunny smile,
With lightest finger tips
They lay a hundred kisses sweet
Upon the ruddy lips.

And then the little spotted moths
Spread out their crimson wings,
And bear away the fairy crowd
With shaking bridle rings.
Come, bairnies, hide in daddy's coat,
Beside the fire so bright—
Perhaps the little fairy folk
Will visit you to-night.

Robert Bird [1867-

THE FAIRY BOOK

When Mother takes the Fairy Book
And we curl up to hear,
'Tis "All aboard for Fairyland!"
Which seems to be so near.

For soon we reach the pleasant place
Of Once Upon a Time,
Where birdies sing the hour of day,
And flowers talk in rhyme;

Where Bobby is a velvet Prince,
And where I am a Queen;

Where one can talk with animals,
And walk about unseen;

Where Little People live in nuts,
And ride on butterflies,
And wonders kindly come to pass
Before your very eyes;

Where candy grows on every bush,
And playthings on the trees,
And visitors pick basketfuls
As often as they please.

It is the nicest time of day—
Though Bedtime is so near,—
When Mother takes the Fairy Book
And we curl up to hear.

Abbie Farwell Brown [18

THE VISITOR

The white goat Amaryllis,
She wandered at her will
At time of daffodillies
Afar and up the hill:
We hunted and we holloa'd
And back she came at dawn,
But what d'you think had followed?—
A little, pagan Faun!

His face was like a berry,
His ears were high and pricked:
Tip-tap—his hoofs came merry
As up the path he clicked;
A junket for his winning
We set in dairy delf;
He eat it—peart and grinning
As Christian as yourself!

He stayed about the steading
A fortnight, say, or more;
A blanket for his bedding
We spread beside the door;

And when the cocks crowed clearly
  Before the dawn was ripe,
He'd call the milkmaids cheerly
  Upon a reedy pipe!

That fortnight of his staying
  The work went smooth as silk:
The hens were all in laying,
  The cows were all in milk;
And then—and then one morning
  The maids woke up at day
Without his oaten warning,—
  And found he'd gone away.

He left no trace behind him;
  But still the milkmaids deem
That they, perhaps, may find him
  With butter and with cream:
Beside the door they set them
  In bowl and golden pat,
But no one comes to get them—
  Unless, maybe, the cat.

The white goat Amaryllis,
  She wanders at her will
At time of daffodillies,
  Away up Woolcombe hill;
She stays until the morrow,
  Then back she comes at dawn;
But never—to our sorrow—
  The little, pagan Faun.

Patrick R. Chalmers [18

THE LITTLE ELF

I MET a little Elf-man, once,
  Down where the lilies blow.
I asked him why he was so small,
  And why he didn't grow.

He slightly frowned, and with his eye
He looked me through and through.
"I'm quite as big for me," said he,
"As you are big for you."

John Kendrick Bangs [1862–

THE SATYRS AND THE MOON

WITHIN the wood behind the hill
The moon got tangled in the trees.
Her splendor made the branches thrill
And thrilled the breeze.

The satyrs in the grotto bent
Their heads to see the wondrous sight.
"It is a god in banishment
That stirs the night."

The little satyr looked and guessed:
"It is an apple that one sees,
Brought from that garden of the West—
Hesperides."

"It is a cyclops' glaring eye."
"A temple dome from Babylon."
"A Titan's cup of ivory."
"A little sun."

The tiny satyr jumped for joy,
And kicked his hoofs in utmost glee.
"It is a wondrous silver toy—
Bring it to me!"

A great wind whistled through the blue
And caught the moon and tossed it high;
A bubble of pale fire it flew
Across the sky.

The satyrs gasped and looked and smiled,
And wagged their heads from side to side,
Except their shaggy little child,
Who cried and cried.

Herbert S. Gorman [18

THE CHILDREN

THE CHILDREN

When the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And the school for the day is dismissed,
The little ones gather around me,
To bid me good night and be kissed;
Oh, the little white arms that encircle
My neck in their tender embrace!
Oh, the smiles that are halos of heaven,
Shedding sunshine of love on my face!

And when they are gone, I sit dreaming
Of my childhood too lovely to last,—
Of joy that my heart will remember,
While it wakes to the pulse of the past,
Ere the world and its wickedness made me
A partner of sorrow and sin,
When the glory of God was about me,
And the glory of gladness within.

All my heart grows as weak as a woman's,
And the fountain of feeling will flow,
When I think of the paths steep and stony,
Where the feet of the dear ones must go,—
Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them,
Of the tempest of fate blowing wild;—
Oh, there's nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child!

They are idols of hearts and of households;
They are angels of God in disguise;
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses,
His glory still shines in their eyes;

Those truants from home and from heaven,—
  They have made me more manly and mild;
And I know now how Jesus could liken
  The kingdom of God to a child.

I ask not a life for the dear ones,
  All radiant, as others have done,
But that life may have just enough shadow
  To temper the glare of the sun;
I would pray God to guard them from evil,
  But my prayer would bound back to myself;—
Ah! a seraph may pray for a sinner,
  But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bended,
  I have banished the rule and the rod
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge,
  They have taught me the goodness of God:
My heart is the dungeon of darkness
  Where I shut them for breaking a rule;
My frown is sufficient correction;
  My love is the law of the school.

I shall leave the old house in the autumn,
  To traverse its threshold no more;
Ah, how I shall sigh for the dear ones
  That meet me each morn at the door!
I shall miss the "good nights" and the kisses,
  And the gush of their innocent glee,
The group on the green, and the flowers
  That are brought every morning for me.

I shall miss them at morn and at even,
  Their song in the school and the street;
I shall miss the low hum of their voices,
  And the tread of their delicate feet.
When the lessons of life are all ended,
  And death says: "The school is dismissed!"
May the little ones gather around me,
  To bid me good night and be kissed!

Charles Monroe Dickinson [1842–

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

LAUS INFANTIUM

In praise of little children I will say
God first made man, then found a better way
For woman, but his third way was the best.
Of all created things, the loveliest
And most divine are children. Nothing here
Can be to us more gracious or more dear.
And though, when God saw all his works were good,
There was no rosy flower of babyhood,
'Twas said of children in a later day
That none could enter Heaven save such as they.

The earth, which feels the flowering of a thorn,
Was glad, O little child, when you were born;
The earth, which thrills when skylarks scale the blue,
Soared up itself to God's own Heaven in you;
And Heaven, which loves to lean down and to glass
Its beauty in each dewdrop on the grass,—
Heaven laughed to find your face so pure and fair,
And left, O little child, its reflex there.

William Canton [1845–

THE DESIRE

Give me no mansions ivory white
Nor palaces of pearl and gold;
Give me a child for all delight,
Just four years old.

Give me no wings of rosy shine
Nor snowy raiment, fold on fold,
Give me a little boy all mine,
Just four years old.

Give me no gold and starry crown
Nor harps, nor palm branches unrolled;
Give me a nestling head of brown,
Just four years old.

Give me a cheek that's like the peach,
Two arms to clasp me from the cold;
And all my heaven's within my reach,
Just four years old.

Dear God, You give me from Your skies
A little paradise to hold,
As Mary once her Paradise,
Just four years old.

Katherine Tynan [1861–

A CHILD'S LAUGHTER

All the bells of heaven may ring,
All the birds of heaven may sing,
All the wells on earth may spring,
All the winds on earth may bring
All sweet sounds together;
Sweeter far then all things heard,
Hand of harper, tone of bird,
Sound of woods at sundawn stirred,
Welling water's winsome word,
Wind in warm, wan weather.

One thing yet there is, that none,
Hearing ere its chime be done,
Knows not well the sweetest one
Heard of man beneath the sun,
Hoped in heaven hereafter;
Soft and strong and loud and light,

Very sound of very light,
Heard from morning's rosiest height,
When the soul of all delight,
  Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome rolled
Never forth such note, nor told
Hours so blithe in tones so bold,
As the radiant mouth of gold
  Here that rings forth heaven.
If the golden-crested wren
Were a nightingale—why, then
Something seen and heard of men
Might be half as sweet as when
  Laughs a child of seven.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

SEVEN YEARS OLD

Seven white roses on one tree,
Seven white loaves of blameless leaven,
Seven white sails on one soft sea,
Seven white swans on one lake's lea,
Seven white flowerlike stars in Heaven,
All are types unmeet to be
For a birthday's crown of seven.

Not the radiance of the roses,
Not the blessing of the bread,
Not the breeze that ere day grows is
Fresh for sails and swans, and closes
Wings above the sun's grave spread
When the starshine on the snows is
Sweet as sleep on sorrow shed.

Nothing sweeter, nothing best,
Holds so good and sweet a treasure
As the love wherewith once blest
Joy grows holy, grief takes rest,
Life, half tired with hours to measure,
Fills his eyes and lips and breast
With most light and breath of pleasure;

As the rapture unpolluted,
As the passion undefiled,
By whose force all pains heart-rooted
Are transfigured and transmuted,
Recompensed and reconciled,
Through the imperial, undisputed,
Present godhead of a child.

Brown bright eyes and fair bright head,
Worth a worthier crown than this is,
Worth a worthier song instead,
Sweet grave wise round mouth, full fed
With the joy of love, whose bliss is
More than mortal wine and bread,
Lips whose words are sweet as kisses.

Little hands so glad of giving,
Little heart so glad of love,
Little soul so glad of living,
While the strong swift hours are weaving
Light with darkness woven above,
Time for mirth and time for grieving,
Plume of raven and plume of dove.

I can give you but a word
Warm with love therein for leaven,
But a song that falls unheard
Yet on ears of sense unstirred
Yet by song so far from Heaven,
Whence you came the brightest bird,
Seven years since, of seven times seven.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

CREEP AFORE YE GANG

Creep awa', my bairnie, creep afore ye gang,
Cock ye baith your lugs to your auld Grannie's sang:
Gin ye gang as far ye will think the road lang,
Creep awa', my bairnie, creep afore ye gang.

Creep awa', my bairnie, ye're ower young to learn
To tot up and down yet, my bonnie wee bairn;
Better creepin' cannie, than fa'in' wi' a bang,
Duntin' a' your wee brow,—creep afore ye gang.

Ye'll creep, an' ye'll hotch, an' ye'll nod to your mither,
Watchin' ilka step o' your wee dousy brither;
Rest ye on the floor till your wee limbs grow strang,
An' ye'll be a braw chiel yet,—creep afore ye gang.

The wee birdie fa's when it tries ower soon to flee,
Folks are sure to tumble, when they climb ower hie;
They wha canna walk right are sure to come to wrang,
Creep awa', my bairnie, creep afore ye gang.

James Ballantine [1808–1877]

CASTLES IN THE AIR

The bonnie, bonnie bairn who sits poking in the ase,
Glowering in the fire wi' his wee round face,
Laughing at the fuffin' lowe—what sees he there?
Ha! the young dreamer's bigging castles in the air.

His wee chubby face and his touzie curly pow
Are laughing and nodding to the dancing lowe;
He'll brown his rosy cheeks, and singe his sunny hair,
Glowering at the imps wi' their castles in the air.

He sees muckle castles towering to the moon;
He sees little sodgers pu'ing them a' doun;
Warlds whommlin' up and doun, bleezing wi' a flare,—
See how he loups as they glimmer in the air!

For a' sae sage he looks, what can the laddie ken?
He's thinking upon naething, like mony mighty men:
A wee thing mak's us think, a sma' thing mak's us stare,—
There are mair folk than him bigging castles in the air.

Sic a night in winter may weel mak' him cauld:
His chin upon his buffy hand will soon mak' him auld;
His brow is brent sae braid—O pray that daddy Care
Wad let the wean alane wi' his castles in the air!

He'll glower at the fire, and he'll keek at the light;
But mony sparkling stars are swallowed up by Night:
Aulder e'en than his are glamored by a glare,—
Hearts are broken, heads are turned, wi' castles in the air.

James Ballantine [1808–1877]

UNDER MY WINDOW

Under my window, under my window,
All in the Midsummer weather,
Three little girls with fluttering curls
Flit to and fro together:—
There's Bell with her bonnet of satin sheen,
And Maud with her mantle of silver-green,
And Kate with her scarlet feather.

Under my window, under my window,
Leaning stealthily over,
Merry and clear, the voice I hear
Of each glad-hearted rover.
Ah! sly little Kate, she steals my roses;
And Maud and Bell twine wreaths and posies,
As merry as bees in clover.

Under my window, under my window,
In the blue Midsummer weather,
Stealing slow, on a hushed tiptoe,
I catch them all together:—
Bell with her bonnet of satin sheen,
And Maud with her mantle of silver-green,
And Kate with her scarlet feather.

Under my window, under my window,
And off through the orchard closes;
While Maud she flouts, and Bell she pouts,
They scamper and drop their posies;
But dear little Kate takes naught amiss,
And leaps in my arms with a loving kiss,
And I give her all my roses.

Thomas Westwood [1814?–1888]

LITTLE BELL

He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.
THE ANCIENT MARINER

PIPED the blackbird on the beechwood spray
"Pretty maid, slow wandering this way,
What's your name?" quoth he—
"What's your name? Oh stop and straight unfold,
Pretty maid with showery curls of gold,"—
"Little Bell," said she.

Little Bell sat down beneath the rocks—
Tossed aside her gleaming golden locks—
"Bonny bird," quoth she,
"Sing me your best song before I go."
"Here's the very finest song I know,
Little Bell," said he.

And the blackbird piped; you never heard
Half so gay a song from any bird—
Full of quips and wiles,
Now so round and rich, now soft and slow.
All for love of that sweet face below,
Dimpled o'er with smiles.

And the while the bonny bird did pour
His full heart out freely o'er and o'er
'Neath the morning skies,
In the little childish heart below
All the sweetness seemed to grow and grow,
And shine forth in happy overflow
From the blue, bright eyes.

Down the dell she tripped and through the glade,
Peeped the squirrel from the hazel shade,
And from out the tree
Swung, and leaped, and frolicked, void of fear,—
While bold blackbird piped that all might hear—
"Little Bell," piped he.

Little Bell sat down amid the fern—
"Squirrel, to your task return—
Bring me nuts," quoth she.
Up, away the frisky squirrel hies—
Golden wood-lights glancing in his eyes—
And adown the tree,
Great ripe nuts, kissed brown by July sun,
In the little lap dropped one by one—
Hark, how blackbird pipes to see the fun!
"Happy Bell," pipes he.

Little Bell looked up and down the glade—
"Squirrel, squirrel, if you're not afraid,
Come and share with me!"
Down came squirrel eager for his fare—
Down came bonny blackbird I declare;
Little Bell gave each his honest share—
Ah the merry three!
And the while these frolic playmates twain
Piped and frisked from bough to bough again,
'Neath the morning skies,
In the little childish heart below
All the sweetness seemed to grow and grow,
And shine out in happy overflow
From her blue, bright eyes.

By her snow-white cot at close of day,
Knelt sweet Bell, with folded palms to pray—
Very calm and clear
Rose the praying voice to where, unseen,
In blue heaven, an angel shape serene
Paused awhile to hear—
"What good child is this," the angel said,
"That, with happy heart, beside her bed
Prays so lovingly?"
Low and soft, oh! very low and soft,
Crooned the blackbird in the orchard croft,
"Bell, dear Bell!" crooned he.

"Whom God's creatures love," the angel fair
Murmured, "God doth bless with angels' care;

Child, thy bed shall be
Folded safe from harm—Love deep and kind
Shall watch around and leave good gifts behind,
Little Bell, for thee!"

Thomas Westwood [1814?–1888]

THE BAREFOOT BOY

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy,—
I was once a barefoot boy!
Prince thou art,—the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye,—
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild flower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;

Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans!
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy,—
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,—
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too;
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread;

Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, gray and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;
And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch: pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil:
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

John Greenleaf Whittier. [1807–1892]

THE HERITAGE

The rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of brick and stone, and gold,
And he inherits soft white hands,

And tender flesh that fears the cold,
Nor dares to wear a garment old;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits cares;
The bank may break, the factory burn,
A breath may burst his bubble shares,
And soft white hands could hardly earn
A living that would serve his turn;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits wants,
His stomach craves for dainty fare;
With sated heart, he hears the pants
Of toiling hinds with brown arms bare,
And wearies in his easy-chair;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,
A hardy frame, a hardier spirit,
King of two hands, he does his part
In every useful toil and art;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Wishes o'erjoyed with humble things,
A rank adjudged by toil-won merit,
Content that from employment springs,
A heart that in his labor sings;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
A patience learned of being poor,
Courage, if sorrow come, to bear it,

A fellow-feeling that is sure
To make the outcast bless his door;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

O rich man's son! there is a toil
That with all others level stands;
Large charity doth never soil,
But only whiten, soft white hands;
This is the best crop from thy lands,
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being rich to hold in fee.

O poor man's son! scorn not thy state;
There is worse weariness than thine,
In merely being rich and great;
Toil only gives the soul to shine,
And makes rest fragrant and benign;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being poor to hold in fee.

Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,
Are equal in the earth at last;
Both, children of the same dear God,
Prove title to your heirship vast
By record of a well-filled past;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Well worth a life to hold in fee.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

LETTY'S GLOBE

OR SOME IRREGULARITIES IN A FIRST LESSON IN GEOGRAPHY

When Letty had scarce passed her third glad year,
And her young artless words began to flow,
One day we gave the child a colored sphere
Of the wide Earth, that she might mark and know,
By tint and outline, all its sea and land.
She patted all the world; old Empires peeped
Between her baby fingers; her soft hand
Was welcome at all frontiers. How she leaped,

And laughed and prattled in her world-wide bliss!
But when we turned her sweet unlearnèd eye
On our own Isle, she raised a joyous cry,—
"O yes! I see it, Letty's home is there!"
And while she hid all England with a kiss,
Bright over Europe fell her golden hair.

Charles Tennyson Turner [1808–1879]

DOVE'S NEST

"Sylvia, hush!" I said, "come here,
Come see a fairy-tale, my dear!
Tales told are good, tales seen are best!"
The dove was brooding on the nest
In the lowest crotch of the apple tree.
I lifted her up so quietly,
That when she could have touched the bird
The soft gray creature had not stirred.
It looked at us with a wild dark eye.
But, "Birdie, fly!" was Sylvia's cry,
Impatient Sylvia, "Birdie, fly."
Ah, well: but when I touched the nest,
The child recoiled upon my breast.
Was ever such a startling thing?
Sudden silver and purple wing,
The dove was out, away, across,
Struggling heart-break on the grass.
And there in the cup within the tree
Two milk-white eggs were ours to see.
Was ever thing so pretty? Alack,
"Birdie!" Sylvia cried, "come back!"

Joseph Russell Taylor [1868–

THE ORACLE

I lay upon the summer grass.
A gold-haired, sunny child came by,
And looked at me, as loath to pass,
With questions in her lingering eye.

She stopped and wavered, then drew near,
(Ah! the pale gold around her head!)
And o'er my shoulder stopped to peer.
"Why do you read?" she said.

"I read a poet of old time,
Who sang through all his living hours—
Beauty of earth—the streams, the flowers—
And stars, more lovely than his rhyme.

"And now I read him, since men go,
Forgetful of these sweetest things;
Since he and I love brooks that flow,
And dawns, and bees, and flash of wings!"

She stared at me with laughing look,
Then clasped her hands upon my knees:
"How strange to read it in a book!
I could have told you all of these!"

Arthur Davison Ficke [1883–

TO A LITTLE GIRL

You taught me ways of gracefulness and fashions of address,
The mode of plucking pansies and the art of sowing cress,
And how to handle puppies, with propitiatory pats
For mother dogs, and little acts of courtesy to cats.

O connoisseur of pebbles, colored leaves and trickling rills,
Whom seasons fit as do the sheaths that wrap the daffodils,
Whose eyes' divine expectancy foretells some starry goal,
You taught me here docility—and how to save my soul.

Helen Parry Eden [18

TO A LITTLE GIRL

Her eyes are like forget-me-nots,
So loving, kind and true;
Her lips are like a pink sea-shell
Just as the sun shines through;

Her hair is like the waving grain
In summer's golden light;
And, best of all, her little soul
Is, like a lily, white.

Gustav Kobbé [1857–

A PARENTAL ODE TO MY SON

AGED THREE YEARS AND FIVE MONTHS

Thou happy, happy elf!
(But stop,—first let me kiss away that tear!)
Thou tiny image of myself!
(My love, he's poking peas into his ear!)
Thou merry, laughing sprite,
With spirits feather-light,
Untouched by sorrow, and unsoiled by sin,—
(My dear, the child is swallowing a pin!)

Thou little tricksy Puck!
With antic toys so funnily bestuck,
Light as the singing bird that wings the air,—
(The door! the door! he'll tumble down the stair!)
Thou darling of thy sire!
(Why, Jane, he'll set his pinafore afire!)
Thou imp of mirth and joy!
In Love's dear chain so strong and bright a link,
Thou idol of thy parents,—(Drat the boy!
There goes my ink!)

Thou cherub,—but of earth;
Fit playfellow for Fays, by moonlight pale,
In harmless sport and mirth,
(That dog will bite him, if he pulls its tail!)
Thou human humming-bee, extracting honey
From every blossom in the world that blows,
Singing in youth's Elysium ever sunny.—
(Another tumble! That's his precious nose!)

Thy father's pride and hope!
(He'll break the mirror with that skipping-rope!)

With pure heart newly stamped from nature's mint,
(Where *did* he learn that squint?)
Thou young domestic dove!
(He'll have that jug off with another shove!)
Dear nursling of the hymeneal nest!
(Are these torn clothes his best?)
Little epitome of man!
(He'll climb upon the table, that's his plan!)
Touched with the beauteous tints of dawning life,—
(He's got a knife!)

Thou enviable being!
No storms, no clouds, in thy blue sky foreseeing,
Play on, play on,
My elfin John!
Toss the light ball, bestride the stick,—
(I knew so many cakes would make him sick!)
With fancies, buoyant as the thistle-down,
Prompting the face grotesque, and antic brisk,
With many a lamb-like frisk!
(He's got the scissors, snipping at your gown!)

Thou pretty opening rose!
(Go to your mother, child, and wipe your nose!)
Balmy and breathing music like the South,—
(He really brings my heart into my mouth!)
Fresh as the morn, and brilliant as its star,—
(I wish that window had an iron bar!)
Bold as the hawk, yet gentle as the dove;—
(I'll tell you what, my love,
I cannot write unless he's sent above.)

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

A NEW POET

I WRITE. He sits beside my chair,
And scribbles, too, in hushed delight,
He dips his pen in charmèd air:
What is it he pretends to write?

He toils and toils; the paper gives
No clue to aught he thinks. What then?
His little heart is glad; he lives
The poems that he cannot pen.

Strange fancies throng that baby brain.
What grave, sweet looks! What earnest eyes!
He stops—reflects—and now again
His unrecording pen he plies.

It seems a satire on myself,—
These dreamy nothings scrawled in air,
This thought, this work! Oh tricksy elf,
Wouldst drive thy father to despair?

Despair! Ah, no; the heart, the mind
Persists in hoping,—schemes and strives
That there may linger with our kind
Some memory of our little lives.

Beneath his rock in the early world
Smiling the naked hunter lay,
And sketched on horn the spear he hurled,
The urus which he made his prey.

Like him I strive in hope my rhymes
May keep my name a little while,—
O child, who knows how many times
We two have made the angels smile!

William Canton [1845–

TO LAURA W——, TWO YEARS OLD

Bright be the skies that cover thee,
Child of the sunny brow,—
Bright as the dream flung over thee
By all that meets thee now,—
Thy heart is beating joyously,
Thy voice is like a bird's,
And sweetly breaks the melody
Of thy imperfect words.

I know no fount that gushes out
As gladly as thy tiny shout.

I would that thou might'st ever be
  As beautiful as now,
That time might ever leave as free
  Thy yet unwritten brow.
I would life were all poetry
  To gentle measure set,
That naught but chastened melody
  Might stain thine eye of jet,
Nor one discordant note be spoken,
Till God the cunning harp hath broken.

I would—but deeper things than these
  With woman's lot are wove:
Wrought of intensest sympathies,
  And nerved by purest love;
By the strong spirit's discipline,
  By the fierce wrong forgiven,
By all that wrings the heart of sin,
  Is woman won to heaven.
"Her lot is on thee," lovely child—
God keep thy spirit undefiled!

I fear thy gentle loveliness,
  Thy witching tone and air,
Thine eye's beseeching earnestness
  May be to thee a snare.
The silver stars may purely shine,
  The waters taintless flow:
But they who kneel at woman's shrine
  Breathe on it as they bow.
Peace may fling back the gift again,
But the crushed flower will leave a stain.

What shall preserve thee, beautiful child?
  Keep thee as thou art now?
Bring thee, a spirit undefiled,
  At God's pure throne to bow?

The world is but a broken reed,
  And life grows early dim—
Who shall be near thee in thy need,
  To lead thee up to Him?
He who himself was "undefiled?"
With Him we trust thee, beautiful child!

Nathaniel Parker Willis [1806–1867]

TO ROSE

Rose, when I remember you,
Little lady, scarcely two,
I am suddenly aware
Of the angels in the air.
All your softly gracious ways
Make an island in my days
Where my thoughts fly back to be
Sheltered from too strong a sea.
All your luminous delight
Shines before me in the night
When I grope for sleep and find
Only shadows in my mind.

Rose, when I remember you,
White and glowing, pink and new,
With so swift a sense of fun
Although life has just begun;
With so sure a pride of place
In your very infant face,
I should like to make a prayer
To the angels in the air:
"If an angel ever brings
Me a baby in her wings,
Please be certain that it grows
Very, very much like Rose."

Sara Teasdale [1884–

TO CHARLOTTE PULTENEY

Timely blossom, Infant fair,
Fondling of a happy pair,
Every morn and every night
Their solicitous delight,
Sleeping, waking, still at ease,
Pleasing, without skill to please;
Little gossip, blithe and hale,
Tattling many a broken tale,
Singing many a tuneless song,
Lavish of a heedless tongue;
Simple maiden, void of art,
Babbling out the very heart,
Yet abandoned to thy will,
Yet imagining no ill,
Yet too innocent to blush;
Like the linnet in the bush
To the mother-linnet's note
Moduling her slender throat;
Chirping forth thy pretty joys,
Wanton in the change of toys,
Like the linnet green, in May
Flitting to each bloomy spray;
Wearied then and glad of rest,
Like the linnet in the nest:—
This thy present happy lot,
This, in time will be forgot:
Other pleasures, other cares,
Ever-busy Time prepares;
And thou shalt in thy daughter see,
This picture, once, resembled thee.

Ambrose Philips [1675?–1749]

THE PICTURE OF LITTLE T. C. IN A PROSPECT OF FLOWERS

See with what simplicity
This nymph begins her golden days!
In the green grass she loves to lie,
And there with her fair aspect tames

The wilder flowers, and gives them names;
But only with the roses plays,
And them does tell
What color best becomes them, and what smell.

Who can foretell for what high cause
This darling of the gods was born?
Yet this is she whose chaster laws
The wanton Love shall one day fear,
And, under her command severe,
See his bow broke, and ensigns torn.
Happy who can
Appease this virtuous enemy of man!

O then let me in time compound
And parley with those conquering eyes,
Ere they have tried their force to wound,
Ere with their glancing wheels they drive
In triumph over hearts that strive,
And them that yield but more despise:
Let me be laid
Where I may see the glories from some shade.

Meantime, whilst every verdant thing
Itself does at thy beauty charm,
Reform the errors of the Spring;
Make that the tulips may have share
Of sweetness, seeing they are fair,
And roses of their thorns disarm;
But most procure
That violets may a longer age endure.

But O young beauty of the woods,
Whom Nature courts with fruits and flowers,
Gather the flowers, but spare the buds;
Lest Flora, angry at thy crime
To kill her infants in their prime,
Do quickly make the example yours;
And, ere we see,
Nip, in the blossom, all our hopes and thee.

Andrew Marvell [1621–1678]

TO HARTLEY COLERIDGE

SIX YEARS OLD

O THOU! whose fancies from afar are brought:
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
And fittest to unutterable thought
The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol;
Thou fairy voyager! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat
May rather seem
To brood on air than on an earthly stream;
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
Where earth and heaven do make one imagery:
O blessed vision! happy child!
Thou art so exquisitely wild,
I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years.
I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,
Lord of thy house and hospitality;
And Grief, uneasy lover! never rest
But when she sate within the touch of thee.
O too industrious folly!
O vain and causeless melancholy!
Nature will either end thee quite;
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
Preserve for thee, by individual right,
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
What hast thou to do with sorrow,
Or the injuries of to-morrow?
Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
Ill-fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;
A gem that glitters while it lives,
And no forewarning gives;
But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife,
Slips in a moment out of life.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

TO A CHILD OF QUALITY

FIVE YEARS OLD, 1704, THE AUTHOR THEN FORTY

Lords, knights, and squires, the numerous band
That wear the fair Miss Mary's fetters,
Were summoned by her high command
To show their passions by their letters.

My pen amongst the rest I took,
Lest those bright eyes, that cannot read,
Should dart their kindling fires, and look
The power they have to be obeyed.

Nor quality, nor reputation,
Forbids me yet my flame to tell;
Dear Five-years-old befriends my passion,
And I may write till she can spell.

For, while she makes her silkworms' beds
With all the tender things I swear;
Whilst all the house my passion reads,
In papers round her baby's hair;

She may receive and own my flame;
For, though the strictest prudes should know it,
She'll pass for a most virtuous dame,
And I for an unhappy poet.

Then too, alas! when she shall tear
The rhymes some younger rival sends,
She'll give me leave to write, I fear,
And we shall still continue friends.

For, as our different ages move,
'Tis so ordained (would Fate but mend it!),
That I shall be past making love
When she begins to comprehend it.

Matthew Prior [1664–1721]

EX ORE INFANTIUM

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy
Once, and just so small as I?
And what did it feel like to be
Out of Heaven, and just like me?
Didst Thou sometimes think of *there*,
And ask where all the angels were?
I should think that I would cry
For my house all made of sky;
I would look about the air,
And wonder where my angels were;
And at waking 'twould distress me—
Not an angel there to dress me!

Hadst Thou ever any toys,
Like us little girls and boys?
And didst Thou play in Heaven with all
The angels, that were not too tall,
With stars for marbles? Did the things
Play *Can you see me?* through their wings?

Didst Thou kneel at night to pray,
And didst Thou join Thy hands, this way?
And did they tire sometimes, being young,
And make the prayer seem very long?
And dost Thou like it best, that we
Should join our hands to pray to Thee?
I used to think, before I knew,
The prayer not said unless we do.
And did Thy Mother at the night
Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right?
And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,
Kissed, and sweet, and Thy prayers said?

Thou canst not have forgotten all
That it feels like to be small:
And Thou know'st I cannot pray
To Thee in my father's way—
When Thou wast so little, say,
Could'st Thou talk Thy Father's way?—
So, a little Child, come down
And hear a child's tongue like Thy own;

Take me by the hand and walk,
And listen to my baby-talk.
To Thy Father show my prayer
(He will look, Thou art so fair),
And say: "O Father, I, Thy Son,
Bring the prayer of a little one."

And He will smile, that children's tongue
Has not changed since Thou wast young!

Francis Thompson [1859–1907]

OBITUARY

FINDING Francesca full of tears, I said,
"Tell me thy trouble." "Oh, my dog is dead!
Murdered by poison!—no one knows for what!—
Was ever dog born capable of that?"
"Child,"—I began to say, but checked my thought,—
"A better dog can easily be bought."
For no—what animal could him replace?
Those loving eyes! That fond, confiding face!
Those dear, dumb touches! Therefore I was dumb.
From word of mine could any comfort come?
A bitter sorrow 'tis to lose a brute
Friend, dog or horse, for grief must then be mute,—
So many smile to see the rivers shed
Of tears for one poor, speechless creature dead.
When parents die there's many a word to say—
Kind words, consoling—one can always pray;
When children die 'tis natural to tell
Their mother, "Certainly, with them 'tis well!"
But for a dog, 'twas all the life he had,
Since death is end of dogs, or good or bad.
This was his world; he was contented here;
Imagined nothing better, naught more dear,
Than his young mistress; sought no brighter sphere;
Having no sin, asked not to be forgiven;
Ne'er guessed at God nor ever dreamed of heaven.
Now he has passed away, so much of love
Goes from our life, without one hope above!
When a dog dies there's nothing to be said
But—kiss me, darling!—dear old Smiler's dead.

Thomas William Parsons [1819–1892]

THE CHILD'S HERITAGE

Oh, there are those, a sordid clan,
  With pride in gaud and faith in gold,
Who prize the sacred soul of man
  For what his hands have sold.

And these shall deem thee humbly bred:
  They shall not hear, they shall not see
The kings among the lordly dead
  Who walk and talk with thee!

A tattered cloak may be thy dole,
  And thine the roof that Jesus had:
The broidered garment of the soul
  Shall keep thee purple-clad!

The blood of men hath dyed its brede,
  And it was wrought by holy seers
With sombre dream and golden deed,
  And pearled with women's tears.

With Eld thy chain of days is one:
  The seas are still Homeric seas;
Thy skies shall glow with Pindar's sun,
  The stars of Socrates!

Unaged the ancient tide shall surge,
  The old Spring burn along the bough:
For thee, the new and old converge
  In one eternal Now!

I give thy feet the hopeful sod,
  Thy mouth, the priceless boon of breath;
The glory of the search for God
  Be thine in life and death!

Unto thy flesh, the soothing dust;
  Thy soul, the gift of being free:
The torch my fathers gave in trust,
  Thy father gives to thee!

John G. Neihardt [1881-

A GIRL OF POMPEII

A PUBLIC haunt they found her in:
  She lay asleep, a lovely child;
  The only thing left undefiled
Where all things else bore taint of sin.

Her supple outlines fixed in clay
  The universal law suspend,
  And turn Time's chariot back, and blend
A thousand years with yesterday.

A sinless touch, austere yet warm,
  Around her girlish figure pressed,
  Caught the sweet imprint of her breast,
And held her, surely clasped, from harm.

Truer than work of sculptor's art
  Comes this dear maid of long ago,
  Sheltered from woeful chance, to show
A spirit's lovely counterpart,

And bid mistrustful men be sure
  That form shall fate of flesh escape,
  And, quit of earth's corruptions, shape
Itself, imperishably pure.

Edward Sandford Martin [1856–

ON THE PICTURE OF A "CHILD TIRED OF PLAY"

TIRED of play! Tired of play!
What hast thou done this live-long day!
The bird is silent and so is the bee,
The shadow is creeping up steeple and tree;
The doves have flown to the sheltering eaves,
And the nests are dark with the drooping leaves;
Twilight gathers, and day is done,—
How hast thou spent it, restless one?

Playing! And what hast thou done beside
To tell thy mother at eventide?

What promise of morn is left unbroken?
What kind word to thy playmate spoken?
Whom hast thou pitied, and whom forgiven?
How with thy faults has duty striven?
What hast thou learned by field and hill,
By greenwood path and by singing rill?

There will come an eve to a longer day
That will find thee tired,—but not with play!
And thou wilt learn, as thou learnest now,
With wearied limbs and aching brow,
And wish the shadows would faster creep
And long to go to thy quiet sleep.

Well will it be for thee then if thou
Art as free from sin and shame as now!
Well for thee if thy tongue can tell
A tale like this, of a day spent well!
If thine open hand hath relieved distress,
And thy pity hath sprung to wretchedness—
If thou hast forgiven the sore offence
And humbled thy heart with penitence;

If Nature's voices have spoken to thee
With her holy meanings, eloquently—
If every creature hath won thy love,
From the creeping worm to the brooding dove—
If never a sad, low-spoken word
Hath plead with thy human heart unheard—
Then, when the night steals on, as now
It will bring relief to thine aching brow,
And, with joy and peace at the thought of rest,
Thou wilt sink to sleep on thy mother's breast.

Nathaniel Parker Willis [1806–1867]

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years:
Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
Bright volumes of vapor through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail;
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade:
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colors have all passed away from her eyes!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

CHILDREN'S SONG

Sometimes wind and sometimes rain,
Then the sun comes back again;
Sometimes rain and sometimes snow,
Goodness, how we'd like to know
Why the weather alters so.

When the weather's really good
We go nutting in the wood;
When it rains we stay at home,
And then sometimes other some
Of the neighbors' children come.

Sometimes we have jam and meat,
All the things we like to eat;
Sometimes we make do with bread
And potatoes boiled instead.
Once when we were put to bed
We had nowt and mother cried,
But that was after father died.

So, sometimes wind and sometimes rain,
Then the sun comes back again;
Sometimes rain and sometimes snow,
Goodness, how we'd like to know
If things will *always* alter so.

Ford Madox Hueffer [1873–

THE MITHERLESS BAIRN

When a' other bairnies are hushed to their hame
By aunty, or cousin, or frecky grand-dame,
Wha stands last and lanely, an' naebody carin'?
'Tis the puir doited loonie,—the mitherless bairn!

The mitherless bairn gangs to his lane bed;
Nane covers his cauld back, or haps his bare head;
His wee hackit heelies are hard as the airn,
An' litheless the lair o' the mitherless bairn.

Aneath his cauld brow siccan dreams hover there,
O' hands that wont kindly to kame his dark hair;
But mornin' brings clutches, a' reckless an' stern,
That lo'e na the locks o' the mitherless bairn!

Yon sister that sang o'er his saftly rocked bed
Now rests in the mools where her mammie is laid;
The father toils sair their wee bannock to earn,
An' kens na the wrangs o' his mitherless bairn.

Her spirit, that passed in yon hour o' his birth,
Still watches his wearisome wanderings on earth;
Recording in heaven the blessings they earn
Wha couthilie deal wi' the mitherless bairn!

O, speak him na harshly,—he trembles the while,
He bends to your bidding, and blesses your smile;
In their dark hour o' anguish the heartless shall learn
That God deals the blow, for the mitherless bairn!

William Thom [1798?–1848]

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years?
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,
And *that* cannot stop their tears.

The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
The young birds are chirping in the nest,
The young fawns are playing with the shadows,
The young flowers are blowing toward the west—
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
They are weeping bitterly!
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the free.

Do you question the young children in the sorrow,
Why their tears are falling so?
The old man may weep for his to-morrow
Which is lost in Long Ago;
The old tree is leafless in the forest,
The old year is ending in the frost,
The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,
The old hope is hardest to be lost:
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
Do you ask them why they stand
Weeping sore before the bosoms of their mothers,
In our happy Fatherland?

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their looks are sad to see,
For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses
Down the cheeks of infancy;
"Your old earth," they say, "is very dreary;
Our young feet," they say, "are very weak;
Few paces have we taken, yet are weary—
Our grave-rest is very far to seek:
Ask the aged why they weep, and not the children
For the outside earth is cold,
And we young ones stand without, in our bewildering,
And the graves are for the old.

"True," say the children, "it may happen
That we die before our time:
Little Alice died last year—her grave is shapen
Like a snowball, in the rime.
We looked into the pit prepared to take her:
Was no room for any work in the close clay!

From the sleep wherein she lieth none will wake her,
Crying, 'Get up, little Alice! it is day.'
If you listen by that grave, in sun and shower,
With your ear down, little Alice never cries;
Could we see her face, be sure we should not know her,
For the smile has time for growing in her eyes:
And merry go her moments, lulled and stilled in
The shroud by the kirk-chime.
It is good when it happens," say the children,
"That we die before our time."

Alas, alas, the children! they are seeking
Death in life, as best to have!
They are binding up their hearts away from breaking,
With a cerement from the grave.
Go out, children, from the mine and from the city,
Sing out, children, as the little thrushes do;
Pluck your handfuls of the meadow cowslips pretty;
Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let them through!
But they answer, "Are your cowslips of the meadows
Like our weeds anear the mine?
Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-shadows,
From your pleasures fair and fine!

"For oh," say the children, "we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap;
If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.
Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,
We fall upon our faces, trying to go;
And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,
The reddest flower would look as pale as snow.
For, all day, we drag our burden tiring,
Through the coal-dark, underground;
Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round.

"For, all day, the wheels are droning, turning;
Their wind comes in our faces,
Till our hearts turn, our heads, with pulses burning,
And the walls turn in their places:

Turns the sky in the high window blank and reeling,
Turns the long light that drops adown the wall,
Turn the black flies that crawl along the ceiling:
All are turning, all the day, and we with all.
And all day, the iron wheels are droning;
And sometimes we could pray,
'O ye wheels, (breaking out in a mad moaning)
'Stop! be silent for to-day!' "

Ay, be silent! Let them hear each other breathing
For a moment, mouth to mouth!
Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh wreathing
Of their tender human youth!
Let them feel that this cold metallic motion
Is not all the life God fashions or reveals:
Let them prove their living souls against the notion
That they live in you, or under you, O wheels!
Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark;
And the children's souls, which God is calling sunward,
Spin on blindly in the dark.

Now tell the poor young children, O my brothers,
To look up to Him and pray;
So the blessèd One, who blesseth all the others,
Will bless them another day.
They answer, " Who is God that He should hear us,
While the rushing of the iron wheels is stirred?
When we sob aloud, the human creatures near us
Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a word!
And *we* hear not (for the wheels in their resounding)
Strangers speaking at the door:
Is it likely God, with angels singing round Him,
Hears our weeping any more?

"Two words, indeed, of praying we remember,
And at midnight's hour of harm,
'Our Father,' looking upward in the chamber,
We say softly for a charm.
We know no other words except 'Our Father,'
And we think that, in some pause of angels' song,

God may pluck them with the silence sweet to gather,
And hold both within his right hand which is strong.
'Our Father!' If He heard us, He would surely
(For they call Him good and mild)
Answer, smiling down the steep world very purely,
'Come and rest with me, my child.'

"But no!" say the children, weeping faster,
"He is speechless as a stone;
And they tell us, of His image is the master
Who commands us to work on.
Go to!" say the children,—"Up in Heaven,
Dark, wheel-like, turning clouds are all we find.
Do not mock us; grief has made us unbelieving:
We look up for God, but tears have made us blind."
Do you hear the children weeping and disproving,
O my brothers, what ye preach?
For God's possible is taught by His world's loving,
And the children doubt of each.

And well may the children weep before you!
They are weary ere they run;
They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory
Which is brighter than the sun.
They know the grief of man, without its wisdom;
They sink in man's despair, without its calm;
Are slaves, without the liberty in Christdom,
Are martyrs, by the pang without the palm:
Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievingly
The harvest of its memories cannot reap,—
Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.
Let them weep! let them weep!

They look up, with their pale and sunken faces,
And their look is dread to see,
For they mind you of their angels in high places,
With eyes turned on Deity.
"How long," they say, "how long, O cruel nation,
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's heart,—
Stifle down with a mailèd heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?

Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,
And your purple shows your path;
But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper
Than the strong man in his wrath!"

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

THE SHADOW-CHILD

Why do the wheels go whirring round,
Mother, mother?
Oh, mother, are they giants bound,
And will they growl forever?
Yes, fiery giants underground,
Daughter, little daughter,
Forever turn the wheels around,
And rumble-grumble ever.

Why do I pick the threads all day,
Mother, mother?
While sunshine children are at play?
And must I work forever?
Yes, shadow-child; the live-long day,
Daughter, little daughter,
Your hands must pick the threads away,
And feel the sunshine never.

Why do the birds sing in the sun,
Mother, mother?
If all day long I run and run,
Run with the wheels forever?
The birds may sing till day is done,
Daughter, little daughter,
But with the wheels your feet must run—
Run with the wheels forever.

Why do I feel so tired each night,
Mother, mother?
The wheels are always buzzing bright;
Do they grow sleepy never?
Oh, baby thing, so soft and white,
Daughter, little daughter,
The big wheels grind us in their might,
And they will grind forever.

And is the white thread never spun,
Mother, mother?
And is the white cloth never done,
For you and me done never?
Oh, yes, our thread will all be spun,
Daughter, little daughter,
When we lie down out in the sun,
And work no more forever.

And when will come that happy day,
Mother, mother?
Oh, shall we laugh and sing and play
Out in the sun forever?
Nay, shadow-child, we'll rest all day,
Daughter, little daughter,
Where green grass grows and roses gay,
There in the sun forever.

Harriet Monroe [1860–

MOTHER WEPT

Mother wept, and father sighed;
With delight aglow
Cried the lad, "To-morrow," cried,
"To the pit I go."

Up and down the place he sped,—
Greeted old and young;
Far and wide the tidings spread;
Clapt his hands and sung.

Came his cronies; some to gaze
Wrapped in wonder; some
Free with counsel; some with praise:
Some with envy dumb.

"May he," many a gossip cried,
"Be from peril kept."
Father hid his face and sighed,
Mother turned and wept.

Joseph Skipsey [1832–1903]

DUTY

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
  So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, "Thou must,"
  The youth replies, "I can."

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

LUCY GRAY

OR SOLITUDE

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray:
  And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see, at break of day,
  The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
  She dwelt on a wide moor,
The sweetest thing that ever grew
  Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
  The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
  Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night,—
  You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
  Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father, will I gladly do:
  'Tis scarcely afternoon,—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
  And yonder is the moon!"

At this the Father raised his hook,
  And snapped a fagot-brand.
He plied his work; —and Lucy took
  The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:
She wandered up and down:
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on the hill they stood
That overlooked the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept,—and, turning homeward, cried,
"In heaven we all shall meet;"
When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small:
And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,
And by the low stone-wall;

And then an open field they crossed—
The marks were still the same—
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank;
And further there were none!

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

EMMIE

Our doctor had called in another, I never had seen him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw him come in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and of other lands—
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big merciless hands!
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but they said too of him
He was happier using the knife than in trying to save the limb,
And that I can well believe, for he looked so coarse and so red,
I could think he was one of those who would break their jests on the dead,
And mangle the living dog that had loved him and fawned at his knee—
Drenched with the hellish oorali—that ever such things should be!

Here was a boy—I am sure that some of our children would die
But for the voice of love, and the smile, and the comforting eye—
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seemed out of its place—
Caught in a mill and crushed—it was all but a hopeless case:

And he handled him gently enough; but his voice and his face were not kind,
And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it and made up his mind,
And he said to me roughly "The lad will need little more of your care."
"All the more need," I told him, "to seek the Lord Jesus in prayer;
They are all His children here, and I pray for them all as my own:"
But he turned to me, "Ay, good woman, can prayer set a broken bone?"
Then he muttered half to himself, but I know that I heard him say,
"All very well—but the good Lord Jesus has had his day."

Had? has it come? It has only dawned. It will come by and by.
O, how could I serve in the wards if the hope of the world were a lie?
How could I bear with the sights and the loathsome smells of disease
But that He said "Ye do it to me, when ye do it to these"?

So he went. And we passed to this ward where the younger children are laid:
Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our meek little maid;
Empty you see just now! We have lost her who loved her so much—
Patient of pain though as quick as a sensitive plant to the touch;
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved me to tears,
Hers was the gratefullest heart I have found in a child of her years—
Nay you remember our Emmie; you used to send her the flowers;
How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em, talk to 'em hours after hours!

They that can wander at will where the works of the Lord
are revealed
Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip out of the
field;
Flowers to these "spirits in prison" are all they can know of
the spring,
They freshen and sweeten the wards like the waft of an
angel's wing;
And she lay with a flower in one hand and her thin hands
crossed on her breast—
Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we thought her
at rest,
Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor said, "Poor little
dear,
Nurse, I must do it to-morrow: she'll never live through it,
I fear."

I walked with our kindly old doctor as far as the head of the
stair,
Then I returned to the ward; the child didn't see I was there.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved and so vexed!
Emmie had heard him. Softly she called from her cot to
the next,
"He says I shall never live through it; O Annie, what shall
I do?"
Annie considered. "If I," said the wise little Annie, "was
you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me, for, Emmie,
you see,
It's all in the picture there: 'Little children should come to
Me.' "—
(Meaning the print that you gave us, I find that it always
can please
Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children about His
knees.)
"Yes, and I will," said Emmie, "but then if I call to the
Lord,
How should He know that it's me? such a lot of beds in the
ward?"

That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she considered and said:
"Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave 'em outside on the bed—
The Lord has so *much* to see to! but, Emmie, you tell it Him plain,
It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the counterpane."

I had sat three nights by the child—I could not watch her for four—
My brain had begun to reel—I felt I could do it no more.
That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that it never would pass.
There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of hail on the glass,
And there was a phantom cry that I heard as I tossed about,
The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm and the darkness without;
My sleep was broken besides with dreams of the dreadful knife
And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce would escape with her life;
Then in the gray of the morning it seemed she stood by me and smiled,
And the doctor came at his hour, and we went to see the child.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we believed her asleep again—
Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the counterpane;—
Say that His day is done! Ah, why should we care what they say?
The Lord of the children had heard her, and Emmie had passed away.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

"IF I WERE DEAD"

"If I were dead, you'd sometimes say, Poor Child!"
The dear lips quivered as they spake,
And the tears brake
From eyes which, not to grieve me, brightly smiled.
Poor Child, poor Child!
I seem to hear your laugh, your talk, your song.
It is not true that Love will do no wrong.
Poor Child!
And did you think, when you so cried and smiled,
How I, in lonely nights, should lie awake,
And of those words your full avengers make?
Poor Child, poor Child!
And now, unless it be
That sweet amends thrice told are come to thee,
O God, have Thou *no* mercy upon me!
Poor Child!

Coventry Patmore [1823–1896]

THE TOYS

My little Son, who looked from thoughtful eyes
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobeyed,
I struck him, and dismissed
With hard words and unkissed,
—His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darkened eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-veined stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,

And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells,
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I prayed
To God, I wept, and said:
Ah, when at last we lie with trancèd breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
"I will be sorry for their childishness."

Coventry Patmore [1823–1896]

A SONG OF TWILIGHT

Oh, to come home once more, when the dusk is falling,
To see the nursery lighted and the children's table spread;
"Mother, mother, mother!" the eager voices calling,
"The baby was so sleepy that he had to go to bed!"

Oh, to come home once more, and see the smiling faces,
Dark head, bright head, clustered at the pane;
Much the years have taken, when the heart its path retraces,
But until time is not for me, the image will remain.

Men and women now they are, standing straight and steady,
Grave heart, gay heart, fit for life's emprise;
Shoulder set to shoulder, how should they be but ready!
The future shines before them with the light of their own eyes.

Still each answers to my call; no good has been denied me,
My burdens have been fitted to the little strength that's mine,
Beauty, pride and peace have walked by day beside me,
The evening closes gently in, and how can I repine?

But oh, to see once more, when the early dusk is falling,
The nursery windows glowing and the children's table spread;
"Mother, mother, mother!" the high child-voices calling,
"He couldn't *stay awake for you, he* had *to go to bed!"*

Unknown

LITTLE BOY BLUE

THE little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch he stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket moulds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair;
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now, don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise!"
So, toddling off to his trundle-bed,
He dreamt of the pretty toys;
And, as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh! the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true!

Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face;
And they wonder, as waiting the long years through
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue,
Since he kissed them and put them there.

Eugene Field [1850–1895]

THE DISCOVERER

I HAVE a little kinsman
Whose earthly summers are but three,
And yet a voyager is he
Greater then Drake or Frobisher,

Than all their peers together!
He is a brave discoverer,
And, far beyond the tether
Of them who seek the frozen Pole,
Has sailed where the noiseless surges roll.
Ay, he has travelled whither
A winged pilot steered his bark
Through the portals of the dark,
Past hoary Mimir's well and tree,
Across the unknown sea.

Suddenly, in his fair young hour,
Came one who bore a flower,
And laid it in his dimpled hand
With this command:
"Henceforth thou art a rover!
Thou must make a voyage far,
Sail beneath the evening star,
And a wondrous land discover."
—With his sweet smile innocent
Our little kinsman went.

Since that time no word
From the absent has been heard.
Who can tell
How he fares, or answer well
What the little one has found
Since he left us, outward bound?
Would that he might return!
Then should we learn
From the pricking of his chart
How the skyey roadways part.
Hush! does not the baby this way bring,
To lay beside this severed curl,
Some starry offering
Of chrysolite or pearl?

Ah, no! not so!
We may follow on his track,
But he comes not back.

And yet I dare aver
He is a brave discoverer
Of climes his elders do not know.
He has more learning than appears
On the scroll of twice three thousand years,
More than in the groves is taught,
Or from furthest Indies brought;
He knows, perchance, how spirits fare,—
What shapes the angels wear,
What is their guise and speech
In those lands beyond our reach,—
And his eyes behold
Things that shall never, never be to mortal hearers told.

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

A CHRYSALIS

My little Mädchen found one day
A curious something in her play,
That was not fruit, nor flower, nor seed;
It was not anything that grew,
Or crept, or climbed, or swam, or flew;
Had neither legs nor wings, indeed;
And yet she was not sure, she said,
Whether it was alive or dead.

She brought in her tiny hand
To see if I would understand,
And wondered when I made reply,
"You've found a baby butterfly."
"A butterfly is not like this,"
With doubtful look she answered me.
So then I told her what would be
Some day within the chrysalis;
How, slowly, in the dull brown thing
Now still as death, a spotted wing,
And then another, would unfold,
Till from the empty shell would fly
A pretty creature, by and by,
All radiant in blue and gold.

"And will it, truly?" questioned she—
Her laughing lips and eager eyes
All in a sparkle of surprise—
"And shall your little Mädchen see?"
"She shall!" I said. How could I tell
That ere the worm within its shell
Its gauzy, splendid wings had spread,
My little Mädchen would be dead?

To-day the butterfly has flown,—
She was not here to see it fly,—
And sorrowing I wonder why
The empty shell is mine alone.
Perhaps the secret lies in this:
I too had found a chrysalis,
And Death that robbed me of delight
Was but the radiant creature's flight!

Mary Emily Bradley [1835–1898]

MATER DOLOROSA

I'd a dream to-night
  As I fell asleep,
O! the touching sight
  Makes me still to weep:
Of my little lad,
Gone to leave me sad,
Ay, the child I had,
  But was not to keep.

As in heaven high,
  I my child did seek,
There in train came by
  Children fair and meek,
Each in lily white,
With a lamp alight;
Each was clear to sight,
  But they did not speak.

Then, a little sad,
Came my child in turn,
But the lamp he had,
O it did not burn!
He, to clear my doubt,
Said, half-turned about,
"Your tears put it out;
Mother, never mourn."

William Barnes [1801–1886]

THE LITTLE GHOST

The stars began to peep
Gone was the bitter day.
She heard the milky ewes
Bleat to their lambs astray.
Her heart cried for her lamb
Lapped cold in the churchyard sod,
She could not think on the happy children
At play with the Lamb of God.

She heard the calling ewes
And the lambs' answer, alas!
She heard her heart's blood drip in the night
As the ewes' milk on the grass.
Her tears that burnt like fire
So bitter and slow ran down
She could not think on the new-washed children
Playing by Mary's gown.

Oh who is this comes in
Over her threshold stone?
And why is the old dog wild with joy
Who all day long made moan?
This fair little radiant ghost,
Her one little son of seven,
New 'scaped from the band of merry children
In the nurseries of Heaven.

He was all clad in white
  Without a speck or stain;
His curls had a ring of light
  That rose and fell again.
"Now come with me, my own mother,
  And you shall have great ease,
For you shall see the lost children
  Gathered to Mary's knees."

Oh, lightly sprang she up
  Nor waked her sleeping man,
And hand in hand with the little ghost
  Through the dark night she ran.
She is gone swift as a fawn,
  As a bird homes to its nest,
She has seen them lie, the sleepy children
  Twixt Mary's arm and breast.

At morning she came back;
  Her eyes were strange to see.
She will not fear the long journey,
  However long it be.
As she goes in and out
  She sings unto hersel';
For she has seen the mothers' children
  And knows that it is well.

Katharine Tynan [1861–

MOTHERHOOD

The night throbs on; O, let me pray, dear lad!
Crush off his name a moment from my mouth.
To Thee my eyes would turn, but they go back,
Back to my arm beside me, where he lay—
So little, Lord, so little and so warm!

I cannot think that Thou hadst need of him!
He was so little, Lord, he cannot sing,
He cannot praise Thee; all his life had learned
Was to hold fast my kisses in the night.

Give him to me—he is not happy there!
He had not felt this life, his lovely eyes
Just knew me for his mother, and he died.

Hast Thou an angel there to mother him?
I say he loves me best—if he forgets,
If Thou allow it that my child forgets
And runs not out to meet me when I come—

What are my curses to Thee? Thou hast heard
The curse of Abel's mother, and since then
We have not ceased to threaten at Thy throne,
To threat and pray Thee that Thou hold them still
In memory of us.

See Thou tend him well,
Thou God of all the mothers. If he lack
One of his kisses—ah, my heart, my heart,
Do angels kiss in heaven? Give him back!

Forgive me, Lord, but I am sick with grief,
And tired of tears, and cold to comforting.
Thou art wise, I know, and tender, aye, and good,
Thou hast my child, and he is safe in Thee,
And I believe—

Ah, God, my child shall go
Orphaned among the angels! All alone.
So little and alone! He knows not Thee,
He only knows his mother—give him back.

Josephine Daskam Bacon [1876-

THE MOTHER'S PRAYER

The good Lord gave, the Lord has taken from me,
Blessed be His name, His holy will be done.
The mourners all have gone, all save I, his mother,
The little grave lies lonely in the sun.

Nay! I would not follow, though they did beseech me,
For the angels come now waiting for my dead.
Heaven's door is open, so my whispers soar there,
While the gentle angels lift him from his bed.

Oh Lord, when Thou gavest he was weak and helpless,
Could not rise nor wander from my shielding arm;
Lovely is he now and strong with four sweet summers,
Laughing, running, tumbling, hard to keep from harm.

If some tender mother, whose babe on earth is living,
Takes his little hand to guide his stranger feet
'Mid the countless hosts that cross the floor of heaven,
Thou wilt not reprove her for Thy pity sweet.

If upon her breast she holds his baby beauty,
All his golden hair will fall about her hand,
Laughing let her fingers pull it into ringlets—
Long and lovely ringlets. She will understand.

Wilful are his ways and full of merry mischief;
If he prove unruly, lay the blame on me.
Never did I chide him for his noise or riot,
Smiled upon his folly, glad his joy to see.

Each eve shall I come beside his bed so lowly;
"Hush-a-by, my baby," softly shall I sing,
So, if he be frightened, full of sleep and anger,
The song he loved shall reach him and sure comfort bring.

Lord, if in my praying, Thou shouldst hear me weeping,
Ever was I wayward, always full of tears,
Take no heed of this grief. Sweet the gift Thou gavest
All the cherished treasure of those golden years.

Do not, therefore, hold me to Thy will ungrateful:
Soon I shall stand upright, smiling, strong, and brave,
With a son in heaven the sad earth forgetting,
But 'tis lonely yet, Lord, by the little grave.
Oh, 'tis lonely, lonely, by the little grave!

Dora Sigerson Shorter [18 –

DA LEETLA BOY

Da spreeng ees com'; but oh, da joy
  Eet ees too late!
He was so cold, my leetla boy,
  He no could wait.

I no can count how manny week,
How manny day, dat he ees seeck;
How manny night I seet an' hold
Da leetla hand dat was so cold.
He was so patience, oh, so sweet!
Eet hurts my throat for theenk of eet;
An' all he evra ask ees w'en
Ees gona com' da spreeng agen.
Wan day, wan brighta sunny day,
He see, across da alleyway,
Da leetla girl dat's livin' dere
Ees raise her window for da air,
An' put outside a leetla pot
Of—w'at-you-call?—forgat-me-not.
So smalla flower, so leetla theeng!
But steell eet mak' hees hearta seeng:
"Oh, now, at las', ees com' da spreeng!
Da leetla plant ees glad for know
Da sun ees com' for mak' eet grow.
So, too, I am grow warm and strong."
So lika dat he seeng hees song.
But, ah! da night com' down an' den
Da weenter ees sneak back agen,
An' een da alley all da night
Ees fall da snow, so cold, so white,
An' cover up da leetla pot
Of—w'at-you-call?—forgat-me-not.
All night da leetla hand I hold
Ees grow so cold, so cold, so cold!

Da spreeng ees com'; but, oh, da joy
  Eet ees too late!
He was so cold, my leetla boy,
  He no could wait.

Thomas Augustin Daly [1871–

ON THE MOOR

I

I MET a child upon the moor
A-wading down the heather;
She put her hand into my own,
We crossed the fields together.

I led her to her father's door—
A cottage midst the clover.
I left her—and the world grew poor
To me, a childless rover.

II

I met a maid upon the moor,
The morrow was her wedding.
Love lit her eyes with lovelier hues
Than the eve-star was shedding.

She looked a sweet good-bye to me,
And o'er the stile went singing.
Down all the lonely night I heard
But bridal bells a-ringing.

III

I met a mother on the moor,
By a new grave a-praying.
The happy swallows in the blue
Upon the winds were playing.

"Would I were in his grave," I said,
"And he beside her standing!"
There was no heart to break if death
For me had made demanding.

Cale Young Rice [1872–

EPITAPH OF DIONYSIA

HERE doth Dionysia lie:
She whose little wanton foot,
Tripping (ah, too carelessly!)
Touched this tomb, and fell into 't.

Trip no more shall she, nor fall.
And her trippings were so few!
Summers only eight in all
Had the sweet child wandered through.

But, already, life's few suns
Love's strong seeds had ripened warm.
All her ways were winning ones;
All her cunning was to charm.

And the fancy, in the flower,
While the flesh was in the bud,
Childhood's dawning sex did dower
With warm gusts of womanhood.

Oh what joys by hope begun,
Oh what kisses kissed by thought,
What love-deeds by fancy done,
Death to endless dust hath wrought!

Had the fates been kind as thou,
Who, till now, was never cold,
Once Love's aptest scholar, now
Thou hadst been his teacher bold;

But, if buried seeds upthrow
Fruits and flowers; if flower and fruit
By their nature fitly show
What the seeds are, whence they shoot,

Dionysia, o'er this tomb,
Where thy buried beauties be,
From their dust shall spring and bloom
Loves and graces like to thee.

Unknown

FOR CHARLIE'S SAKE

The night is late, the house is still;
The angels of the hour fulfil
Their tender ministries, and move
From couch to couch in cares of love.

They drop into thy dreams, sweet wife,
The happiest smile of Charlie's life,
And lay on baby's lips a kiss,
Fresh from his angel-brother's bliss;
And, as they pass, they seem to make
A strange, dim hymn, "For Charlie's sake."

My listening heart takes up the strain,
And gives it to the night again,
Fitted with words of lowly praise,
And patience learned of mournful days,
And memories of the dead child's ways.
His will be done, His will be done!
Who gave and took away my son,
In "the far land" to shine and sing
Before the Beautiful, the King,
Who every day doth Christmas make,
All starred and belled for Charlie's sake.

For Charlie's sake I will arise;
I will anoint me where he lies,
And change my raiment, and go in
To the Lord's house, and leave my sin
Without, and seat me at his board,
Eat, and be glad, and praise the Lord.
For wherefore should I fast and weep,
And sullen moods of mourning keep?
I cannot bring him back, nor he,
For any calling, come to me.
The bond the angel Death did sign,
God sealed—for Charlie's sake, and mine.

I'm very poor—this slender stone
Marks all the narrow field I own;
Yet, patient husbandman, I till
With faith and prayers, that precious hill,
Sow it with penitential pains,
And, hopeful, wait the latter rains;
Content if, after all, the spot
Yield barely one forget-me-not—
Whether or figs or thistles make
My crop, content for Charlie's sake.

I have no houses, builded well—
Only that little lonesome cell,
Where never romping playmates come,
Nor bashful sweethearts, cunning-dumb—
An April burst of girls and boys,
Their rainbowed cloud of glooms and joys
Born with their songs, gone with their toys;
Nor ever is its stillness stirred
By purr of cat, or chirp of bird,
Or mother's twilight legend, told
Of Horner's pie, or Tiddler's gold,
Or fairy hobbling to the door,
Red-cloaked and weird, banned and poor,
To bless the good child's gracious eyes,
The good child's wistful charities,
And crippled changeling's hunch to make
Dance on his crutch, for good child's sake.

How is it with the child? 'Tis well;
Nor would I any miracle
Might stir my sleeper's tranquil trance,
Or plague his painless countenance:
I would not any seer might place
His staff on my immortal's face,
Or lip to lip, and eye to eye,
Charm back his pale mortality.
No, Shunamite! I would not break
God's stillness. Let them weep who wake.

For Charlie's sake my lot is blest:
No comfort like his mother's breast,
No praise like hers; no charm expressed
In fairest forms hath half her zest.
For Charlie's sake this bird's caressed
That death left lonely in the nest;
For Charlie's sake my heart is dressed,
As for its birthday, in its best;
For Charlie's sake we leave the rest
To Him who gave, and who did take,
And saved us twice, for Charlie's sake.

John Williamson Palmer [1825–1906]

"ARE THE CHILDREN AT HOME?"

EACH day, when the glow of sunset
Fades in the western sky,
And the wee ones, tired of playing,
Go tripping lightly by,
I steal away from my husband,
Asleep in his easy-chair,
And watch from the open doorway
Their faces fresh and fair.

Alone in the dear old homestead
That once was full of life,
Ringing with girlish laughter,
Echoing boyish strife,
We two are waiting together;
And oft, as the shadows come,
With tremulous voice he calls me,
"It is night! are the children home?"

"Yes, love!" I answer him gently,
"They're all home long ago;"—
And I sing, in my quivering treble,
A song so soft and low,
Till the old man drops to slumber,
With his head upon his hand,
And I tell to myself the number
At home in the better land.

At home, where never a sorrow
Shall dim their eyes with tears!
Where the smile of God is on them
Through all the summer years!
I know,—yet my arms are empty,
That fondly folded seven,
And the mother-heart within me
Is almost starved for heaven.

Sometimes, in the dusk of evening,
I only shut my eyes,
And the children are all about me,
A vision from the skies:

The babes whose dimpled fingers
  Lost the way to my breast,
And the beautiful ones, the angels,
  Passed to the world of the blest.

With never a cloud upon them,
  I see their radiant brows;
My boys that I gave to freedom,—
  The red sword sealed their vows!
In a tangled Southern forest,
  Twin brothers bold and brave,
They fell; and the flag they died for,
  Thank God! floats over their grave.

A breath, and the vision is lifted
  Away on wings of light,
And again we two are together,
  All alone in the night.
They tell me his mind is failing,
  But I smile at idle fears;
He is only back with the children,
  In the dear and peaceful years.

And still, as the summer sunset
  Fades away in the west,
And the wee ones, tired of playing,
  Go trooping home to rest,
My husband calls from his corner,
  "Say, love, have the children come?"
And I answer, with eyes uplifted,
  "Yes, dear! they are all at home."

Margaret Sangster [1838–

THE MORNING-GLORY

We wreathed about our darling's head
  The morning-glory bright;
Her little face looked out beneath,
  So full of life and light,

So lit as with a sunrise,
That we could only say,
"She is the morning-glory true,
And her poor types are they."

So always from that happy time
We called her by their name,
And very fitting did it seem—
For, sure as morning came,
Behind her cradle bars she smiled
To catch the first faint ray,
As from the trellis smiles the flower
And opens to the day.

But not so beautiful they rear
Their airy cups of blue,
As turned her sweet eyes to the light,
Brimmed with sleep's tender dew;
And not so close their tendrils fine
Round their supports are thrown,
As those dear arms whose outstretched plea
Clasped all hearts to her own.

We used to think how she had come,
Even as comes the flower,
The last and perfect added gift
To crown Love's morning hour;
And how in her was imaged forth
The love we could not say,
As on the little dewdrops round
Shines back the heart of day.

We never could have thought, O God,
That she must wither up,
Almost before a day was flown,
Like the morning-glory's cup;
We never thought to see her droop
Her fair and noble head,
Till she lay stretched before our eyes,
Wilted, and cold, and dead!

The morning-glory's blossoming
  Will soon be coming round—
We see the rows of heart-shaped leaves
  Upspringing from the ground;
The tender things the winter killed
  Renew again their birth,
But the glory of our morning
  Has passed away from earth.

O Earth! in vain our aching eyes
  Stretch over thy green plain!
Too harsh thy dews, too gross thine air
  Her spirit to sustain;
But up in groves of Paradise
  Full surely we shall see
Our morning-glory beautiful
  Twine round our dear Lord's knee.

Maria White Lowell [1821–1855]

SHE CAME AND WENT

As a twig trembles, which a bird
  Lights on to sing, then leaves unbent,
So is my memory thrilled and stirred;—
  I only know she came and went.

As clasps some lake, by gusts unriven,
  The blue dome's measureless content,
So my soul held that moment's heaven;—
  I only know she came and went.

As, at one bound, our swift spring heaps
  The orchards full of bloom and scent,
So clove her May my wintry sleeps;—
  I only know she came and went.

An angel stood and met my gaze,
  Through the low doorway of my tent;
The tent is struck, the vision stays;—
  I only know she came and went.

Oh, when the room grows slowly dim,
And life's last oil is nearly spent,
One gush of light these eyes will brim,
Only to think she came and went.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

THE FIRST SNOW-FALL

The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails softened to swan's-down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"
And I told of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar that renewed our woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
"The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!"

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

"WE ARE SEVEN"

A SIMPLE Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl:
She was eight years old, she said:
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad:
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? Seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."
She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea;

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the church-yard lie
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid;
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little Maid replied:
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.

"So in the church-yard she was laid;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
Quick was the little Maid's reply,
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

MY CHILD

I CANNOT make him dead!
His fair sunshiny head
Is ever bounding round my study chair;
Yet when my eyes, now dim
With tears, I turn to him,
The vision vanishes,—he is not there!

I walk my parlor floor,
And, through the open door,
I hear a footfall on the chamber stair;
I'm stepping toward the hall
To give my boy a call;
And then bethink me that—he is not there!

I thread the crowded street;
A satchelled lad I meet,

With the same beaming eyes and colored hair;
And, as he's running by,
Follow him with my eye,
Scarcely believing that—he is not there!

I know his face is hid
Under the coffin-lid;
Closed are his eyes; cold is his forehead fair;
My hand that marble felt;
O'er it in prayer I knelt;
Yet my heart whispers that—he is not there!

I cannot make him dead!
When passing by the bed,
So long watched over with parental care,
My spirit and my eye,
Seek him inquiringly,
Before the thought comes that—he is not there!

When, at the cool gray break
Of day, from sleep I wake,
With my first breathing of the morning air
My soul goes up, with joy,
To Him who gave my boy;
Then comes the sad thought that—he is not there!

When at the day's calm close,
Before we seek repose,
I'm with his mother, offering up our prayer;
Whate'er I may be saying,
I am, in spirit, praying
For our boy's spirit, though—he is not there!

Not there!—Where, then, is he?
The form I used to see
Was but the raiment that he used to wear.
The grave, that now doth press
Upon that cast-off dress,
Is but his wardrobe locked;—*he* is not there!

He lives!—In all the past
He lives; nor, to the last,
Of seeing him again will I despair;
In dreams I see him now;
And on his angel brow,
I see it written, "Thou shalt see me *there!*"

Yes, we all live to God!
Father, thy chastening rod
So help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear,
That, in the spirit-land,
Meeting at thy right hand,
'Twill be our heaven to find that—he is there!

John Pierpont [1785–1866]

THE CHILD'S WISH GRANTED

Do you remember, my sweet, absent son,
How in the soft June days forever done
You loved the heavens so warm and clear and high;
And when I lifted you, soft came your cry,—
"Put me 'way up—'way, 'way up in blue sky"?

I laughed and said I could not;—set you down,
Your gray eyes wonder-filled beneath that crown
Of bright hair gladdening me as you raced by.
Another Father now, more strong than I,
Has borne you voiceless to your dear blue sky.

George Parsons Lathrop [1851–1898]

CHALLENGE

This little child, so white, so calm,
Decked for her grave,
Encountered death without a qualm.
Are you as brave?

So small, and armed with naught beside
Her mother's kiss,
Alone she stepped, unterrified,
Into the abyss.

"Ah," you explain, "she did not know—
This babe of four—
Just what it signifies to go."
Do you know more?

Kenton Foster Murray [18 –

TIRED MOTHERS

A little elbow leans upon your knee,
Your tired knee that has so much to bear;
A child's dear eyes are looking lovingly
From underneath a thatch of tangled hair.
Perhaps you do not heed the velvet touch
Of warm, moist fingers, folding yours so tight;
You do not prize this blessing overmuch,—
You almost are too tired to pray to-night.

But it *is* blessedness! A year ago
I did not see it as I do to-day,—
We are so dull and thankless; and too slow
To catch the sunshine till it slips away.
And now it seems surpassing strange to me
That, while I wore the badge of motherhood,
I did not kiss more oft and tenderly
The little child that brought me only good.

And if some night when you sit down to rest,
You miss this elbow from your tired knee,—
This restless, curling head from off your breast,—
This lisping tongue that chatters constantly;
If from your own the dimpled hands had slipped,
And ne'er would nestle in your palm again;
If the white feet into their grave had tripped,
I could not blame you for your heartache then!

I wonder so that mothers ever fret
At little children clinging to their gown;
Or that the footprints, when the days are wet,
Are ever black enough to make them frown.

If I could find a little muddy boot,
Or cap, or jacket, on my chamber-floor,—
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
And hear its patter in my house once more,—

If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
To-morrow make a kite to reach the sky,
There is no woman in God's world could say
She was more blissfully content than I.
But ah! the dainty pillow next my own
Is never rumpled by a shining head;
My singing birdling from its nest has flown,
The little boy I used to kiss is dead.

May Riley Smith [1842–

MY DAUGHTER LOUISE

In the light of the moon, by the side of the water,
My seat on the sand and her seat on my knees,
We watch the bright billows, do I and my daughter,
My sweet little daughter Louise.
We wonder what city the pathway of glory,
That broadens away to the limitless west,
Leads up to—she minds her of some pretty story
And says: "To the city that mortals love best."
Then I say: "It must lead to the far away city,
The beautiful City of Rest."

In the light of the moon, by the side of the water,
Stand two in the shadow of whispering trees,
And one loves my daughter, my beautiful daughter,
My womanly daughter Louise.
She steps to the boat with a touch of his fingers,
And out on the diamonded pathway they move;
The shallop is lost in the distance, it lingers,
It waits, but I know that its coming will prove
That it went to the walls of the wonderful city,
The magical City of Love.

In the light of the moon, by the side of the water,
I wait for her coming from over the seas;
I wait but to welcome the dust of my daughter,
To weep for my daughter Louise.
The path, as of old, reaching out in its splendor,
Gleams bright, like a way that an angel has trod;
I kiss the cold burden its billows surrender,
Sweet clay to lie under the pitiful sod:
But she rests, at the end of the path, in the city
Whose "builder and maker is God."

Homer Greene [1853–

"I AM LONELY"

From "The Spanish Gypsy"

The world is great: the birds all fly from me,
The stars are golden fruit upon a tree
All out of reach: my little sister went,
And I am lonely.

The world is great: I tried to mount the hill
Above the pines, where the light lies so still,
But it rose higher: little Lisa went
And I am lonely.

The world is great: the wind comes rushing by.
I wonder where it comes from; sea birds cry
And hurt my heart: my little sister went,
And I am lonely.

The world is great: the people laugh and talk,
And make loud holiday: how fast they walk!
I'm lame, they push me: little Lisa went,
And I am lonely.

George Eliot [1819–1880]

SONNETS

From "Mimma Bella"

I

Have dark Egyptians stolen Thee away,
Oh Baby, Baby, in whose cot we peer
As down some empty gulf that opens sheer
And fathomless, illumined by no ray?

And wilt thou come, on some far distant day,
With unknown face, and say, "Behold! I'm here,
The child you lost;" while we in sudden fear,
Dumb with great doubt, shall find no word to say?
One darker than dark gipsy holds thee fast;
One whose strong fingers none has forced apart
Since first they closed on things that were too fair;
Nor shall we see thee other than thou wast,
But such as thou art printed in the heart,
In changeless baby loveliness still there.

II

Two springs she saw—two radiant Tuscan springs,
What time the wild red tulips are aflame
In the new wheat, and wreaths of young vine frame
The daffodils that every light breeze swings;
And the anemones that April brings
Make purple pools, as if Adonis came
Just there to die; and Florence scrolls her name
In every blossom Primavera flings.
Now, when the scented iris, straight and tall,
Shall hedge the garden gravel once again
With pale blue flags, at May's exulting call,
And when the amber roses, wet with rain,
Shall tapestry the old gray villa wall,
We, left alone, shall seek one bud in vain.

IV

Oh, rosy as the lining of a shell
Were the wee hands that now are white as snows;
And like pink coral, with their elfin toes,
The feet that on life's brambles never fell.
And with its tiny smile, adorable
The mouth that never knew life's bitter sloes;
And like the incurved petal of a rose
The little ear, now deaf in Death's strong spell.
Now, while the seasons in their order roll,
And sun and rain pour down from God's great dome,
And deathless stars shine nightly overhead,
Near other children, with her little doll,

She waits the wizard that will never come
To wake the sleep-struck playground of the dead.

VI

Oh, bless the law that veils the Future's face;
For who could smile into a baby's eyes,
Or bear the beauty of the evening skies,
If he could see what cometh on apace?
The ticking of the death-watch would replace
The baby's prattle, for the over-wise;
The breeze's murmur would become the cries
Of stormy petrels where the breakers race.
We live as moves the walker in his sleep,
Who walks because he sees not the abyss
His feet are skirting as he goes his way:
If we could see the morrow from the steep
Of our security, the soul would miss
Its footing, and fall headlong from to-day.

VIII

One day, I mind me, now that she is dead,
When nothing warned us of the dark decree,
I crooned, to lull her, in a minor key,
Such fancies as first came into my head.
I crooned them low, beside her little bed;
And the refrain was somehow "Come with me,
And we will wander by the purple sea;"
I crooned it, and—God help me!—felt no dread.
O Purple Sea, beyond the stress of storms,
Where never ripple breaks upon the shore
Of Death's pale Isles of Twilight as they dream,
Give back, give back, O Sea of Nevermore,
The frailest of the unsubstantial forms
That leave the shores that are for those that seem!

XX

What essences from Idumean palm,
What ambergris, what sacerdotal wine,
What Arab myrrh, what spikenard, would be thine,
If I could swathe thy memory in such balm!

Oh, for wrecked gold, from depths for ever calm,
To fashion for thy name a fretted shrine;
Oh, for strange gems, still locked in virgin mine,
To stud the pyx, where thought would bring sweet psalm!
I have but this small rosary of rhyme,—
No rubies but heart's drops, no pearls but tears,
To lay upon the altar of thy name,
O Mimma Bella;—on the shrine that Time
Makes ever holier for the soul, while years
Obliterate the rolls of human fame.

Eugene Lee-Hamilton [1845–1907]

ROSE-MARIE OF THE ANGELS

Little Sister Rose-Marie,
Will thy feet as willing-light
Run through Paradise, I wonder,
As they run the blue skies under,
Willing feet, so airy-light?

Little Sister Rose-Marie,
Will thy voice as bird-note clear
Lift and ripple over Heaven
As its mortal sound is given,
Swift bird-voice, so young and clear?

How God will be glad of thee,
Little Sister Rose-Marie!

Adelaide Crapsey [1878–1914]

MAIDENHOOD

MAIDENHOOD

Maiden! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run!

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse!

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar?

Oh, thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares!
Care and age come unawares!

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

Oh, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart
For a smile of God thou art.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

GATHER ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious land of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting,

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO MISTRESS MARGARET HUSSEY

Merry Margaret
As midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower:
With solace and gladness,
Much mirth and no madness,
All good and no badness;
So joyously,
So maidenly,
So womanly
Her demeaning
In every thing,
Far, far passing
That I can indite,
Or suffice to write
Of merry Margaret
As midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower,
As patient and still
And as full of good will
As fair Isaphill,

Coliander,
Sweet pomander,
Good Cassander;
Steadfast of thought,
Well made, well wrought,
Far may be sought,
Ere that ye can find
So courteous, so kind,
As merry Margaret,
This midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower.

John Skelton [1460?–1529]

ON HER COMING TO LONDON

WHAT'S she, so late from Penshurst come,
More gorgeous than the mid-day sun,
That all the world amazes?
Sure 'tis some angel from above,
Or 'tis the Cyprian Queen of Love
Attended by the Graces.

Or is't not Juno, Heaven's great dame,
Or Pallas armed, as on she came,
To assist the Greeks in fight,
Or Cynthia, that huntress bold,
Or from old Tithon's bed so cold,
Aurora chasing night?

No, none of those, yet one that shall
Compare, perhaps exceed them all,
For beauty, wit, and birth;
As good as great, as chaste as fair,
A brighter nymph none breathes the air,
Or treads upon the earth.

'Tis Dorothèe, a maid high-born,
And lovely as the blushing morn,

Of noble Sidney's race;
Oh! could you see into her mind,
The beauties there locked-up outshine
The beauties of her face.

Fair Dorothea, sent from heaven
To add more wonders to the seven,
And glad each eye and ear,
Crown of her sex, the Muse's port,
The glory of our English court,
The brightness of our sphere.

To welcome her the Spring breathes forth
Elysian sweets, March strews the earth
With violets and posies,
The sun renews his darting fires,
April puts on her best attires,
And May her crown of roses.

Go, happy maid, increase the store
Of graces born with you, and more
Add to their number still;
So neither all-consuming age,
Nor envy's blast, nor fortune's rage
Shall ever work you ill.

Edmund Waller [1606–1687]

"O, SAW YE BONNY LESLEY"

O saw ye bonny Lesley
As she gaed owre the Border?
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For nature made her what she is,
And ne'er made sic anither!

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee;
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee.

The deil he couldna scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He'd look into thy bonny face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee!"

The powers aboon will tent thee;
Misfortune sha' na steer thee;
Thou'rt like themselves sae lovely
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie!
That we may brag we hae a lass
There's nane again sae bonny.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

TO A YOUNG LADY

Sweet stream, that winds through yonder glade,
Apt emblem of a virtuous maid!—
Silent and chaste she steals along,
Far from the world's gay busy throng:
With gentle yet prevailing force,
Intent upon her destined course;
Graceful and useful all she does,
Blessing and blest where'er she goes;
Pure-bosomed as that watery glass,
And Heaven reflected in her face!

William Cowper [1731–1800]

RUTH

She stood breast high among the corn,
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripened;—such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell.
But long lashes veiled a light,
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks:

Sure, I said, Heaven did not mean,
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

THE SOLITARY REAPER

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of Travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS

I

How blest the Maid whose heart—yet free
From Love's uneasy sovereignty—
Beats with a fancy running high,
Her simple cares to magnify;
Whom Labor, never urged to toil,
Hath cherished on a healthful soil;
Who knows not pomp, who heeds not pelf;
Whose heaviest sin it is to look
Askance upon her pretty Self
Reflected in some crystal brook;
Whom grief hath spared—who sheds no tear
But in sweet pity; and can hear
Another's praise from envy clear.

II

Such (but O lavish Nature! why
That dark unfathomable eye,
Where lurks a Spirit that replies
To stillest mood of softest skies,

Yet hints at peace to be o'erthrown,
Another's first, and then her own?)
Such haply, yon Italian Maid,
Our Lady's laggard Votaress,
Halting beneath the chestnut shade
To accomplish there her loveliness:
Nice aid maternal fingers lend;
A Sister serves with slacker hand;
Then, glittering like a star, she joins the festal band.

III

How blest (if truth may entertain
Coy fancy with a bolder strain)
The Helvetian Girl—who daily braves,
In her light skiff, the tossing waves,
And quits the bosom of the deep
Only to climb the rugged steep!
—Say whence that modulated shout!
From Wood-nymph of Diana's throng?
Or does the greeting to a rout
Of giddy Bacchanals belong?
Jubilant outcry! rock and glade
Resounded—but the voice obeyed
The breath of an Helvetian Maid.

IV

Her beauty dazzles the thick wood;
Her courage animates the flood;
Her steps the elastic greensward meets
Returning unreluctant sweets;
The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice
Aloud, saluted by her voice!
Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,
Be as thou art—for through thy veins
The blood of Heroes runs its race!
And nobly wilt thou brook the chains
That, for the virtuous, Life prepares;
The fetter which the Matron wears;
The patriot Mother's weight of anxious cares!

V

"Sweet Highland Girl! a very shower
Of beauty was thy earthly dower,"
When thou didst flit before mine eyes,
Gay Vision under sullen skies,
While Hope and Love around thee played,
Near the rough falls of Inversneyd!
Have they, who nursed the blossom, seen
No breach of promise in the fruit?
Was joy, in following joy, as keen
As grief can be in grief's pursuit?
When youth had flown did hope still bless
Thy goings—or the cheerfulness
Of innocence survive to mitigate distress?

VI

But from our course why turn—to tread
A way with shadows overspread;
Where what we gladliest would believe
Is feared as what may most deceive?
Bright Spirit, not with amaranth crowned
But heath-bells from thy native ground,
Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,
Nor take one ray of light from Thee;
For in my Fancy thou dost share
The gift of immortality;
And there shall bloom, with Thee allied,
The Votaress by Lugano's side;
And that intrepid Nymph, on Uri's steep descried!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

BLACKMWORE MAIDENS

The primrwose in the sheäde do blow,
The cowslip in the zun,
The thyme upon the down do grow,
The clote where streams do run;

An' where do pretty maïdens grow
  An' blow, but where the tower
Do rise among the bricken tuns,
  In Blackmwore by the Stour.

If you could zee their comely gait,
  An' pretty feäces' smiles,
A-trippèn on so light o' waïght,
  An' steppèn off the stiles;
A-gwaïn to church, as bells do swing
  An' ring within the tower,
You'd own the pretty maïdens' pleäce
  Is Blackmwore by the Stour.

If you vrom Wimborne took your road,
  To Stower or Paladore,
An' all the farmers' housen showed
  Their daughters at the door;
You'd cry to bachelors at hwome—
  "Here, come: 'ithin an hour
You'll vind ten maïdens to your mind,
  In Blackmwore by the Stour."

An' if you looked 'ithin their door,
  To zee em in their pleäce,
A-doèn housework up avore
  Their smilèn mother's feäce;
You'd cry—"Why, if a man would wive
  An' thrive, 'ithout a dower,
Then let en look en out a wife
  In Blackmwore by the Stour."

As I upon my road did pass
  A school-house back in Maÿ,
There out upon the beäten grass
  Wer maïdens at their plaÿ;
An' as the pretty souls did tweil
  An' smile, I cried, "The flower
O' beauty, then, is still in bud
  In Blackmwore by the Stour."

William Barnes [1801–1886]

A PORTRAIT

"One name is Elizabeth"
BEN JONSON

I WILL paint her as I see her.
Ten times have the lilies blown
Since she looked upon the sun.

And her face is lily-clear,
Lily-shaped, and dropped in duty
To the law of its own beauty.

Oval cheeks encolored faintly,
Which a trail of golden hair
Keeps from fading off to air:

And a forehead fair and saintly,
Which two blue eyes undershine,
Like meek prayers before a shrine.

Face and figure of a child,—
Though too calm, you think, and tender,
For the childhood you would lend her.

Yet child-simple, undefiled,
Frank, obedient, waiting still
On the turnings of your will.

Moving light, as all young things,
As young birds, or early wheat
When the wind blows over it.

Only, free from flutterings
Of loud mirth that scorneth measure—
Taking love for her chief pleasure.

Choosing pleasures, for the rest,
Which come softly—just as she,
When she nestles at your knee.

Quiet talk she liketh best,
In a bower of gentle looks,—
Watering flowers, or reading books.

And her voice, it murmurs lowly,
As a silver stream may run,
Which yet feels (you feel) the sun.

And her smile it seems half holy,
As if drawn from thoughts more far
Than our common jestings are.

And if any poet knew her,
He would sing of her with falls
Used in lovely madrigals.

And if any painter drew her,
He would paint her unaware
With a halo round her hair.

And if reader read the poem,
He would whisper—"You have done a
Consecrated little Una!"

And a dreamer (did you show him
That same picture) would exclaim,
"'Tis my angel, with a name!"

And a stranger,—when he sees her
In the street even—smileth stilly,
Just as you would at a lily.

And all voices that address her,
Soften, sleeken every word,
As if speaking to a bird.

And all fancies yearn to cover
The hard earth, whereon she passes,
With the thymy-scented grasses.

And all hearts do pray, "God love her!"
Ay and always, in good sooth,
We may all be sure HE DOTH.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

TO A CHILD OF FANCY

THE nests are in the hedgerows,
The lambs are on the grass;
With laughter sweet as music
The hours lightfooted pass,
My darling child of fancy,
My winsome prattling lass.

Blue eyes, with long brown lashes,
Thickets of golden curl,
Red little lips disclosing
Twin rows of fairy pearl,
Cheeks like the apple blossom,
Voice lightsome as the merle.

A whole Spring's fickle changes,
In every short-lived day,
A passing cloud of April,
A flowery smile of May,
A thousand quick mutations
From graver moods to gay.

Far off, I see the season
When thy childhood's course is run,
And thy girlhood opens wider
Beneath the growing sun,
And the rose begins to redden,
But the violets are done.

And further still the summer,
When thy fair tree, fully grown,
Shall bourgeon, and grow splendid
With blossoms of its own,
And the fruit begins to gather,
But the buttercups are mown.

If I should see thy autumn,
'Twill not be close at hand,
But with a spirit vision,
From some far-distant land.

Or, perhaps, I hence may see thee
Amongst the angels stand.

I know not what of fortune
The future holds for thee,
Nor if skies fair or clouded
Wait thee in days to be,
But neither joy nor sorrow
Shall sever thee from me.

Dear child, whatever changes
Across our lives may pass,
I shall see thee still for ever,
Clearly as in a glass,
The same sweet child of fancy,
The same dear winsome lass.

Lewis Morris [1833–1907]

DAISY

Where the thistle lifts a purple crown
Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—
O the breath of the distant surf!—

The hills look over on the South,
And southward dreams the sea;
And, with the sea-breeze hand in hand,
Came innocence and she.

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry
Red for the gatherer springs,
Two children did we stray and talk
Wise, idle, childish things.

She listened with big-lipped surprise,
Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine:
Her skin was like a grape, whose veins
Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake,
  Nor knew her own sweet way;
But there's never a bird, so sweet a song
  Thronged in whose throat that day!

Oh, there were flowers in Storrington
  On the turf and on the spray;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
  Was the Daisy-flower that day!

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face!
  She gave me tokens three:—
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
  And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a guileless look,
  A still word,—strings of sand!
And yet they made my wild, wild heart
  Fly down to her little hand.

For standing artless as the air,
  And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand,
  And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end:
  Their scent survives their close,
But the rose's scent is bitterness
  To him that loved the rose!

She looked a little wistfully,
  Then went her sunshine way:—
The sea's eye had a mist on it,
  And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,
  She went and left in me
The pang of all the partings gone,
  And partings yet to be.

She left me marveling why my soul
Was sad that she was glad;
At all the sadness in the sweet,
The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seemed to see her, still
Look up with soft replies,
And take the berries with her hand,
And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
That is not paid with moan;
For we are born in others' pain,
And perish in our own.

Francis Thompson [1859?–1907]

TO PETRONILLA WHO HAS PUT UP HER HAIR

Yesterday it blew alway,
Yesterday is dead,
Now forever must it stay
Coiled about your head,
Tell me Whence the great Command
Hitherward has sped.
"Silly boy, as if I knew,"
Petronilla said.

Nay, but I am very sure,
Since you left my side,
Something has befallen you,
You are fain to hide,
Homage has been done to you,
Innocents have died.
"Silly boy, and what of that?"
Petronilla cried.

Petronilla, much I fear
Scarcely have you wept
All those merry yesterdays,
Slaughtered whilst you slept,
Slain to bind that pretty crown
Closer round your head.
"Silly boy, as if I cared,"
Petronilla said.

Henry Howarth Bashford [1880–

THE GYPSY GIRL

PASSING I saw her as she stood beside
A lonely stream between two barren wolds;
Her loose vest hung in rudely gathered folds
On her swart bosom, which in maiden pride
Pillowed a string of pearls; among her hair
Twined the light bluebell and the stone-crop gay;
And not far thence the small encampment lay,
Curling its wreathèd smoke into the air.
She seemed a child of some sun-favored clime;
So still, so habited to warmth and rest;
And in my wayward musings on past time,
When my thought fills with treasured memories,
That image nearest borders on the blest
Creations of pure art that never dies.

Henry Alford [1810–1871]

FANNY

A SOUTHERN BLOSSOM

COME and see her as she stands,
Crimson roses in her hands;
And her eyes
Are as dark as Southern night,
Yet than Southern dawn more bright,
And a soft, alluring light
In them lies.

None deny if she beseech
With that pretty, liquid speech
Of the South.
All her consonants are slurred,
And the vowels are preferred;
There's a poem in each word
From that mouth.

Even Cupid is her slave;
Of her arrows, half he gave

Her one day
In a merry, playful hour.
Dowered with these and beauty's dower,
Strong indeed her magic power,
So they say.

Venus, not to be outdone
By her generous little son,
Shaped the mouth
Very like to Cupid's bow.
Lack-a-day! Our North can show
No such lovely flowers as grow
In the South!

Anne Reeve Aldrich [1866–1892]

SOMEBODY'S CHILD

Just a picture of Somebody's child,—
Sweet face set in golden hair,
Violet eyes, and cheeks of rose,
Rounded chin, with a dimple there,

Tender eyes where the shadows sleep,
Lit from within by a secret ray,—
Tender eyes that will shine like stars
When love and womanhood come this way:

Scarlet lips with a story to tell,—
Blessed be he who shall find it out,
Who shall learn the eyes' deep secret well,
And read the heart with never a doubt.

Then you will tremble, scarlet lips,
Then you will crimson, loveliest cheeks:
Eyes will brighten and blushes will burn
When the one true lover bends and speaks.

But she's only a child now, as you see,
Only a child in her careless grace:
When Love and Womanhood come this way
Will anything sadden the flower-like face?

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835–1908]

EMILIA

Halfway up the Hemlock valley turnpike,
In the bend of Silver Water's arm,
Where the deer come trooping down at even,
Drink the cowslip pool, and fear no harm,
Dwells Emilia,
Flower of the fields of Camlet Farm.

Sitting sewing by the western window
As the too brief mountain sunshine flies,
Hast thou seen a slender-shouldered figure
With a chestnut braid, Minerva-wise,
Round her temples,
Shadowing her gray, enchanted eyes?

When the freshets flood the Silver Water,
When the swallow flying northward braves
Sleeting rains that sweep the birchen foothills
Where the windflowers' pale plantation waves—
(Fairy gardens
Springing from the dead leaves in their graves),—

Falls forgotten, then, Emilia's needle;
Ancient ballads, fleeting through her brain,
Sing the cuckoo and the English primrose,
Outdoors calling with a quaint refrain;
And a rainbow
Seems to brighten through the gusty rain.

Forth she goes, in some old dress and faded,
Fearless of the showery shifting wind;
Kilted are her skirts to clear the mosses,
And her bright braids in a 'kerchief pinned,
Younger sister
Of the damsel-errant Rosalind.

While she helps to serve the harvest supper
In the lantern-lighted village hall,
Moonlight rises on the burning woodland,
Echoes dwindle from the distant Fall.
Hark, Emilia!
In her ear the airy voices call.

Hidden papers in the dusty garret,
Where her few and secret poems lie,—
Thither flies her heart to join her treasure,
While she serves, with absent-musing eye,
Mighty tankards
Foaming cider in the glasses high.

"Would she mingle with her young companions!"
Vainly do her aunts and uncles say;
Ever, from the village sports and dances,
Early missed, Emilia slips away.
Whither vanished?
With what unimagined mates to play?

Did they seek her, wandering by the water,
They should find her comrades shy and strange:
Queens and princesses, and saints and fairies,
Dimly moving in a cloud of change:—
Desdemona;
Mariana of the Moated Grange.

Up this valley to the fair and market
When young farmers from the southward ride,
Oft they linger at a sound of chanting
In the meadows by the turnpike side;
Long they listen,
Deep in fancies of a fairy bride.

Sarah N. Cleghorn [1876–

TO A GREEK GIRL

With breath of thyme and bees that hum,
Across the years you seem to come,—
Across the years with nymph-like head,
And wind-blown brows unfilleted;
A girlish shape that slips the bud
In lines of unspoiled symmetry;
A girlish shape that stirs the blood
With pulse of Spring, Autonoë!

Where'er you pass,—where'er you go,
I hear the pebbly rillet flow;
Where'er you go,—where'er you pass,
There comes a gladness on the grass;
You bring blithe airs where'er you tread,—
Blithe airs that blow from down and sea;
You wake in me a Pan not dead,—
Not wholly dead!—Autonoë!

How sweet with you on some green sod
To wreathe the rustic garden-god;
How sweet beneath the chestnut's shade
With you to weave a basket-braid;
To watch across the stricken chords
Your rosy-twinkling fingers flee;
To woo you in soft woodland words,
With woodland pipe, Autonoë!

In vain,—in vain! The years divide:
Where Thamis rolls a murky tide,
I sit and fill my painful reams,
And see you only in my dreams;—
A vision, like Alcestis, brought
From under-lands of Memory,—
A dream of Form in days of Thought,—
A dream,—a dream, Autonoë!

Austin Dobson [1840–

"CHAMBER SCENE"

AN EXQUISITE PICTURE IN THE STUDIO OF A YOUNG ARTIST AT ROME

She rose from her untroubled sleep,
And put away her soft brown hair,
And, in a tone as low and deep
As love's first whisper, breathed a prayer—
Her snow-white hands together pressed,
Her blue eyes sheltered in the lid,
The folded linen on her breast,
Just swelling with the charms it hid;

And from her long and flowing dress
  Escaped a bare and slender foot,
Whose shape upon the earth did press
  Like a new snow-flake, white and "mute";
And there, from slumber pure and warm,
  Like a young spirit fresh from heaven,
She bowed her slight and graceful form,
  And humbly prayed to be forgiven.

Oh God! if souls unsoiled as these
  Need daily mercy from Thy throne;
If she upon her bended knees,
  Our loveliest and our purest one,—
She, with a face so clear and bright,
We deem her some stray child of light;—
If she, with those soft eyes in tears,
Day after day in her first years,
  Must kneel and pray for grace from Thee,
  What far, far deeper need have we!
How hardly, if she win not heaven,
Will *our* wild errors be forgiven!

Nathaniel Parker Willis [1806–1867]

"AH, BE NOT FALSE"

Ah, be not false, sweet Splendor!
  Be true, be good;
Be wise as thou art tender;
  Be all that Beauty should.

Not lightly be thy citadel subdued;
  Not ignobly, not untimely,
Take praise in solemn mood;
  Take love sublimely.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

A LIFE-LESSON

There! little girl, don't cry!
  They have broken your doll, I know;
  And your tea-set blue,
  And your play-house, too,
Are things of the long ago;

But childish troubles will soon pass by.—
There! little girl, don't cry!

There! little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your slate, I know;
And the glad, wild ways
Of your school-girl days
Are things of the long ago;
But life and love will soon come by.—
There! little girl, don't cry!

There! little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your heart, I know;
And the rainbow gleams
Of your youthful dreams
Are things of the long ago;
But Heaven holds all for which you sigh.—
There! little girl, don't cry!

James Whitcomb Riley [1852–1916]

THE MAN

THE BREAKING

THE LORD GOD SPEAKS TO A YOUTH

BEND now thy body to the common weight:
(But oh, that vine-clad head, those limbs of morn!
Those proud young shoulders, I myself made straight!
How shall ye wear the yoke that must be worn?)

Look thou, my son, what wisdom comes to thee:
(But oh, that singing mouth, those radiant eyes!
Those dancing feet—that I myself made free!
How shall I sadden them to make them wise?)

Nay, then, thou shalt! Resist not—have a care!
(Yea, I must work my plans who sovereign sit;
Yet do not tremble so! I cannot bear—
Though I am God—to see thee so submit!)

Margaret Steele Anderson [18 –

THE FLIGHT OF YOUTH

THERE are gains for all our losses,
There are balms for all our pain:
But when youth, the dream, departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
And it never comes again.

We are stronger, and are better,
Under manhood's sterner reign:
Still we feel that something sweet
Followed youth, with flying feet,
And will never come again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
And we sigh for it in vain:
We behold it everywhere,
On the earth, and in the air,
But it never comes again.

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825–1903]

"DAYS OF MY YOUTH"

Days of my youth,
Ye have glided away;
Hairs of my youth,
Ye are frosted and gray;
Eyes of my youth,
Your keen sight is no more;
Cheeks of my youth,
Ye are furrowed all o'er;
Strength of my youth,
All your vigor is gone;
Thoughts of my youth,
Your gay visions are flown.

Days of my youth,
I wish not your recall;
Hairs of my youth,
I'm content ye should fall;
Eyes of my youth,
You much evil have seen;
Cheeks of my youth,
Bathed in tears have you been;
Thoughts of my youth,
You have led me astray;
Strength of my youth,
Why lament your decay?

Days of my age,
Ye will shortly be past;
Pains of my age,
Yet awhile ye can last;

Joys of my age,
In true wisdom delight;
Eyes of my age,
Be religion your light;
Thoughts of my age,
Dread ye not the cold sod;
Hopes of my age,
Be ye fixed on your God.

St. George Tucker [1752–1828]

AVE ATQUE VALE

Farewell, my Youth! for now we needs must part,
For here the paths divide;
Here hand from hand must sever, heart from heart,—
Divergence deep and wide.

You'll wear no withered roses for my sake,
Though I go mourning for you all day long,
Finding no magic more in bower or brake,
No melody in song.

Gray Eld must travel in my company
To seal this severance more fast and sure.
A joyless fellowship, i' faith, 'twill be,
Yet must we fare together, I and he,
Till I shall tread the footpath way no more.

But when a blackbird pipes among the boughs,
On some dim, iridescent day in spring,
Then I may dream you are remembering
Our ancient vows.

Or when some joy foregone, some fate forsworn,
Looks through the dark eyes of the violet,
I may re-cross the set, forbidden bourne,
I may forget
Our long, long parting for a little while,
Dream of the golden splendors of your smile,
Dream you remember yet.

Rosamund Marriott Watson [1863–1911]

TO YOUTH

Where art thou gone, light-ankled Youth?
With wing at either shoulder,
And smile that never left thy mouth
Until the Hours grew colder:

Then somewhat seemed to whisper near
That thou and I must part;
I doubted it; I felt no fear,
No weight upon the heart.

If aught befell it, Love was by
And rolled it off again;
So, if there ever was a sigh,
'Twas not a sigh of pain.

I may not call thee back; but thou
Returnest when the hand
Of gentle Sleep waves o'er my brow
His poppy-crested wand;

Then smiling eyes bend over mine,
Then lips once pressed invite;
But sleep hath given a silent sign,
And both, alas! take flight.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

STANZAS WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE AND PISA

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead-flower with May-dew besprinkled:
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary!
What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give glory?

Oh FAME!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover,
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shivered sail shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined turret wreathe,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and gray beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a vanished scene;
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though they be,
So, midst the withered waste of life, those tears would flow to me.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

"WHEN AS A LAD"

When, as a lad, at break of day
I watched the fishers sail away,
My thoughts, like flocking birds, would follow
Across the curving sky's blue hollow,
And on and on—
Into the very heart of dawn!

For long I searched the world! Ah me!
I searched the sky, I searched the sea,
With much of useless grief and rueing,
Those wingèd thoughts of mine pursuing—
So dear were they,
So lovely and so far away!

I seek them still and always will
Until my laggard heart is still,
And I am free to follow, follow,
Across the curving sky's blue hollow,
Those thoughts too fleet
For any save the soul's swift feet!

Isabel Ecclestone Mackay [18 –

"AROUND THE CHILD"

Around the child bend all the three
Sweet Graces—Faith, Hope, Charity.
Around the man bend other faces—
Pride, Envy, Malice, are his Graces.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

ALADDIN

When I was a beggarly boy,
And lived in a cellar damp,
I had not a friend nor a toy,
But I had Aladdin's lamp;
When I could not sleep for the cold,
I had fire enough in my brain,
And builded, with roofs of gold,
My beautiful castles in Spain!

Since then I have toiled day and night,
I have money and power good store,
But I'd give all my lamps of silver bright
For the one that is mine no more.
Take, Fortune, whatever you choose;
You gave, and may snatch again;
I have nothing 'twould pain me to lose,
For I own no more castles in Spain!

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

THE QUEST

It was a heavenly time of life
When first I went to Spain,
The lovely land of silver mists,
The land of golden grain.

My little ship through unknown seas
Sailed many a changing day;
Sometimes the chilling winds came up
And blew across her way;

Sometimes the rain came down and hid
The shining shores of Spain,
The beauty of the silver mists
And of the golden grain.

But through the rains and through the winds,
Upon the untried sea,
My fairy ship sailed on and on,
With all my dreams and me.

And now, no more a child, I long
For that sweet time again,
When on the far horizon bar
Rose up the shores of Spain.

O lovely land of silver mists,
O land of golden grain,
I look for you with smiles, with tears,
But look for you in vain!

Ellen Mackey Hutchinson Cortissoz [18 –

MY BIRTH-DAY

"My birth-day"—what a different sound
That word had in my youthful ears!
And how, each time the day comes round,
Less and less white its mark appears!
When first our scanty years are told,
It seems like pastime to grow old;
And, as Youth counts the shining links
That Time around him binds so fast,
Pleased with the task, he little thinks
How hard that chain will press at last.
Vain was the man, and false as vain,
Who said—"were he ordained to run
His long career of life again,
He would do all that he had done."

Ah, 'tis not thus the voice, that dwells
In sober birth-days, speaks to me;
Far otherwise—of time it tells
Lavished unwisely, carelessly;
Of counsel mocked; of talents, made
Unapply for high and pure designs,
But oft, like Israel's incense, laid
Upon unholy, earthly shrines;

Of nursing many a wrong desire;
Of wandering after Love too far,
And taking every meteor-fire
That crossed my pathway, for a star.
All this it tells, and, could I trace
The imperfect picture o'er again,
With power to add, retouch, efface
The lights and shades, the joy and pain,
How little of the past would stay!
How quickly all should melt away—
All—but that Freedom of the Mind,
Which hath been more than wealth to me;
Those friendships, in my boyhood twined,
And kept till now unchangingly;
And that dear home, that saving-ark,
Where Love's true light at last I've found,
Cheering within, when all grows dark,
And comfortless, and stormy round!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

SONNET

ON HIS HAVING ARRIVED TO THE AGE OF TWENTY–THREE

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
That I to manhood am arrived so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet, be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven:
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-master's eye.

John Milton [1608–1674]

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honorable death
Is here:—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

GROWING GRAY

"On a l' age de son cœur."
A. D' HOUDETOT

A LITTLE more toward the light;—
Me miserable! Here's one that's white;
And one that's turning;
Adieu to song and "salad days;"
My Muse, let's go at once to Jay's,
And order mourning.

We must reform our rhymes, my Dear,—
Renounce the gay for the severe,—
Be grave, not witty;
We have, no more, the right to find
That Pyrrha's hair is neatly twined,—
That Chloe's pretty.

Young Love's for us a farce that's played;
Light canzonet and serenade
No more may tempt us;
Gray hairs but ill accord with dreams;
From aught but sour didactic themes
Our years exempt us.

Indeed! you really fancy so?
You think for one white streak we grow
At once satiric?
A fiddlestick! Each hair's a string
To which our ancient Muse shall sing
A younger lyric.

The heart's still sound. Shall "cakes and ale"
Grow rare to youth because *we* rail
At schoolboy dishes?
Perish the thought! 'Tis ours to chant,
When neither Time nor Tide can grant
Belief with wishes.

Austin Dobson [1840–

THE ONE WHITE HAIR

The wisest of the wise
Listen to pretty lies
And love to hear 'em told.
Doubt not that Solomon
Listened to many a one,—
Some in his youth, and more when he grew old.

I never was among
The choir of Wisdom's song,
But pretty lies loved I
As much as any king,
When youth was on the wing,
And (must it then be told?) when youth had quite gone by.

Alas! and I have not
The pleasant hour forgot
When one pert lady said,
"O Walter! I am quite
Bewildered with affright!
I see (sit quiet now) a white hair on your head!"

Another more benign
Snipped it away from mine,
And in her own dark hair
Pretended it was found . . .
She leaped, and twirled it round
Fair as she was, she never was *so* fair!

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

BALLADE OF MIDDLE AGE

Our youth began with tears and sighs,
With seeking what we could not find;
Our verses all were threnodies,
In elegiacs still we whined;
Our ears were deaf, our eyes were blind,
We sought and knew not what we sought.
We marvel, now we look behind:
Life's more amusing than we thought!

Oh, foolish youth, untimely wise!
Oh, phantoms of the sickly mind!
What? not content with seas and skies,
With rainy clouds and southern wind,
With common cares and faces kind,
With pains and joys each morning brought?
Ah, old, and worn, and tired we find
Life's more amusing than we thought!

Though youth "turns spectre-thin and dies,"
To mourn for youth we're not inclined;
We set our souls on salmon flies,
We whistle where we once repined.
Confound the woes of human-kind!
By Heaven we're "well deceived," I wot;
Who hum, contented or resigned,
"Life's more amusing than we thought"!

ENVOY

O nate mecum, worn and lined
Our faces show, but *that* is naught;
Our hearts are young 'neath wrinkled rind:
Life's more amusing than we thought!

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

MIDDLE AGE

When that my days were fewer,
Some twenty years ago,
And all that is was newer,
And time itself seemed slow,

With ardor all impassioned,
I let my hopes fly free,
And deemed the world was fashioned
My playing-field to be.

The cup of joy was filled then
With Fancy's sparkling wine;
And all the things I willed then
Seemed destined to be mine.
Friends had I then in plenty,
And every friend was true;
Friends always are at twenty,
And on to twenty-two.

The men whose hair was sprinkled
With little flecks of gray,
Whose faded brows were wrinkled—
Sure they had had their day.
And though we bore no malice,
We knew their hearts were cold,
For they had drained their chalice,
And now were spent and old.

At thirty, we admitted,
A man may be alive,
But slower, feebler witted;
And done at thirty-five.
If Fate prolongs his earth-days,
His joys grow fewer still;
And after five more birthdays
He totters down the hill.

We were the true immortals
Who held the earth in fee;
For us were flung the portals
Of fame and victory.
The days were bright and breezy,
And gay our banners flew,
And every peak was easy
To scale at twenty-two.

And thus we spent our gay time
As having much to spend;
Swift, swift, that pretty playtime
Flew by and had its end.
And lo! without a warning
I woke, as others do,
One fine mid-winter morning,
A man of forty-two.

And now I see how vainly
Is youth with ardor fired;
How fondly, how insanely
I formerly aspired.
A boy may still detest age,
But as for me I know,
A man has reached his best age
At forty-two or so.

For youth it is the season
Of restlessness and strife;
Of passion and unreason,
And ignorance of life.
Since, though his cheeks have roses,
No boy can understand
That everything he knows is
A graft at second hand.

But *we* have toiled and wandered
With weary feet and numb;
Have doubted, sifted, pondered,—
How else should knowledge come?
Have seen, too late for heeding,
Our hopes go out in tears,
Lost in the dim receding,
Irrevocable years.

Yet, though with busy fingers
No more we wreathe the flowers,
An airy perfume lingers,
A brightness still is ours.

And though no rose our cheeks have,
The sky still shines as blue;
And still the distant peaks have
The glow of twenty-two.

Rudolph Chambers Lehmann [1856–

TO CRITICS

When I was seventeen I heard
From each censorious tongue,
"I'd not do that if I were you;
You see you're rather young."

Now that I number forty years,
I'm quite as often told
Of this or that I shouldn't do
Because I'm quite too old.

O carping world! If there's an age
Where youth and manhood keep
An equal poise, alas! I must
Have passed it in my sleep.

Walter Learned [1847–1915]

THE RAINBOW

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

LEAVETAKING

Pass, thou wild light,
Wild light on peaks that so

Grieve to let go
The day.
Lovely thy tarrying, lovely too is night:
Pass thou away.

Pass, thou wild heart,
Wild heart of youth that still
Hast half a will
To stay.
I grow too old a comrade, let us part:
Pass thou away.

William Watson [1858–

EQUINOCTIAL

The sun of life has crossed the line;
The summer-shine of lengthened light
Faded and failed, till, where I stand,
'Tis equal day and equal night.

One after one, as dwindling hours,
Youth's glowing hopes have dropped away,
And soon may barely leave the gleam
That coldly scores a winter's day.

I am not young; I am not old;
The flush of morn, the sunset calm,
Paling and deepening, each to each,
Meet midway with a solemn charm.

One side I see the summer fields,
Not yet disrobed of all their green;
While westerly, along the hills,
Flame the first tints of frosty sheen.

Ah, middle-point, where cloud and storm
Make battle-ground of this my life!
Where, even-matched, the night and day
Wage round me their September strife!

I bow me to the threatening gale:
I know when that is overpast,
Among the peaceful harvest days,
An Indian Summer comes at last!

Adeline D. T. Whitney [1824–1906]

"BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF YEARS"

From "Atalanta in Calydon"

Before the beginning of years,
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
Grief, with a glass that ran;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
Summer, with flowers that fell;
Remembrance, fallen from heaven;
And madness, risen from hell;
Strength, without hands to smite;
Love, that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light;
And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears,
And a measure of sliding sand
From under the feet of the years;
And froth and drift of the sea;
And dust of the laboring earth;
And bodies of things to be
In the houses of death and of birth;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
And fashioned with loathing and love,
With life before and after,
And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a span,
With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
They gathered as unto strife;
They breathed upon his mouth,
They filled his body with life;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
For the veils of the soul therein,
A time for labor and thought,
A time to serve and to sin;
They gave him light in his ways,
And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire;
With his lips he travaileth;
In his heart is a blind desire,
In his eyes foreknowledge of death;
He weaves, and is clothed with derision
Sows, and he shall not reap;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

MAN

Weighing the steadfastness and state
Of some mean things which here below reside,
Where birds, like watchful clocks, the noiseless date
And intercourse of times divide,
Where bees at night get home and hive, and flowers,
Early as well as late,
Rise with the sun, and set in the same bowers;

I would, said I, my God would give
The staidness of these things to man! for these
To His divine appointments ever cleave,
And no new business breaks their peace;
The birds nor sow nor reap, yet sup and dine,
The flowers without clothes live,
Yet Solomon was never dressed so fine.

Man hath still either toys, or care;
He hath no root, nor to one place is tied,
But ever restless and irregular
About this earth doth run and ride;
He knows he hath a home, but scarce knows where;
He says it is so far,
That he hath quite forgot how to go there.

He knocks at all doors, strays and roams;
Nay, hath not so much wit as some stones have,
Which in the darkest nights point to their homes
By some hid sense their Maker gave;
Man is the shuttle, to whose winding quest
And passage through these looms
God ordered motion, but ordained no rest.

Henry Vaughan [1622–1695]

THE PULLEY

When God at first made Man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by—
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can;
Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way,
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honor, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.

George Herbert [1593–1633]

ODE ON THE INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose;
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the Birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong.
The Cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep:
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,

And all the earth is gay;
Land and Sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy Shepherd-boy!

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
O evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning
This sweet May morning,
And the Children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the East
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision spendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can,
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his Mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his Father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife:
But it will not be long

Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave:
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed

For that which is most worthy to be blest—
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,

Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks, which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they:
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober coloring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE WOMAN

WOMAN

Not she with traitorous kiss her Saviour stung,
Not she denied him with unholy tongue;
She, while apostles shrank, could dangers brave,
Last at the cross and earliest at the grave.

Eaton Stannard Barrett [1786–1820]

WOMAN

There in the fane a beauteous creature stands,
The first best work of the Creator's hands,
Whose slender limbs inadequately bear
A full-orbed bosom and a weight of care;
Whose teeth like pearls, whose lips like cherries, show,
And fawn-like eyes still tremble as they glow.

From the Sanskrit of Calidasa

SIMPLEX MUNDITIIS

From "Epicœne"

Still to be neat, still to be dressed
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powdered, still perfumed:
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all the adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

DELIGHT IN DISORDER

A SWEET disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness:
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction:
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher:
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbons to flow confusedly:
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat:
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility:
Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

A PRAISE OF HIS LADY

GIVE place, you ladies, and begone!
Boast not yourselves at all!
For here at hand approacheth one
Whose face will stain you all.

The virtue of her lively looks
Excels the precious stone;
I wish to have none other books
To read or look upon.

In each of her two crystal eyes
Smileth a naked boy;
It would you all in heart suffice
To see that lamp of joy.

I think Nature hath lost the mould
Where she her shape did take;
Or else I doubt if Nature could
So fair a creature make.

She may be well compared
Unto the Phœnix kind,
Whose like was never seen nor heard,
That any man can find.

In life she is Diana chaste,
In truth Penelope;
In word and eke in deed steadfast.
What will you more we say?

If all the world were sought so far,
Who could find such a wight?
Her beauty twinkleth like a star
Within the frosty night.

Her roseal color comes and goes
With such a comely grace,
More ruddier, too, than doth the rose
Within her lively face.

At Bacchus' feast none shall her meet,
Nor at no wanton play,
Nor gazing in an open street,
Nor gadding as a stray.

The modest mirth that she doth use
Is mixed with shamefastness;
All vice she doth wholly refuse,
And hateth idleness.

O Lord! it is a world to see
How virtue can repair,
And deck her in such honesty,
Whom Nature made so fair.

Truly she doth so far exceed
Our women nowadays,
As doth the gillyflower a weed;
And more a thousand ways.

How might I do to get a graff
Of this unspotted tree?
For all the rest are plain but chaff,
Which seem good corn to be.

This gift alone I shall her give:
When death doth what he can,
Her honest fame shall ever live
Within the mouth of man.

John Heywood [1497?–1580?]

ON A CERTAIN LADY AT COURT

I KNOW a thing that's most uncommon;
(Envy, be silent and attend!)
I know a reasonable woman,
Handsome and witty, yet a friend.

Not warped by passion, awed by rumor;
Not grave through pride, nor gay through folly;
An equal mixture of good-humor
And sensible soft melancholy.

"Has she no faults then (Envy says), Sir?"
Yes, she has one, I must aver:
When all the world conspires to praise her,
The woman's deaf, and does not hear.

Alexander Pope [1688–1744]

PERFECT WOMAN

SHE was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE SOLITARY-HEARTED

She was a queen of noble Nature's crowning,
A smile of hers was like an act of grace;
She had no winsome looks, no pretty frowning,
Like daily beauties of the vulgar race:
But if she smiled, a light was on her face,
A clear, cool kindliness, a lunar beam
Of peaceful radiance, silvering o'er the stream
Of human thought with unabiding glory;
Not quite a waking truth, not quite a dream,
A visitation, bright and transitory.

But she is changed,—hath felt the touch of sorrow,
No love hath she, no understanding friend;
O grief! when Heaven is forced of earth to borrow
What the poor niggard earth has not to lend;

But when the stalk is snapped, the rose must bend.
The tallest flower that skyward rears its head
Grows from the common ground, and there must shed
Its delicate petals. Cruel fate, too surely,
That they should find so base a bridal bed,
Who lived in virgin pride, so sweet and purely.

She had a brother, and a tender father,
And she was loved, but not as others are
From whom we ask return of love,—but rather
As one might love a dream; a phantom fair
Of something exquisitely strange and rare,
Which all were glad to look on, men and maids,
Yet no one claimed—as oft, in dewy glades,
The peering primrose, like a sudden gladness,
Gleams on the soul, yet unregarded fades;—
The joy is ours, but all its own the sadness.

'Tis vain to say—her worst of grief is only
The common lot, which all the world have known;
To her 'tis more, because her heart is lonely,
And yet she hath no strength to stand alone,—
Once she had playmates, fancies of her own,
And she did love them. They are passed away
As Fairies vanish at the break of day;
And like a spectre of an age departed,
Or unsphered Angel wofully astray,
She glides along—the solitary-hearted.

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1849]

OF THOSE WHO WALK ALONE

Women there are on earth, most sweet and high,
Who lose their own, and walk bereft and lonely,
Loving that one lost heart until they die,
Loving it only.

And so they never see beside them grow
Children, whose coming is like breath of flowers;
Consoled by subtler loves the angels know
Through childless hours.

Good deeds they do: they comfort and they bless
In duties others put off till the morrow;
Their look is balm, their touch is tenderness
To all in sorrow.

Betimes the world smiles at them, as 'twere shame,
This maiden guise, long after youth's departed;
But in God's Book they bear another name—
"The faithful-hearted."

Faithful in life, and faithful unto death,
Such souls, in sooth, illume with lustre splendid
That glimpsed, glad land wherein, the Vision saith,
Earth's wrongs are ended.

Richard Burton [1859–

"SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY"

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

PRELUDES

From "The Angel in the House"

I

UNTHRIFT

Ah, wasteful woman, she that may
On her sweet self set her own price,
Knowing man cannot choose but pay,
How has she cheapened paradise;
How given for nought her priceless gift,
How spoiled the bread, and spilled the wine,
Which, spent with due, respective thrift,
Had made brutes men, and men divine.

II

HONOR AND DESERT

O Queen, awake to thy renown,
Require what 'tis our wealth to give,
And comprehend and wear the crown
Of thy despised prerogative!
I, who in manhood's name at length
With glad songs come to abdicate
The gross regality of strength,
Must yet in this thy praise abate,
That, through thine erring humbleness
And disregard of thy degree,
Mainly, has man been so much less
Than fits his fellowship with thee.

High thoughts had shaped the foolish brow,
The coward had grasped the hero's sword,
The vilest had been great, hadst thou,
Just to thyself, been worth's reward.
But lofty honors undersold
Seller and buyer both disgrace;
And favors that make folly bold
Banish the light from virtue's face.

III

THE ROSE OF THE WORLD

Lo, when the Lord made North and South,
And sun and moon ordained, He,
Forthbringing each by word of mouth
In order of its dignity,
Did man from the crude clay express
By sequence, and all else decreed,
He formed the woman; nor might less
Than Sabbath such a work succeed.

And still with favor singled out,
Marred less than man by mortal fall,
Her disposition is devout,
Her countenance angelical:
The best things that the best believe
Are in her face so kindly writ
The faithless, seeing her, conceive
Not only heaven, but hope of it;
No idle thought her instinct shrouds,
But fancy chequers settled sense,
Like alteration of the clouds
On noonday's azure permanence.

Pure dignity, composure, ease,
Declare affections nobly fixed,
And impulse sprung from due degrees
Of sense and spirit sweetly mixed.
Her modesty, her chiefest grace,
The cestus clasping Venus' side,
How potent to deject the face
Of him who would affront its pride!

Wrong dares not in her presence speak,
Nor spotted thought its taint disclose
Under the protest of a cheek
Outbragging Nature's boast, the rose.
In mind and manners how discreet;
How artless in her very art;
How candid in discourse; how sweet
The concord of her lips and heart!

How simple and how circumspect;
  How subtle and how fancy-free;
Though sacred to her love, how decked
  With unexclusive courtesy;
How quick in talk to see from far
  The way to vanquish or evade;
How able her persuasions are
  To prove, her reasons to persuade.

How (not to call true instinct's bent
  And woman's very nature, harm),
How amiable and innocent
  Her pleasure in her power to charm;
How humbly careful to attract,
  Though crowned with all the soul desires,
Connubial aptitude exact,
  Diversity that never tires!

IV

THE TRIBUTE

Boon Nature to the woman bows;
  She walks in earth's whole glory clad,
And, chiefest far herself of shows,
  All others help her and are glad:
No splendor 'neath the sky's proud dome
  But serves her for familiar wear;
The far-fetched diamond finds its home
  Flashing and smouldering in her hair;
For her the seas their pearls reveal;
  Art and strange lands her pomp supply
With purple, chrome, and cochineal,
  Ochre, and lapis lazuli;
The worm its golden woof presents;
  Whatever runs, flies, dives, or delves,
All doff for her their ornaments,
  Which suit her better than themselves;
And all, by this their power to give,
  Proving her right to take, proclaim
Her beauty's clear prerogative
  To profit so by Eden's blame.

V

NEAREST THE DEAREST

Till Eve was brought to Adam, he
  A solitary desert trod,
Though in the great society
  Of nature, angels, and of God.
If one slight column counterweighs
  The ocean, 'tis the Maker's law,
Who deems obedience better praise
  Than sacrifice of erring awe.

VI

THE FOREIGN LAND

A woman is a foreign land,
  Of which, though there he settle young,
A man will ne'er quite understand
  The customs, politics, and tongue.
The foolish hie them post-haste through,
  See fashions odd and prospects fair,
Learn of the language, "How d'ye do,"
  And go and brag they have been there.
The most for leave to trade apply,
  For once, at Empire's seat, her heart,
Then get what knowledge ear and eye
  Glean chancewise in the life-long mart.
And certain others, few and fit,
  Attach them to the Court, and see
The Country's best, its accent hit,
  And partly sound its polity.

Coventry Patmore [1823–1896]

A HEALTH

I FILL this cup to one made up
  Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
  The seeming paragon;

To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burdened bee
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon—
Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.

Edward Coate Pinkney [1802–1828]

OUR SISTER

Her face was very fair to see,
So luminous with purity:—
It had no roses, but the hue
Of lilies lustrous with their dew—
Her very soul seemed shining through!

Her quiet nature seemed to be
Tuned to each season's harmony.
The holy sky bent near to her;
She saw a spirit in the stir
Of solemn woods. The rills that beat
Their mosses with voluptuous feet,
Went dripping music through her thought.
Sweet impulse came to her unsought
From graceful things, and beauty took
A sacred meaning in her look.

In the great Master's steps went she
With patience and humility.
The casual gazer could not guess
Half of her veilèd loveliness;
Yet ah! what precious things lay hid
Beneath her bosom's snowy lid:—
What tenderness and sympathy,
What beauty of sincerity,
What fancies chaste, and loves, that grew
In heaven's own stainless light and dew!

True woman was she day by day
In suffering, toil, and victory.
Her life, made holy and serene
By faith, was hid with things unseen.
She knew what they alone can know
Who live above but dwell below.

Horatio Nelson Powers [1826–1890]

FROM LIFE

Her thoughts are like a flock of butterflies.
She has a merry love of little things,
And a bright flutter of speech, whereto she brings
A threefold eloquence—voice, hands and eyes.
Yet under all a subtle silence lies
As a bird's heart is hidden by its wings;
And you shall search through many wanderings
The fairyland of her realities.

She hides herself behind a busy brain—
A woman, with a child's laugh in her blood;
A maid, wearing the shadow of motherhood—
Wise with the quiet memory of old pain,
As the soft glamor of remembered rain
Hallows the gladness of a sunlit wood.

Brian Hooker [1880–

THE ROSE OF THE WORLD

Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream?
For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
Mournful that no new wonder may betide,
Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam,
And Usna's children died.

We and the laboring world are passing by:
Amid men's souls, that waver and give place,
Like the pale waters in their wintry race,
Under the passing stars, foam of the sky,
Lives on this lonely face.

Bow down, archangels, in your dim abode:
Before you were, or any hearts to beat,
Weary and kind one lingered by His seat;
He made the world to be a grassy road
Before her wandering feet.

William Butler Yeats [1865–

DAWN OF WOMANHOOD

Thus will I have the woman of my dream.
  Strong must she be and gentle, like a star
Her soul burn whitely; nor its arrowy beam

May any cloud of superstition mar:
  True to the earth she is, patient and calm.
Her tranquil eyes shall penetrate afar

Through centuries, and her maternal arm
  Enfold the generations yet unborn;
Nor she, by passing glamor nor alarm,

Will from the steadfast way of life be drawn.
  Gray-eyed and fearless, I behold her gaze
Outward into the furnace of the dawn.

Sacred shall be the purport of her days,
  Yet human; and the passion of the earth
Shall be for her adornment and her praise.

She is most often joyous, with a mirth
  That rings true-tempered holy womanhood.
She cannot fear the agonies of birth,

Nor sit in pallid lethargy and brood
  Upon the coming seasons of her pain:
By her the mystery is understood

Of harvest, and fulfilment in the grain.
  Yea, she is wont to labor in the field,
Delights to heap, at sunset, on the wain

Festoons and coronals of the golden yield.
  A triumph is the labor of her soul,
Sublime along eternity revealed.

Lo, everlastingly in her control,
  Under the even measure of her breath,
Like crested waves the onward centuries roll.

Nor to far heaven her spirit wandereth,
  Nor lifteth she her voice in barren prayer,
Nor trembleth at appearances of death.

She, godlike in her womanhood, will fare
Calm-visaged and heroic to the end.
The homestead is her most especial care;

She loves the sacred hearth: she will defend
Her gods from desecration of the vile.
Fierce, like a wounded tigress, she can rend

Whatever may have entered to defile.
I see her in the evening by the fire,
And in her eyes, illumined from the pile

Of blazing logs, a motherly desire
Glows like the moulded passion of a rose;
Beautiful is her presence in the bower:

Her spirit is the spirit of repose.
Mankind shall hold her motherhood in awe:
Woman is she indeed, and not of those

That he with sacramental gold must draw
Discreetly to his chamber in the night,
Or bind to him with fetters of the law.

He holds her by a spiritual right.
With diamond and with pearl he need not sue;
Nor will she deck herself for his delight:

Beauty is the adornment of the true.
She shall possess for ornament and gem
A flower, the glowworm, or the drop of dew:

More innocently fair than all of them,
It will not even shame her if she make
A coronal of stars her diadem.

Though she is but a vision, I can take
Courage from her. I feel her arrowy beam
Already, for her spirit is awake,

And passes down the future like a gleam,—
Thus have I made the woman of my dream.

Harold Monro [1879–

THE SHEPHERDESS

She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
She guards them from the steep.
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night
The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

Alice Meynell [1853–

A PORTRAIT

Mother and maid and soldier, bearing best
Her girl's lithe body under matron gray,
And opening new eyes on each new day
With faith concealed and courage unconfessed;
Jealous to cloak a blessing in a jest,
Clothe beauty carefully in disarray,
And love absurdly, that no word betray
The worship all her deeds make manifest:

Armored in smiles, a motley Britomart—
Her lance is high adventure, tipped with scorn;
Her banner to the suns and winds unfurled,
Washed white with laughter; and beneath her heart,
Shrined in a garland of laborious thorn,
Blooms the unchanging Rose of all the World.

Brian Hooker [1880–

THE WIFE

THE little Dreams of Maidenhood—
I put them all away
As tenderly as mother would
The toys of yesterday,
When little children grow to men
Too over-wise for play.

The little dreams I put aside—
I loved them every one,
And yet since moon-blown buds must hide
Before the noon-day sun,
I close them wistfully away
And give the key to none.

O little Dreams of Maidenhood—
Lie quietly, nor care
If some day in an idle mood
I, searching unaware
Through some closed corner of my heart,
Should laugh to find you there.

Theodosia Garrison [1874–

"TRUSTY, DUSKY, VIVID, TRUE"

TRUSTY, dusky, vivid, true,
With eyes of gold and bramble-dew,
Steel true and blade straight
The great Artificer made my mate.

Honor, anger, valor, fire,
A love that life could never tire,
Death quench, or evil stir,
The mighty Master gave to her.

Teacher, tender comrade, wife,
A fellow-farer true through life,
Heart-whole and soul-free,
The August Father gave to me.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

THE SHRINE

THERE is a shrine whose golden gate
  Was opened by the Hand of God;
It stands serene, inviolate,
  Though millions have its pavement trod;
As fresh, as when the first sunrise
Awoke the lark in Paradise.

'Tis compassed with the dust and toil
  Of common days, yet should there fall
A single speck, a single soil
  Upon the whiteness of its wall,
The angels' tears in tender rain
Would make the temple theirs again.

Without, the world is tired and old,
  But, once within the enchanted door,
The mists of time are backward rolled,
  And creeds and ages are no more;
But all the human-hearted meet
In one communion vast and sweet.

I enter—all is simply fair,
  Nor incense-clouds, nor carven throne;
But in the fragrant morning air
  A gentle lady sits alone;
My mother—ah! whom should I see
Within, save ever only thee?

Digby Mackworth Dolben [1848–1867]

THE VOICE

As I went down the hill I heard
  The laughter of the countryside;
For, rain being past, the whole land stirred
  With new emotion, like a bride.
I scarce had left the grassy lane,
  When something made me catch my breath:
A woman called, and called again,
  Elizabeth! Elizabeth!

It was my mother's name. A part
Of wounded memory sprang to tears,
And the few violets of my heart
Shook in the wind of happier years.
Quicker than magic came the face
That once was sun and moon for me;
The garden shawl, the cap of lace,
The collie's head against her knee.

Mother, who findest out a way
To pass the sentinels, and stand
Behind my chair at close of day,
To touch me—almost—with thy hand,
Deep in my breast, how sure, how clear,
The lamp of love burns on till death!—
How trembles if I chance to hear
Elizabeth! Elizabeth!

Norman Gale [1862–

MOTHER

I HAVE praised many loved ones in my song,
And yet I stand
Before her shrine, to whom all things belong,
With empty hand.

Perhaps the ripening future holds a time
For things unsaid;
Not now; men do not celebrate in rhyme
Their daily bread.

Theresa Helburn [1888–

AD MATREM

OFT in the after days, when thou and I
Have fallen from the scope of human view,
When, both together, under the sweet sky,
We sleep beneath the daisies and the dew,
Men will recall thy gracious presence bland,
Conning the pictured sweetness of thy face;
Will pore o'er paintings by thy plastic hand,
And vaunt thy skill and tell thy deeds of grace.
Oh, may they then, who crown thee with true bays,
Saying, "What love unto her son she bore!"

Make this addition to thy perfect praise,
"Nor ever yet was mother worshipped more!"
So shall I live with Thee, and thy dear fame
Shall link my love unto thine honored name.

Julian Fane [1827–1870]

C. L. M.

In the dark womb where I began,
My mother's life made me a man.
Through all the months of human birth
Her beauty fed my common earth.
I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,
But through the death of some of her.

Down in the darkness of the grave
She cannot see the life she gave.
For all her love, she cannot tell
Whether I use it ill or well,
Nor knock at dusty doors to find
Her beauty dusty in the mind.

If the grave's gates could be undone,
She would not know her little son,
I am so grown. If we should meet,
She would pass by me in the street,
Unless my soul's face let her see
My sense of what she did for me.

What have I done to keep in mind
My debt to her and womankind?
What woman's happier life repays
Her for those months of wretched days?
For all my mouthless body leeched
Ere Birth's releasing hell was reached?

What have I done, or tried, or said
In thanks to that dear woman dead?
Men triumph over women still,
Men trample women's rights at will,
And man's lust roves the world untamed. . . .
O grave, keep shut lest I be shamed.

John Masefield [1874–

STEPPING WESTWARD

STEPPING WESTWARD

"What, you are stepping westward?"—"Yea."
—'Twould be a wildish destiny,
If we, who thus together roam
In a strange Land, and far from home,
Were in this place the guests of Chance:
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance
Though home or shelter he had none,
With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;
Behind, all gloomy to behold;
And stepping westward seemed to be
A kind of heavenly destiny:
I liked the greeting; 'twas a sound
Of something without place or bound;
And seemed to give me spiritual right
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
Was walking by her native lake:
The salutation had to me
The very sound of courtesy:
Its power was felt; and while my eye
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
The echo of the voice enwrought
A human sweetness with the thought
Of travelling through the world that lay
Before me in my endless way.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

A FAREWELL TO ARMS

(TO QUEEN ELIZABETH)

His golden locks Time hath to silver turned;
O Time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing!
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,
But spurned in vain; youth waneth by increasing:
Beauty, strength, youth, are flowers but fading seen;
Duty, faith, love, are roots, and ever green.

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees;
And lovers' sonnets turned to holy psalms,
A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
And feed on prayers, which are Age his alms:
But though from court to cottage he depart,
His Saint is sure of his unspotted heart.

And when he saddest sits in homely cell,
He'll teach his swains this carol for a song,—
"Blest be the hearts that wish my sovereign well,
Curst be the souls that think her any wrong."
Goddess, allow this aged man his right
To be your beadsman now that was your knight.

George Peele [1558?–1597?]

THE WORLD

The World's a bubble, and the life of Man
Less than a span:
In his conception wretched,—from the womb,
So to the tomb;
Curst from his cradle, and brought up to years
With cares and fears.
Who then to frail mortality shall trust,
But limns on water, or but writes in dust.

Yet whilst with sorrow here we live oppressed,
What life is best?
Courts are but only superficial schools
To dandle fools;

The rural parts are turned into a den
Of savage men;
And where's a city from foul vice so free,
But may be termed the worst of all the three?

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed,
Or pains his head:
Those that live single, take it for a curse,
Or do things worse:
Some would have children; those that have them moan
Or wish them gone:
What is it, then, to have, or have no wife,
But single thraldom, or a double strife?

Our own affections still at home to please
Is a disease;
To cross the seas to any foreign soil,
Peril and toil;
Wars with their noise affright us; when they cease,
We are worse in peace:
—What then remains, but that we still should cry
For being born, or, being born, to die?

Francis Bacon [1561–1626]

"WHEN THAT I WAS AND A LITTLE TINY BOY"

From "Twelfth Night"

When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came to man's estate,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gate,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came, alas! to wive,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
By swaggering could I never thrive,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came unto my beds,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
With toss-pots still had drunken heads;
For the rain it raineth every day.

A great while ago the world begun,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

OF THE LAST VERSES IN THE BOOK

When we for age could neither read nor write,
The subject made us able to indite;
The soul, with nobler resolutions decked,
The body stooping does herself erect.
No mortal parts are requisite to raise
Her that, unbodied, can her Maker praise.

The seas are quiet when the winds give o'er;
So calm are we when passions are no more.
For then we know how vain it was to boast
Of fleeting things, so certain to be lost.
Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness which age descries.

The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that Time has made:
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home.
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

Edmund Waller [1606–1687]

A LAMENT

THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS EXECUTION

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares;
My feast of joy is but a dish of pain;
My crop of corn is but a field of tares;
And all my good is but vain hope of gain;

The day is fled, and yet I saw no sun;
And now I live, and now my life is done!

The spring is past, and yet it is not sprung;
The fruit is dead, and yet the leaves be green;
My youth is gone, and yet I am but young;
I saw the world, and yet I was not seen;
My thread is cut, and yet it is not spun;
And now I live, and now my life is done!

I sought my death, and found it in my womb;
I looked for life, and saw it was a shade;
I trod the earth, and knew it was my tomb;
And now I die, and now I am but made;
The glass is full, and now my glass is run;
And now I live, and now my life is done!

Chidiock Tichborne [1558?–1586]

TOMORROW

In the down-hill of life, when I find I'm declining,
May my fate no less fortunate be
Than a snug elbow-chair will afford for reclining,
And a cot that o'erlooks the wide sea;
With an ambling pad-pony to pace o'er the lawn,
While I carol away idle sorrow,
And blithe as the lark that each day hails the dawn,
Look forward with hope for Tomorrow.

With a porch at my door, both for shelter and shade too,
As the sunshine or rain may prevail,
And a small spot of ground for the use of the spade too,
With a barn for the use of the flail:
A cow for my dairy, a dog for my game,
And a purse when a friend wants to borrow;
I'll envy no Nabob his riches or fame,
Nor what honors may wait him Tomorrow.

From the bleak northern blast may my cot be completely
Secured by a neighboring hill;
And at night may repose steal upon me more sweetly
By the sound of a murmuring rill.

And while peace and plenty I find at my board,
With a heart free from sickness and sorrow,
With my friends may I share what Today may afford,
And let them spread the table Tomorrow.

And when I at last must throw off this frail covering,
Which I've worn for three-score years and ten,
On the brink of the grave I'll not seek to keep hovering,
Nor my thread wish to spin o'er again;
But my face in the glass I'll serenely survey,
And with smiles count each wrinkle and furrow;
And this old worn-out stuff, which is threadbare Today,
May become everlasting Tomorrow.

John Collins [1742?–1808]

LATE WISDOM

We've trod the maze of error round,
Long wandering in the winding glade;
And now the torch of truth is found,
It only shows us where we strayed:
By long experience taught, we know—
Can rightly judge of friends and foes;
Can all the worth of these allow,
And all the faults discern in those.

Now, 'tis our boast that we can quell
The wildest passions in their rage,
Can their destructive force repel,
And their impetuous wrath assuage.—
Ah, Virtue! dost thou arm when now
This bold rebellious race are fled?
When all these tyrants rest, and thou
Art warring with the mighty dead?

George Crabbe [1754–1832]

YOUTH AND AGE

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding like a bee,—
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy
When I was young!

When I was young?—Ah, woful When!
Ah, for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly *then* it flashed along:—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Naught cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
Oh! the joys that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty
Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah, woful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known that Thou and I were one.
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on
To make believe that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But Springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dewdrops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve
When we are old:

That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismissed,
Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

THE OLD MAN'S COMFORTS

AND HOW HE GAINED THEM

"You are old, Father William," the young man cried;
"The few locks which are left you are gray;
You are hale, Father William,—a hearty old man:
Now tell me the reason, I pray."

"In the days of my youth," Father William replied,
"I remembered that youth would fly fast,
And abused not my health and my vigor at first,
That I never might need them at last."

"You are old, Father William," the young man cried,
"And pleasures with youth pass away;
And yet you lament not the days that are gone:
Now tell me the reason, I pray."

"In the days of my youth," Father William replied,
"I remembered that youth could not last;
I thought of the future, whatever I did,
That I never might grieve for the past."

"You are old, Father William," the young man cried,
"And life must be hastening away;
You are cheerful, and love to converse upon death:
Now tell me the reason, I pray."

"I am cheerful, young man," Father William replied;
"Let the cause thy attention engage;
In the days of my youth, I remembered my God,
And He hath not forgotten my age."

Robert Southey [1774–1843]

TO AGE

Welcome, old friend! These many years
Have we lived door by door:
The Fates have laid aside their shears
Perhaps for some few more.

I was indocile at an age
When better boys were taught,
But thou at length hast made me sage,
If I am sage in aught.

Little I know from other men,
Too little they from me,
But thou hast pointed well the pen
That writes these lines to thee.

Thanks for expelling Fear and Hope,
One vile, the other vain;
One's scourge, the other's telescope,
I shall not see again:

Rather what lies before my feet
My notice shall engage.—
He who hath braved Youth's dizzy heat
Dreads not the frost of Age.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

LATE LEAVES

The leaves are falling; so am I;
The few late flowers have moisture in the eye;
So have I too.
Scarcely on any bough is heard
Joyous, or even unjoyous, bird
The whole wood through.

Winter may come: he brings but nigher
His circle (yearly narrowing) to the fire

Where old friends meet.
Let him; now heaven is overcast,
And spring and summer both are past,
And all things sweet.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

YEARS

Years, many parti-colored years,
Some have crept on, and some have flown
Since first before me fell those tears
I never could see fall alone.

Years, not so many, are to come,
Years not so varied, when from you
One more will fall: when, carried home,
I see it not, nor hear *Adieu*.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

THE RIVER OF LIFE

The more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages:
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals, lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.

But as the careworn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye Stars, that measure life to man,
Why seem your courses quicker?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath,
And life itself is vapid,
Why, as we reach the Falls of Death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?

It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding,
When one by one our friends have gone
And left our bosoms bleeding?

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness;
And those of youth, a seeming length,
Proportioned to their sweetness.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

"LONG TIME A CHILD"

Long time a child, and still a child, when years
Had painted manhood on my cheek, was I,—
For yet I lived like one not born to die;
A thriftless prodigal of smiles and tears,
No hope I needed, and I knew no fears.
But sleep, though sweet, is only sleep; and waking,
I waked to sleep no more; at once o'ertaking
The vanguard of my age, with all arrears
Of duty on my back. Nor child, nor man,
Nor youth, nor sage, I find my head is gray,
For I have lost the race I never ran:
A rathe December blights my lagging May;
And still I am a child, though I be old:
Time is my debtor for my years untold.

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1849]

THE WORLD I AM PASSING THROUGH

Few, in the days of early youth,
Trusted like me in love and truth.
I've learned sad lessons from the years;
But slowly, and with many tears;
For God made me to kindly view
The world that I was passing through.

How little did I once believe
That friendly tones could e'er deceive!
That kindness, and forbearance long,
Might meet ingratitude and wrong!
I could not help but kindly view
The world that I was passing through.

And though I've learned some souls are base,
I would not, therefore, hate the race;
I still would bless my fellow men,
And trust them, though deceived again.
God help me still to kindly view
The world that I am passing through!

Through weary conflicts I have passed,
And struggled into rest at last;
Such rest as when the rack has broke
A joint, or nerve, at every stroke.
The wish survives to kindly view
The world that I am passing through.

From all that fate has brought to me
I strive to learn humility,
And trust in Him who rules above,
Whose universal law is love.
Thus only can I kindly view
The world that I am passing through.

When I approach the setting sun,
And feel my journey nearly done,
May earth be veiled in genial light,
And her last smile to me seem bright!
Help me till then to kindly view
The world that I am passing through!

And all who tempt a trusting heart
From faith and hope to drift apart,—
May they themselves be spared the pain
Of losing power to trust again!
God help us all to kindly view
The world that we are passing through!

Lydia Maria Child [1802–1880]

TERMINUS

It is time to be old,
To take in sail:—
The god of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said: "No more!
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.
Fancy departs: no more invent;
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent.
There's not enough for this and that,
Make thy option which of two;
Economize the failing river,
Not the less revere the Giver,
Leave the many and hold the few.
Timely wise accept the terms,
Soften the fall with wary foot;
A little while
Still plan and smile,
And,—fault of novel germs,—
Mature the unfallen fruit.
Curse, if thou wilt, thy sires,
Bad husbands of their fires,
Who, when they gave thee breath,
Failed to bequeath
The needful sinew stark as once,
The Baresark marrow to thy bones,
But left a legacy of ebbing veins,
Inconstant heat and nerveless reins,—
Amid the Muses, left thee deaf and dumb,
Amid the Gladiators, halt and numb."

As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime:

"Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed."

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

RABBI BEN EZRA

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in his hand
Who saith "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
Not that, admiring stars,
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;
Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,
Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed
On joy, to solely seek and find and feast:
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men;
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw-crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied
To that which doth provide

And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe!

For thence,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh has soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play?
To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:
I own the Past profuse
Of power each side, perfection every turn:
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole:
Should not the heart beat once "How good to live and learn"?

Not once beat "Praise be thine!
I see the whole design,
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect too:
Perfect I call thy plan:
Thanks that I was a man!
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what thou shalt do!"

For pleasant is this flesh;
Our soul, in its rose-mesh
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest:
Would we some prize might hold
To match those manifold
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we did best!

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!"

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its term:
Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute; a God though in the germ.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold:
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame:
Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being old.

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray:
A whisper from the west
Shoots—"Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth: here dies another day."

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain:
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day:
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, than repose on aught found made:
So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedest age: wait death nor be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the Past!
Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained,
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;
Ten, who in ears and eyes
Match me: we all surmise,
They this thing, and I that: whom shall my soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,—
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though, about thy rim,
Scull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips a-glow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needest thou with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who mouldest men;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I,—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily,—mistake my end, to slake thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work:
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

HUMAN LIFE

Sad is our youth, for it is ever going,
Crumbling away beneath our very feet;
Sad is our life, for onward it is flowing,
In current unperceived because so fleet;
Sad are our hopes for they were sweet in sowing,
But tares, self-sown, have overtopped the wheat;
Sad are our joys, for they were sweet in blowing;
And still, O still, their dying breath is sweet:

And sweet is youth, although it hath bereft us
Of that which made our childhood sweeter still;
And sweet our life's decline, for it hath left us
A nearer Good to cure an older Ill:
And sweet are all things, when we learn to prize them
Not for their sake, but His who grants them or denies them.

Aubrey Thomas de Vere [1814–1902]

YOUNG AND OLD

From "The Water Babies"

When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down:
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among:
God grant you find one face there
You loved when all was young.

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

THE ISLE OF THE LONG AGO

O! a wonderful stream is the River Time,
As it runs through the realm of tears,
With a faultless rhythm and a musical rhyme,
And a broader sweep and a surge sublime,
As it blends with the Ocean of Years.

How the winters are drifting, like flakes of snow,
And the summers, like buds between,
And the year in the sheaf—so they come and they go,
On the river's breast, with its ebb and its flow,
As it glides in the shadow and sheen.

There's a magical isle up the River Time,
Where the softest of airs are playing;
There's a cloudless sky and a tropical clime,
And a song as sweet as a vesper chime,
And the Junes with the roses are straying.

And the name of the isle is the Long Ago,
And we bury our treasures there;
There are brows of beauty, and bosoms of snow;
There are heaps of dust—but we loved them so!
There are trinkets, and tresses of hair.

There are fragments of song that nobody sings,
And a part of an infant's prayer;
There's a lute unswept, and a harp without strings;
There are broken vows, and pieces of rings,
And the garments that She used to wear;

There are hands that are waved, when the fairy shore
By the mirage is lifted in air;
And we sometimes hear, through the turbulent roar,
Sweet voices we heard in the days gone before,
When the wind down the river is fair.

O! remembered for aye be the blessed isle,
All the day of our life till night;
When the evening comes with its beautiful smile,
And our eyes are closing to slumber awhile,
May that "Greenwood" of Soul be in sight!

Benjamin Franklin Taylor [1819–1887]

GROWING OLD

What is it to grow old?
Is it to lose the glory of the form,
The lustre of the eye?

Is it for beauty to forego her wealth?
—Yes, but not this alone.

Is it to feel our strength—
Not our bloom only, but our strength—decay?
Is it to feel each limb
Grow stiffer, every function less exact,
Each nerve more loosely strung?

Yes, this, and more; but not—
Ah, 'tis not what in youth we dreamed 'twould be!
'Tis not to have our life
Mellowed and softened as with sunset glow,
A golden day's decline.

'Tis not to see the world
As from a height, with rapt prophetic eyes,
And heart profoundly stirred;
And weep, and feel the fulness of the past,
The years that are no more.

It is to spend long days
And not once feel that we were ever young;
It is to add, immured
In the hot prison of the present, month
To month with weary pain.

It is to suffer this,
And feel but half, and feebly, what we feel.
Deep in our hidden heart
Festers the dull remembrance of a change,
But no emotion—none.

It is!—last stage of all—
When we are frozen up within, and quite
The phantom of ourselves,
To hear the world applaud the hollow ghost
Which blessed the living man.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

PAST

THE clocks are chiming in my heart
Their cobweb chime;
Old murmurings of days that die,
The sob of things a-drifting by.
The clocks are chiming in my heart!

The stars have twinkled, and gone out—
Fair candles blown!
The hot desires burn low, and wan
Those ashy fires, that flamed anon.
The stars have twinkled, and gone out!

John Galsworthy [1867–

TWILIGHT

WHEN I was young the twilight seemed too long.
How often on the western window-seat
I leaned my book against the misty pane
And spelled the last enchanting lines again,
The while my mother hummed an ancient song,
Or sighed a little and said: "The hour is sweet!"
When I, rebellious, clamored for the light.

But now I love the soft approach of night,
And now with folded hands I sit and dream
While all too fleet the hours of twilight seem;
And thus I know that I am growing old.

O granaries of Age! O manifold
And royal harvest of the common years!
There are in all thy treasure-house no ways
But lead by soft descent and gradual slope
To memories more exquisite than hope.
Thine is the Iris born of olden tears,
And thrice more happy are the happy days
That live divinely in the lingering rays.

A. Mary F. Robinson [1857–

YOUTH AND AGE

Youth hath many charms,—
  Hath many joys, and much delight;
Even its doubts, and vague alarms,
  By contrast make it bright:
And yet—and yet—forsooth,
  I love Age as well as Youth!

Well, since I love them both,
  The good of both I will combine,—
In women, I will look for Youth,
  And look for Age, in wine:
And then—and then—I'll bless
  This twain that gives me happiness!

George Arnold [1834–1865]

FORTY YEARS ON

Forty years on, when afar and asunder
  Parted are those who are singing today,
When you look back, and forgetfully wonder
  What you were like in your work and your play;
Then, it may be, there will often come o'er you
  Glimpses of notes like the catch of a song—
Visions of boyhood shall float them before you,
  Echoes of dreamland shall bear them along.
  Follow up! Follow up! Follow up! Follow up!
    Till the field ring again and again,
    With the tramp of the twenty-two men,
      Follow up! Follow up!

Routs and discomfitures, rushes and rallies,
  Bases attempted, and rescued, and won,
Strife without anger, and art without malice,—
  How will it seem to you forty years on?

Then, you will say, not a feverish minute
  Strained the weak heart, and the wavering knee,
Never the battle raged hottest, but in it
  Neither the last nor the faintest were we!
    Follow up! Follow up!

O the great days, in the distance enchanted,
  Days of fresh air, in the rain and the sun,
How we rejoiced as we struggled and panted—
  Hardly believable, forty years on!
How we discoursed of them, one with another,
  Auguring triumph, or balancing fate,
Loved the ally with the heart of a brother,
  Hated the foe with a playing at hate!
    Follow up! Follow up!

Forty years on, growing older and older,
  Shorter in wind, and in memory long,
Feeble of foot and rheumatic of shoulder,
  What will it help you that once you were strong?
God gives us bases to guard or beleaguer,
  Games to play out, whether earnest or fun,
Fights for the fearless, and goals for the eager,
  Twenty, and thirty, and forty years on!
    Follow up! Follow up!

Edward Ernest Bowen [1836–1901]

DREGS

The fire is out, and spent the warmth thereof,
(This is the end of every song man sings!)
The golden wine is drunk, the dregs remain,
Bitter as wormwood and as salt as pain;
And health and hope have gone the way of love
Into the drear oblivion of lost things.
Ghosts go along with us until the end;
This was a mistress, this, perhaps, a friend.
With pale, indifferent eyes, we sit and wait
For the dropped curtain and the closing gate:
This is the end of all the songs man sings.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

THE PARADOX OF TIME

A VARIATION ON RONSARD

"Le temps s'en va, le temps s'en va, ma dame!
Las! le temps non: mais nous nous en allons!"

TIME goes, you say? Ah no!
Alas, Time stays, *we* go;
Or else, were this not so,
What need to chain the hours,
For Youth were always ours?
Time goes, you say?—ah no!

Ours is the eyes' deceit
Of men whose flying feet
Lead through some landscape low;
We pass, and think we see
The earth's fixed surface flee:—
Alas, Time stays—we go!

Once in the days of old,
Your locks were curling gold,
And mine had shamed the crow.
Now, in the self-same stage,
We've reached the silver age;
Time goes, you say?—ah no!

Once, when my voice was strong,
I filled the woods with song
To praise your "rose" and "snow";
My bird, that sang, is dead;
Where are your roses fled?
Alas, Time stays—we go!

See, in what traversed ways,
What backward Fate delays
The hopes we used to know;
Where are our old desires?—
Ah, where those vanished fires?
Time goes, you say?—ah no!

How far, how far, O Sweet,
The past behind our feet
Lies in the even-glow!
Now, on the forward way,
Let us fold hands, and pray;
Alas, Time stays,—*we* go!

Austin Dobson [1840–

AGE

Snow and stars, the same as ever
In the days when I was young,—
But their silver song, ah never,
Never now is sung!

Cold the stars are, cold the earth is,
Everything is grim and cold!
Strange and drear the sound of mirth is—
Life and I are old!

William Winter [1836–1917]

OMNIA SOMNIA

Dawn drives the dreams away, yet some abide.
Once, in a tide of pale and sunless weather,
I dreamed I wandered on a bare hillside,
When suddenly the birds sang all together.

Still it was Winter, even in the dream;
There was no leaf nor bud nor young grass springing;
The skies shone cold above the frost-bound stream:
It was not Spring, and yet the birds were singing.

Blackbird and thrush and plaintive willow-wren,
Chaffinch and lark and linnet, all were calling;
A golden web of music held me then,
Innumerable voices, rising, falling.

O, never do the birds of April sing
More sweet than in that dream I still remember:
Perchance the heart may keep its songs of Spring
Even through the wintry dream of life's December.

Rosamund Marriott Watson [1863–1911]

THE YEAR'S END

Full happy is the man who comes at last
  Into the safe completion of his year;
Weathered the perils of his spring, that blast
  How many blossoms promising and dear!
And of his summer, with dread passions fraught
  That oft, like fire through the ripening corn,
Blight all with mocking death and leave distraught
  Loved ones to mourn the ruined waste forlorn.
But now, though autumn gave but harvest slight,
  Oh, grateful is he to the powers above
For winter's sunshine, and the lengthened night
  By hearth-side genial with the warmth of love.
Through silvered days of vistas gold and green
Contentedly he glides away, serene.

Timothy Cole [1852–

AN OLD MAN'S SONG

Ye are young, ye are young,
  I am old, I am old;
And the song has been sung
  And the story been told.

Your locks are as brown
  As the mavis in May,
Your hearts are as warm
  As the sunshine to-day,
But mine white and cold
  As the snow on the brae.

And Love, like a flower,
  Is growing for you,
Hands clasping, lips meeting,
  Hearts beating so true;
While Fame like a star
In the midnight afar
  Is flashing for you.

For you the To-come,
But for me the Gone-by,
You are panting to live,
I am waiting to die;
The meadow is empty,
No flower groweth high,
And naught but a socket
The face of the sky.

Yea, howso we dream,
Or how bravely we do;
The end is the same,
Be we traitor or true:
And after the bloom
And the passion is past,
Death cometh at last.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866–

SONGS OF SEVEN

SEVEN TIMES ONE.—EXULTATION

THERE'S no dew left on the daisies and clover,
There's no rain left in heaven;
I've said my "seven times" over and over,
Seven times one are seven.

I am old, so old, I can write a letter;
My birthday lessons are done;
The lambs play always, they know no better;
They are only one times one.

O moon! in the night I have seen you sailing
And shining so round and low;
You were bright! ah, bright! but your light is failing,—
You are nothing now but a bow.

You moon, have you done something wrong in heaven
That God has hidden your face?
I hope if you have, you will soon be forgiven,
And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,
You've powdered your legs with gold!
O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold!

O columbine, open your folded wrapper,
Where two twin turtle-doves dwell?
O cuckoopint, toll me the purple clapper
That hangs in your clear green bell!

And show me your nest with the young ones in it;
I will not steal them away;
I am old! you may trust me, linnet, linnet,—
I am seven times one to-day.

SEVEN TIMES TWO.—ROMANCE

You bells in the steeple, ring, ring out your changes,
How many soever they be,
And let the brown meadow-lark's note as he ranges
Come over, come over to me.

Yet birds' clearest carol by fall or by swelling
No magical sense conveys,
And bells have forgotten their old art of telling
The fortune of future days

"Turn again, turn again," once they rang cheerily,
While a boy listened alone;
Made his heart yearn again, musing so wearily
All by himself on a stone.

Poor bells! I forgive you; your good days are over,
And mine, they are yet to be;
No listening, no longing shall aught, aught discover:
You leave the story to me.

The foxglove shoots out of the green matted heather
Preparing her hoods of snow;
She was idle, and slept till the sunshiny weather:
Oh! children take long to grow.

I wish and I wish that the spring would go faster,
Nor long summer bide so late;
And I could grow on like the foxglove and aster,
For some things are ill to wait.

I wait for the day when dear hearts shall discover,
While dear hands are laid on my head;
"The child is a woman, the book may close over,
For all the lessons are said."

I wait for my story,—the birds cannot sing it,
Not one, as he sits on the tree;
The bells cannot ring it, but long years, oh, bring it!
Such as I wish it to be.

SEVEN TIMES THREE.—LOVE

I LEANED out of window, I smelt the white clover,
Dark, dark was the garden, I saw not the gate;
"Now, if there be footsteps, he comes, my one lover,—
Hush, nightingale, hush! O sweet nightingale, wait
Till I listen and hear
If a step draweth near,
For my love he is late!

"The skies in the darkness stoop nearer and nearer,
A cluster of stars hangs like fruit in the tree,
The fall of the water comes sweeter, comes clearer:
To what art thou listening, and what dost thou see?
Let the star-clusters grow,
Let the sweet waters flow,
And cross quickly to me.

"You night-moths that hover, where honey brims over
From sycamore blossoms, or settle or sleep;
You glowworms, shine out, and the pathway discover
To him that comes darkling along the rough steep.
Ah, my sailor, make haste,
For the time runs to waste,
And my love lieth deep,—

"Too deep for swift telling; and yet, my one lover,
I've conned thee an answer, it waits thee to-night."
By the sycamore passed he, and through the white clover,
Then all the sweet speech I had fashioned took flight;
But I'll love him more, more
Than e'er wife loved before,
Be the days dark or bright.

SEVEN TIMES FOUR.—MATERNITY

Heigh-ho! daisies and buttercups!
Fair yellow daffodils, stately and tall!
When the wind wakes how they rock in the grasses,
And dance with the cuckoo-buds slender and small!
Here's two bonny boys, and here's mother's own lasses,
Eager to gather them all.

Heigh-ho! daisies and buttercups;
Mother shall thread them a daisy chain;
Sing them a song of the pretty hedge-sparrow,
That loved her brown little ones, loved them full fain;
Sing, "Heart, thou art wide though the house be but narrow,"—
Sing once, and sing it again.

Heigh-ho! daisies and buttercups!
Sweet wagging cowslips, they bend and they bow;
A ship sails afar over warm ocean waters,
And haply one musing doth stand at her prow.
O bonny brown sons, and O sweet little daughters,
Maybe he thinks of you now.

Heigh-ho! daisies and buttercups!
Fair yellow daffodils, stately and tall!
A sunshiny world full of laughter and leisure,
And fresh hearts unconscious of sorrow and thrall!
Send down on their pleasure smiles passing its measure,
God that is over us all!

SEVEN TIMES FIVE.—WIDOWHOOD

I SLEEP and rest, my heart makes moan
Before I am well awake;
"Let me bleed! O let me alone,
Since I must not break!"

For children wake, though fathers sleep
With a stone at foot and at head:
O sleepless God, forever keep,
Keep both living and dead!

I lift mine eyes, and what to see
But a world happy and fair!
I have not wished it to mourn with me,—
Comfort is not there.

Oh, what anear but golden brooms,
But a waste of reedy rills!
Oh, what afar but the fine glooms
On the rare blue hills!

I shall not die, but live forlore,—
How bitter it is to part!
Oh, to meet thee, my love, once more!
O my heart, my heart!

No more to hear, no more to see!
Oh, that an echo might wake
And waft one note of thy psalm to me
Ere my heart-strings break!

I should know it how faint soe'er,
And with angel voices blent;
Oh, once to feel thy spirit anear;
I could be content!

Or once between the gates of gold,
While an entering angel trod,
But once,—thee sitting to behold
On the hills of God!

SEVEN TIMES SIX.—GIVING IN MARRIAGE

To bear, to nurse, to rear,
  To watch, and then to lose:
To see my bright ones disappear,
  Drawn up like morning dews,—
To bear, to nurse, to rear,
  To watch and then to lose:
This have I done when God drew near
  Among his own to choose.

To hear, to heed, to wed,
  And with thy lord depart
In tears, that he, as soon as shed,
  Will let no longer smart,—
To hear, to heed, to wed,
  This while thou didst I smiled,
For now it was not God who said,
  "Mother, give ME thy child."

O fond, O fool, and blind!
  To God I gave with tears;
But when a man like grace would find,
  My soul put by her fears,—
O fond, O fool, and blind!
  God guards in happier spheres;
That man will guard where he did bind
  Is hope for unknown years.

To hear, to heed, to wed,
  Fair lot that maidens choose,
Thy mother's tenderest words are said,
  Thy face no more she views;
Thy mother's lot, my dear,
  She doth in naught accuse;
Her lot to bear, to nurse, to rear,
  To love,—and then to lose.

SEVEN TIMES SEVEN.—LONGING FOR HOME

  A SONG of a boat:—
  There was once a boat on a billow:
Lightly she rocked to her port remote,

And the foam was white in her wake like snow,
And her frail mast bowed when the breeze would blow,
And bent like a wand of willow.

I shaded mine eyes one day when a boat
Went curtsying over the billow,
I marked her course till a dancing mote,
She faded out on the moonlit foam,
And I stayed behind in the dear-loved home;
And my thoughts all day were about the boat,
And my dreams upon the pillow.

I pray you hear my song of a boat
For it is but short:—
My boat you shall find none fairer afloat,
In river or port.
Long I looked out for the lad she bore,
On the open desolate sea,
And I think he sailed to the heavenly shore,
For he came not back to me—
Ah me!

A song of a nest:—
There was once a nest in a hollow:
Down in the mosses and knot-grass pressed,
Soft and warm and full to the brim—
Vetches leaned over it purple, and dim,
With buttercup buds to follow.

I pray you hear my song of a nest,
For it is not long:—
You shall never light in a summer quest
The bushes among—
Shall never light on a prouder sitter,
A fairer nestful, nor ever know
A softer sound than their tender twitter,
That wind-like did come and go.

I had a nestful once of my own,
Ah, happy, happy I!
Right dearly I loved them; but when they were grown
They spread out their wings to fly—

Oh, one after one they flew away
  Far up to the heavenly blue,
To the better country, the upper day,
  And—I wish I was going too.

I pray you what is the nest to me,
  My empty nest?
And what is the shore where I stood to see
  My boat sail down to the west?
Can I call that home where I anchor yet,
  Though my good man has sailed?
Can I call that home where my nest was set,
  Now all its hope hath failed?

Nay, but the port where my sailor went,
  And the land where my nestlings be:
There is the home where my thoughts are sent,
  The only home for me—
Ah me!

Jean Ingelow [1820–1897]

LOOKING BACKWARD

THE RETREAT

HAPPY those early days, when I
Shined in my Angel-infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back, at that short space
Could see a glimpse of His bright face;
When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My Conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense;
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady City of Palm-trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And, when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

Henry Vaughan [1622–1695]

A SUPERSCRIPTION

Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;
I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell;
Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell
Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;
Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell
Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.
Mark me, how still I am! But should there dart
One moment through thy soul the soft surprise
Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath of sighs,—
Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart
Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart
Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

THE CHILD IN THE GARDEN

When to the garden of untroubled thought
I came of late, and saw the open door,
And wished again to enter, and explore
The sweet, wild ways with stainless bloom inwrought,
And bowers of innocence with beauty fraught,
It seemed some purer voice must speak before
I dared to tread that garden loved of yore,
That Eden lost unknown and found unsought.
Then just within the gate I saw a child,—
A stranger-child, yet to my heart most dear,—
Who held his hands to me and softly smiled
With eyes that knew no shade of sin or fear;
"Come in," he said, "and play awhile with me;
I am the little child you used to be."

Henry Van Dyke [1852–

CASTLES IN THE AIR

My thoughts by night are often filled
With visions false as fair:
For in the Past alone I build
My castles in the air.

I dwell not now on what may be;
Night shadows o'er the scene;
But still my fancy wanders free
Through that which might have been.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785–1866]

SOMETIMES

Across the fields of yesterday
He sometimes comes to me,
A little lad just back from play—
The lad I used to be.

And yet he smiles so wistfully
Once he has crept within,
I wonder if he hopes to see
The man I might have been.

Thomas S. Jones, Jr. [1882–

THE LITTLE GHOSTS

Where are they gone, and do you know
If they come back at fall o' dew,
The little ghosts of long ago,
That long ago were you?

And all the songs that ne'er were sung,
And all the dreams that ne'er came true,
Like little children dying young—
Do they come back to you?

Thomas S. Jones, Jr. [1882–

MY OTHER ME

Children, do you ever,
In walks by land or sea,
Meet a little maiden
Long time lost to me?

She is gay and gladsome,
Has a laughing face,
And a heart as sunny;
And her name is Grace.

Naught she knows of sorrow,
  Naught of doubt or blight;
Heaven is just above her—
  All her thoughts are white.

Long time since I lost her,
  That other Me of mine;
She crossed, into Time's shadow
  Out of Youth's sunshine.

Now the darkness keeps her;
  And, call her as I will,
The years that lie between us
  Hide her from me still.

I am dull and pain-worn,
  And lonely as can be—
Oh, children, if you meet her,
  Send back my other Me!

Grace Denio Litchfield [1849–

A SHADOW BOAT

Under my keel another boat
  Sails as I sail, floats as I float;
Silent and dim and mystic still,
  It steals through that weird nether-world,
Mocking my power, though at my will
  The foam before its prow is curled,
  Or calm it lies, with canvas furled.

Vainly I peer, and fain would see
  What phantom in that boat may be;
Yet half I dread, lest I with ruth
  Some ghost of my dead past divine,
Some gracious shape of my lost youth,
  Whose deathless eyes once fixed on mine
  Would draw me downward through the brine!

Arlo Bates [1850–

A LAD THAT IS GONE

Sing me a song of a lad that is gone;
Say, could that lad be I?
Merry of soul he sailed on a day
Over the sea to Skye.

Mull was astern, Rum on the port,
Eigg on the starboard bow;
Glory of youth glowed in his soul:
Where is that glory now?

Sing me a song of a lad that is gone;
Say, could that lad be I?
Merry of soul he sailed on a day
Over the sea to Skye.

Give me again all that was there,
Give me the sun that shone!
Give me the eyes, give me the soul,
Give me the lad that's gone!

Sing me a song of a lad that is gone;
Say, could that lad be I?
Merry of soul he sailed on a day
Over the sea to Skye.

Billow and breeze, islands and seas,
Mountains of rain and sun,
All that was good, all that was fair,
All that was me is gone.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

CARCASSONNE *

"I'm growing old, I've sixty years;
I've labored all my life in vain.
In all that time of hopes and fears,
I've failed my dearest wish to gain.

* For the original of this poem see page 3844.

I see full well that here below
Bliss unalloyed there is for none;
My prayer would else fulfilment know—
Never have I seen Carcassonne!

"You see the city from the hill,
It lies beyond the mountains blue;
And yet to reach it one must still
Five long and weary leagues pursue,
And, to return, as many more.
Had but the vintage plenteous grown—
But, ah! the grape withheld its store.
I shall not look on Carcassonne!

"They tell me every day is there
Not more or less than Sunday gay;
In shining robes and garments fair
The people walk upon their way.
One gazes there on castle walls
As grand as those of Babylon,
A bishop and two generals!
What joy to dwell in Carcassonne!

"The vicar's right: he says that we
Are ever wayward, weak, and blind;
He tells us in his homily
Ambition ruins all mankind;
Yet could I there two days have spent,
While still the autumn sweetly shone,
Ah, me! I might have died content
When I had looked on Carcassonne.

"Thy pardon, Father, I beseech,
In this my prayer if I offend;
One something sees beyond his reach
From childhood to his journey's end.
My wife, our little boy, Aignan,
Have travelled even to Narbonne;
My grandchild has seen Perpignan;
And I—have not seen Carcassonne!"

So crooned, one day, close by Limoux,
A peasant, double-bent with age.
"Rise up, my friend," said I; "with you
I'll go upon this pilgrimage."
We left, next morning, his abode,
But (Heaven forgive him!) half-way on
The old man died upon the road.
He never gazed on Carcassonne.

Translated by John R. Thompson from the French of Gustave Nadaud [1820– ?]

CHILDHOOD

Old Sorrow I shall meet again,
And Joy, perchance—but never, never,
Happy Childhood, shall we twain
See each other's face forever!

And yet I would not call thee back,
Dear Childhood, lest the sight of me,
Thine old companion, on the rack
Of Age, should sadden even thee.

John Banister Tabb [1845–1909]

THE WASTREL

Once, when I was little, as the summer night was falling,
Among the purple upland fields I lost my barefoot way;
The road to home was hidden fast, and frightful shadows, crawling
Along the sky-line, swallowed up the last kind light of day;
And then I seemed to hear you
In the twilight, and be near you;
Seemed to hear your dear voice calling—
Through the meadows, calling, calling—
And I followed and I found you,
Flung my tired arms around you,
And rested on the mother-breast, returned, tired out from play.

Down the days from that day, though I trod strange
paths unheeding,
Though I chased the jack-o'-lanterns of so many mad-
dened years,
Though I never looked behind me, where the home-lights
were receding,
Though I never looked enough ahead to ken the Inn of
Fears;
Still I knew your heart was near me,
That your ear was strained to hear me,
That your love would need no pleading
To forgive me, but was pleading
Of its self that, in disaster,
I should run to you the faster
And be sure that I was dearer for your sacrifice of tears.

Now on life's last Summertime the long last dusk is falling,
And I, who trod one way so long, can tread no other way
Until at death's dim crossroads I watch, hesitant, the
crawling
Night-passages that maze me with the ultimate dismay.
Then when Death and Doubt shall blind me—
Even then—I know you'll find me:
I shall hear you, Mother, calling—
Hear you calling—calling—calling:
I shall fight and follow—find you
Though the grave-clothes swathe and bind you,
And I know your love will answer: "Here's my laddie
home from play!"

Reginald Wright Kauffman [1877–

TROIA FUIT

The world was wide when I was young,
My schoolday hills and dales among;
But, oh, it needs no Puck to put,
With whipping wing and flying foot,
A girdle 'round the narrow sphere
In which I labor now and here!

Life's face was fair when careless I
First loved beneath an April sky,
And wept those fine-imagined woes
That Youth at nineteen thinks it knows;
Now love and woe both run so deep
I have not any time to weep.

No matter; though at last we see
That what was could not always be,
It girds our loins and steels our hands
In duller days and smaller lands
To recollect the country where
The world was wide and life was fair.

Reginald Wright Kauffman [1877–

TEMPLE GARLANDS

There is a temple in my heart
Where moth or rust can never come,
A temple swept and set apart,
To make my soul a home.

And round about the doors of it
Hang garlands that forever last,
That gathered once are always sweet;
The roses of the Past!

A. Mary F. Robinson [1857–

TIME LONG PAST

Like the ghost of a dear friend dead
Is Time long past.
A tone which is now forever fled,
A hope which is now forever past,
A love so sweet it could not last,
Was Time long past.

There were sweet dreams in the night
Of Time long past:
And, was it sadness or delight,
Each day a shadow onward cast
Which made us wish it yet might last,—
That Time long past.

There is regret, almost remorse,
For Time long past.
'Tis like a child's beloved corse
A father watches, till at last
Beauty is like remembrance, cast
From Time long past.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

"I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER"

I REMEMBER, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon
Nor brought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups—
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday,—
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;
My spirit flew in feathers then
That is so heavy now,
The summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:

It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

MY LOST YOUTH

Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth, are long, long thoughts."

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
And the fort upon the hill;
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,
The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,

And the bugle wild and shrill.
And the music of that old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.'

I remember the sea-fight far away,
How it thundered o'er the tide!
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay
Where they in battle died.
And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
The shadows of Deering's Woods;
And the friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
In quiet neighborhoods.
And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the school-boy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,

And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts"

Strange to me are the forms I meet
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-known street,
As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are sighing and whispering still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were
I find my lost youth again.
And the strange and beautiful song,
The groves are repeating it still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

"VOICE OF THE WESTERN WIND"

Voice of the western wind!
Thou singest from afar,
Rich with the music of a land
Where all my memories are;
But in thy song I only hear
The echo of a tone
That fell divinely on my ear
In days forever flown.

Star of the western sky!
Thou beamest from afar,
With lustre caught from eyes I knew
Whose orbs were each a star;

But, oh, those orbs—too wildly bright—
No more eclipse thine own,
And never shall I find the light
Of days forever flown!

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

"LANGSYNE, WHEN LIFE WAS BONNIE"

Langsyne, when life was bonnie,
An' a' the skies were blue,
When ilka thocht took blossom,
An' hung its heid wi' dew,
When winter wasna winter,
Though snaws cam' happin' doon,
Langsyne, when life was bonnie,
Spring gaed a twalmonth roun'.

Langsyne, when life was bonnie,
An' a' the days were lang;
When through them ran the music
That comes to us in sang,
We never wearied liltin'
The auld love-laden tune;
Langsyne, when life was bonnie,
Love gaed a twalmonth roun'.

Langsyne, when life was bonnie,
An' a' the warld was fair,
The leaves were green wi' simmer,
For autumn wasna there.
But listen hoo they rustle,
Wi' an eerie, weary soun',
For noo, alas, 'tis winter
That gangs a twalmonth roun'.

Alexander Anderson [1845–1909]

THE SHOOGY-SHOO

I do be thinking, lassie, of the old days now;
For oh! your hair is tangled gold above your Irish brow;
And oh! your eyes are fairy flax! no other eyes so blue;
Come nestle in my arms, and swing upon the shoogy-shoo.

Sweet and slow, swinging low, eyes of Irish blue,
All my heart is swinging, dear, swinging here with you;
Irish eyes are like the flax, and mine are wet with dew,
Thinking of the old days upon the shoogy-shoo.

When meadow-larks would singing be in old Glentair,
Was one sweet lass had eyes of blue and tangled golden hair;
She was a wee bit girleen then, dear heart, the like of you,
When we two swung the braes among, upon the shoogy-shoo.

Ah well, the world goes up and down, and some sweet day
Its shoogy-shoo will swing us two where sighs will pass away;
So nestle close your bonnie head, and close your eyes so true,
And swing with me, and memory, upon the shoogy-shoo.

Sweet and slow, swinging low, eyes of Irish blue,
All my heart is swinging, dear, swinging here with you;
Irish eyes are like the flax, and mine are wet with dew,
Thinking of the old days upon the shoogy-shoo.

Winthrop Packard [1862–

BABYLON

"We shall meet again in Babylon."

I'm going softly all my years in wisdom if in pain—
For, oh, the music stirs my blood as once it did before,
And still I hear in Babylon, in Babylon, in Babylon,
The dancing feet in Babylon, of those who took my floor.

I'm going silent all my years, but garnered in my brain
Is that swift wit which used to flash and cut them like a sword—
And now I hear in Babylon, in Babylon, in Babylon,
The foolish tongues in Babylon, of those who took my word.

I'm going lonely all my days, who was the first to crave
The second, fierce, unsteady voice, that struggled to speak free—
And now I watch in Babylon, in Babylon, in Babylon,
The pallid loves in Babylon of men who once loved me.

I'm sleeping early by a flame as one content and gray,
But, oh, I dream a dream of dreams beneath a winter moon,
I breathe the breath of Babylon, of Babylon, of Babylon,
The scent of silks in Babylon that floated to a tune.

A band of years has flogged me out—an exile's fate is mine,
To sit with mumbling crones and still a heart that cries with youth.
But, oh, to walk in Babylon, in Babylon, in Babylon,
The happy streets in Babylon, when once the dream was truth.

Viola Taylor [18

THE ROAD OF REMEMBRANCE

The old wind stirs the hawthorn tree;
The tree is blossoming;
Northward the road runs to the sea,
And past the House of Spring.

The folk go down it unafraid;
The still roofs rise before;
When you were lad and I was maid,
Wide open stood the door.

Now, other children crowd the stair,
And hunt from room to room;
Outside, under the hawthorn fair,
We pluck the thorny bloom.

Out in the quiet road we stand,
Shut in from wharf and mart,
The old wind blowing up the land,
The old thoughts at our heart.

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-

THE TRIUMPH OF FORGOTTEN THINGS

There is a pity in forgotten things,
Banished the heart they can no longer fill,
Since restless Fancy, spreading swallow wings,
Must seek new pleasures still!

There is a patience, too, in things forgot;
They wait—they find the portal long unused;
And knocking there, it shall refuse them not,—
Nor aught shall be refused!

Ah, yes! though we, unheeding years on years,
In alien pledges spend the heart's estate,
They bide some blessed moment of quick tears—
Some moment without date—

Some gleam on flower, or leaf, or beaded dew,
Some tremble at the ear of memoried sound
Of mother-song,—they seize the slender clew,—
The old loves gather round!

When that which lured us once now lureth not,
But the tired hands their garnered dross let fall,
This is the triumph of the things forgot—
To hear the tired heart call!

And they are with us at Life's farthest reach,
A light when into shadow all else dips,
As, in the stranger's land, their native speech
Returns to dying lips!

Edith M. Thomas [1854–

IN THE TWILIGHT

Men say the sullen instrument,
That, from the Master's bow,
With pangs of joy or woe,
Feels music's soul through every fibre sent,
Whispers the ravished strings
More than he knew or meant;
Old summers in its memory glow;
The secrets of the wind it sings;
It hears the April-loosened springs;
And mixes with its mood
All it dreamed when it stood
In the murmurous pine-wood
Long ago!

The magical moonlight then
  Steeped every bough and cone;
The roar of the brook in the glen
  Came dim from the distance blown;
The wind through its glooms sang low,
  And it swayed to and fro,
    With delight as it stood,
    In the wonderful wood,
      Long ago!

O my life, have we not had seasons
  That only said, Live and rejoice?
That asked not for causes and reasons,
  But made us all feeling and voice?
When we went with the winds in their blowing,
  When Nature and we were peers,
And we seemed to share in the flowing
  Of the inexhaustible years?
  Have we not from the earth drawn juices
  Too fine for earth's sordid uses?
    Have I heard, have I seen
      All I feel, all I know?
    Doth my heart overween?
    Or could it have been
      Long ago?

Sometimes a breath floats by me,
  An odor from Dreamland sent,
That makes the ghost seem nigh me
  Of a splendor that came and went,
Of a life lived somewhere, I know not
  In what diviner sphere,
Of memories that stay not and go not,
  Like music heard once by an ear
    That cannot forget or reclaim it,
    A something so shy, it would shame it
    To make it a show,
  A something too vague, could I name it,
    For others to know,

As if I had lived it or dreamed it,
As if I had acted or schemed it,
Long ago!

And yet, could I live it over,
This life that stirs in my brain,
Could I be both maiden and lover,
Moon and tide, bee and clover,
As I seem to have been, once again,
Could I but speak it and show it,
This pleasure more sharp than pain,
That baffles and lures me so,
The world should once more have a poet,
Such as it had
In the ages glad,
Long ago!

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

AN IMMORALITY

Sing we for love and idleness,
Naught else is worth the having.
Though I have been in many a land,
There is naught else in living.

And I would rather have my sweet,
Though rose-leaves die of grieving,
Than do high deeds in Hungary
To pass all men's believing.

Ezra Pound [1885–

THREE SEASONS

"A cup for hope!" she said,
In springtime ere the bloom was old:
The crimson wine was poor and cold
By her mouth's richer red.

"A cup for love!" how low,
How soft the words; and all the while
Her blush was rippling with a smile
Like summer after snow.

"A cup for memory!"
Cold cup that one must drain alone:
While autumn winds are up and moan
Across the barren sea.

Hope, memory, love:
Hope for fair morn, and love for day,
And memory for the evening gray
And solitary dove.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful schooldays,—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies,—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her,—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man:
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like, I paced round the haunts of my childhood.
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces—

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed,—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

Charles Lamb [1775–1834]

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

Oft in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain hath bound me,
Fond memory brings the light
Of other days around me:
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain hath bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends, so linked together,
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed!
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain hath bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"TEARS, IDLE TEARS"

From "The Princess"

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more!

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE PET NAME

" . . . *the name*
Which from their *lips seemed a caress.*"
—Miss Milford's "Dramatic Scenes"

I have a name, a little name,
Uncadenced for the ear,
Unhonored by ancestral claim,
Unsanctified by prayer and psalm
The solemn font anear.

It never did to pages wove
For gay romance belong;
It never dedicate did move
As "Sacharissa" unto love,
"Orinda" unto song.

Though I write books, it will be read
Upon the leaves of none,
And afterward, when I am dead,
Will ne'er be graved for sight or tread,
Across my funeral-stone.

This name, whoever chance to call,
  Perhaps your smile may win:
Nay, do not smile! mine eyelids fall
Over mine eyes and feel withal
  The sudden tears within.

Is there a leaf, that greenly grows
  Where summer meadows bloom,
But gathereth the winter snows,
And changeth to the hue of those,
  If lasting till they come?

Is there a word, or jest, or game,
  But time incrusteth round
With sad associate thoughts the same?
And so to me my very name
  Assumes a mournful sound.

My brother gave that name to me
  When we were children twain,
When names acquired baptismally
Were hard to utter, as to see
  That life had any pain.

No shade was on us then, save one
  Of chestnuts from the hill;
And through the word our laugh did run
As part thereof: the mirth being done,
  He calls me by it still.

Nay, do not smile! I hear in it
  What none of you can hear,—
The talk upon the willow seat,
The bird and wind that did repeat
  Around, our human cheer.

I hear the birthday's noisy bliss
  My sisters' woodland glee,
My father's praise I did not miss
When stooping down, he cared to kiss
  The poet at his knee,—

And voices which, to name me, aye
  Their tenderest tones were keeping,—
To some I nevermore can say
An answer till God wipes away
  In heaven these drops of weeping.

My name to me a sadness wears:
  No murmurs cross my mind—
Now God be thanked for these thick tears,
Which show, of those departed years,
  Sweet memories left behind.

Now God be thanked for years enwrought
  With love which softens yet:
Now God be thanked for every thought
Which is so tender it has caught
  Earth's guerdon of regret.

Earth saddens, never shall remove
  Affections purely given;
And e'en that mortal grief shall prove
The immortality of love,
  And heighten it with Heaven.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

THREESCORE AND TEN

Who reach their threescore years and ten,
  As I have mine, without a sigh,
Are either more or less than men—
    Not such am I.

I am not of them; life to me
  Has been a strange, bewildering dream,
Wherein I knew not things that be
    From things that seem.

I thought, I hoped, I knew one thing,
  And had one gift, when I was young—
The impulse and the power to sing,
    And so I sung.

To have a place in the high choir
Of poets, and deserve the same—
What more could mortal man desire
Than poet's fame?

I sought it long, but never found;
The choir so full was and so strong
The jubilant voices there, they drowned
My simple song.

Men would not hear me then, and now
I care not, I accept my fate,
When white hairs thatch the furrowed brow
Crowns come too late!

The best of life went long ago
From me; it was not much at best;
Only the love that young hearts know,
The dear unrest.

Back on my past, through gathering tears,
Once more I cast my eyes, and see
Bright shapes that in my better years
Surrounded me!

They left me here, they left me there,
Went down dark pathways, one by one—
The wise, the great, the young, the fair;
But I went on.

And I go on! And bad or good,
The old allotted years of men
I have endured as best I could,
Threescore and ten!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825–1903]

RAIN ON THE ROOF

When the humid shadows hover
Over all the starry spheres,
And the melancholy darkness
Gently weeps in rainy tears,

What a bliss to press the pillow
Of a cottage-chamber bed,
And to listen to the patter
Of the soft rain overhead!

Every tinkle on the shingles
Has an echo in the heart;
And a thousand dreamy fancies
Into busy being start,
And a thousand recollections
Weave their air-threads into woof,
As I listen to the patter
Of the rain upon the roof.

Now in memory comes my mother,
As she used, in years agone,
To regard the darling dreamers
Ere she left them till the dawn;
And I feel her fond look on me,
As I list to this refrain
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.

Then my little seraph sister,
With her wings and waving hair,
And her star-eyed cherub brother—
A serene angelic pair—
Glide around my wakeful pillow,
With their praise or mild reproof,
As I listen to the murmur
Of the soft rain on the roof.

And another comes, to thrill me
With her eyes' delicious blue;
And I mind not, musing on her,
That her heart was all untrue:
I remember but to love her
With a passion kin to pain,
And my heart's quick pulses vibrate
To the patter of the rain.

Art hath naught of tone or cadence
That can work with such a spell
In the soul's mysterious fountains,
Whence the tears of rapture well,
As that melody of nature,
That subdued, subduing strain
Which is played upon the shingles
By the patter of the rain.

Coates Kinney [1826–1904]

ALONE BY THE HEARTH

HERE, in my snug little fire-lit chamber,
Sit I alone:
And, as I gaze in the coals, I remember
Days long agone.
Saddening it is when the night has descended,
Thus to sit here,
Pensively musing on episodes ended
Many a year.

Still in my visions a golden-haired glory
Flits to and fro;
She whom I loved—but 'tis just the old story:
Dead, long ago.
'Tis but a wraith of love; yet I linger
(Thus passion errs),
Foolishly kissing the ring on my finger—
Once it was hers.

Nothing has changed since her spirit departed,
Here, in this room
Save I, who, weary, and half broken-hearted,
Sit in the gloom.
Loud 'gainst the window the winter rain dashes,
Dreary and cold;
Over the floor the red fire-light flashes
Just as of old.

Just as of old—but the embers are scattered,
Whose ruddy blaze
Flashed o'er the floor where the fairy feet pattered
In other days!
Then, her dear voice, like a silver chime ringing,
Melted away;
Often these walls have re-echoed her singing,
Now hushed for aye!

Why should love bring naught but sorrow, I wonder?
Everything dies!
Time and death, sooner or later, must sunder
Holiest ties.
Years have rolled by; I am wiser and older—
Wiser, but yet
Not till my heart and its feelings grow colder,
Can I forget.

So, in my snug little fire-lit chamber,
Sit I alone;
And, as I gaze in the coals, I remember
Days long agone!

George Arnold [1834–1865]

THE OLD MAN DREAMS

Oh for one hour of youthful joy!
Give back my twentieth spring!
I'd rather laugh, a bright-haired boy,
Than reign, a gray-beard king.

Off with the spoils of wrinkled age!
Away with Learning's crown!
Tear out life's Wisdom-written page,
And dash its trophies down!

One moment let my life-blood stream
From boyhood's fount of flame!
Give me one giddy, reeling dream
Of life all love and fame!

My listening angel heard the prayer,
And, calmly smiling, said,
"If I but touch thy silvered hair,
Thy hasty wish hath sped.

"But is there nothing in thy track
To bid thee fondly stay,
While the swift seasons hurry back
To find the wished-for day?"

"Ah, truest soul of womankind!
Without thee what were life?
One bliss I cannot leave behind:
I'll take—my—precious—wife!"

The angel took a sapphire pen
And wrote in rainbow dew,
The man would be a boy again,
And be a husband, too!

"And is there nothing yet unsaid,
Before the change appears?
Remember, all their gifts have fled
With those dissolving years."

"Why, yes;" for memory would recall
My fond paternal joys;
"I could not bear to leave them all—
I'll take—my—girl—and—boys."

The smiling angel dropped his pen,—
"Why, this will never do;
The man would be a boy again,
And be a father, too!"

And so I laughed,—my laughter woke
The household with its noise,—
And wrote my dream, when morning broke,
To please the gray-haired boys.

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE GARRET*

AFTER BÉRANGER

With pensive eyes the little room I view,
  Where, in my youth, I weathered it so long;
With a wild mistress, a stanch friend or two,
  And a light heart still breaking into song:
Making a mock of life, and all its cares,
  Rich in the glory of my rising sun,
Lightly I vaulted up four pair of stairs,
  In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

Yes; 'tis a garret—let him know't who will—
  There was my bed—full hard it was and small;
My table there—and I decipher still
  Half a lame couplet charcoaled on the wall.
Ye joys, that Time hath swept with him away,
  Come to mine eyes, ye dreams of love and fun;
For you I pawned my watch how many a day,
  In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

And see my little Jessy, first of all;
  She comes with pouting lips and sparkling eyes:
Behold, how roguishly she pins her shawl
  Across the narrow casement, curtain-wise;
Now by the bed her petticoat glides down,
  And when did woman look the worse in none?
I have heard since who paid for many a gown,
  In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

One jolly evening, when my friends and I
  Made happy music with our songs and cheers,
A shout of triumph mounted up thus high,
  And distant cannon opened on our ears:
We rise,—we join in the triumphant strain,—
  Napoleon conquers—Austerlitz is won—
Tyrants shall never tread us down again,
  In the brave days when I was twenty-one.

* For the original of this poem see page 3839.

Let us begone—the place is sad and strange—
How far, far off, these happy times appear;
All that I have to live I'd gladly change
For one such month as I have wasted here—
To draw long dreams of beauty, love, and power,
From founts of hope that never will outrun,
And drink all life's quintessence in an hour,
Give me the days when I was twenty-one!

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

AULD LANG SYNE

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min'?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae rin about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine;
But we've wandered monie a weary fit
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl't i' the burn,
Frae mornin' sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roared
Sin' auld lang syne.

And here's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o' thine;
And we'll tak a right guid willie-waught
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine,
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

ROCK ME TO SLEEP

Backward, turn backward, O Time, in your flight,
Make me a child again, just for to-night!
Mother, come back from the echoless shore,
Take me again to your heart as of yore;
Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;
Over my slumbers your loving watch keep;—
Rock me to sleep, mother,—rock me to sleep!

Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years!
I am so weary of toil and of tears,—
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain,—
Take them, and give me my childhood again!
I have grown weary of dust and decay,—
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away;
Weary of sowing for others to reap;—
Rock me to sleep, mother,—rock me to sleep!

Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,
Mother, O mother, my heart calls for you!
Many a summer the grass has grown green,
Blossomed and faded, our faces between:
Yet, with strong yearning and passionate pain,
Long I to-night for your presence again.
Come from the silence so long and so deep;—
Rock me to sleep, mother,— rock me to sleep!

Over my heart, in the days that are flown,
No love like mother-love ever has shone;
No other worship abides and endures,—
Faithful, unselfish, and patient, like yours:
None like a mother can charm away pain
From the sick soul and the world-weary brain.
Slumber's soft calms o'er my heavy lids creep;—
Rock me to sleep, mother,—rock me to sleep!

Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold,
Fall on your shoulders again as of old;

Let it drop over my forehead to-night,
Shading my faint eyes away from the light;
For with its sunny-edged shadows once more
Haply will throng the sweet visions of yore;
Lovingly, softly, its bright billows sweep;—
Rock me to sleep, mother,—rock me to sleep!

Mother, dear mother, the years have been long
Since I last listened your lullaby song:
Sing, then, and unto my soul it shall seem
Womanhood's years have been only a dream.
Clasped to your heart in a loving embrace,
With your light lashes just sweeping my face,
Never hereafter to wake or to weep;—
Rock me to sleep, mother,—rock me to sleep!

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

THE BUCKET

How dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood,
When fond recollection presents them to view!
The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wild-wood,
And every loved spot which my infancy knew!
The wide-spreading pond, and the mill that stood by it,
The bridge, and the rock where the cataract fell,
The cot of my father, the dairy-house nigh it,
And e'en the rude bucket that hung in the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket which hung in the well.

That moss-covered vessel I hailed as a treasure,
For often at noon, when returned from the field,
I found it the source of an exquisite pleasure,
The purest and sweetest that nature can yield.
How ardent I seized it, with hands that were glowing,
And quick to the white-pebbled bottom it fell;
Then soon, with the emblem of truth overflowing,
And dripping with coolness, it rose from the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket arose from the well.

How sweet from the green mossy brim to receive it,
As poised on the curb it inclined to my lips!
Not a full blushing goblet would tempt me to leave it,
The brightest that beauty or revelry sips.
And now, far removed from the loved habitation,
The tear of regret will intrusively swell,
As fancy reverts to my father's plantation,
And sighs for the bucket that hangs in the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket that hangs in the well!

Samuel Woodworth [1785–1842]

THE GRAPE-VINE SWING

Lithe and long as the serpent train,
Springing and clinging from tree to tree,
Now darting upward, now down again,
With a twist and a twirl that are strange to see;
Never took serpent a deadlier hold,
Never the cougar a wilder spring,
Strangling the oak with the boa's fold,
Spanning the beach with the condor's wing.

Yet no foe that we fear to seek,—
The boy leaps wild to thy rude embrace;
Thy bulging arms bear as soft a cheek
As ever on lover's breast found place;
On thy waving train is a playful hold
Thou shalt never to lighter grasp persuade;
While a maiden sits in thy drooping fold,
And swings and sings in the noonday shade!

O giant strange of our Southern woods!
I dream of thee still in the well-known spot,
Though our vessel strains o'er the ocean floods,
And the Northern forest beholds thee not;
I think of thee still with a sweet regret,
As the cordage yields to my playful grasp,—
Dost thou spring and cling in our woodlands yet?
Does the maiden still swing in thy giant clasp?

William Gilmore Simms [1806–1870]

THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! whare the crick so still and deep
Looked like a baby-river that was laying half asleep,
And the gurgle of the worter round the drift jest below
Sounded like the laugh of something we onc't ust to know
Before we could remember anything but the eyes
Of the angels lookin' out as we left Paradise;
But the merry days of youth is beyond our controle,
And it's hard to part ferever with the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! In the happy days of yore,
When I ust to lean above it on the old sickamore,
Oh! it showed me a face in its warm sunny tide
That gazed back at me so gay and glorified,
It made me love myself as I leaped to caress
My shadder smilin' up at me with sich tenderness.
But them days is past and gone, and old Time's tuck his toll
From the old man come back to the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! In the long, lazy days
When the hum-drum of school made so many run-a-ways,
How pleasant was the journey down the old dusty lane,
Whare the tracks of our bare feet was all printed so plane
You could tell by the dent of the heel and the sole
They was lots o' fun on hand at the old swimmin'-hole.
But the lost joys is past! Let your tears in sorrow roll
Like the rain that ust to dapple up the old swimmin'-hole.

Thare the bulrushes growed, and the cattails so tall,
And the sunshine and shadder fell over it all;
And it mottled the worter with amber and gold
Tel the glad lilies rocked in the ripples that rolled;
And the snake-feeder's four gauzy wings fluttered by
Like the ghost of a daisy dropped out of the sky,
Or a wownded apple-blossom in the breeze's controle
As it cut acrost some orchurd to'rds the old swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! When I last saw the place,
The scenes was all changed, like the change in my face;

The bridge of the railroad now crosses the spot
Whare the old divin'-log lays sunk and fergot.
And I stray down the banks whare the trees ust to be—
But never again will theyr shade shelter me!
And I wish in my sorrow I could strip to the soul,
And dive off in my grave like the old swimmin'-hole.

James Whitcomb Riley [1852–1916]

FORTY YEARS AGO

I've wandered to the village, Tom, I've sat beneath the tree,
Upon the schoolhouse playground, that sheltered you and me;
But none were there to greet me, Tom; and few were left to know,
Who played with us upon that green some forty years ago.

The grass is just as green, Tom; barefooted boys at play
Were sporting, just as we did then, with spirits just as gay.
But the "master" sleeps upon the hill, which, coated o'er with snow,
Afforded us a sliding-place some forty years ago.

The old schoolhouse is altered some; the benches are replaced
By new ones, very like the same our jackknives once defaced;
But the same old bricks are in the wall, the bell swings to and fro;
Its music's just the same, dear Tom, 'twas forty years ago.

The boys were playing some old game, beneath that same old tree;
I have forgot the name just now—you've played the same with me,
On that same spot; 'twas played with knives, by throwing so and so;
The loser had a task to do, there, forty years ago.

The river's running just as still; the willows on its side
Are larger than they were, Tom; the stream appears less wide;

But the grape-vine swing is ruined now, where once we played the beau,
And swung our sweethearts—pretty girls—just forty years ago.

The spring that bubbled 'neath the hill, close by the spreading beech,
Is very low—'twas then so high that we could scarcely reach;
And, kneeling down to get a drink, dear Tom, I started so,
To see how sadly I am changed since forty years ago.

Near by that spring, upon an elm, you know I cut your name,
Your sweetheart's just beneath it, Tom, and you did mine the same;
Some heartless wretch has peeled the bark, 'twas dying sure but slow,
Just as she died, whose name you cut, some forty years ago.

My lids have long been dry, Tom, but tears came to my eyes;
I thought of her I loved so well, those early broken ties;
I visited the old churchyard, and took some flowers to strow
Upon the graves of those we loved some forty years ago.

Some are in the churchyard laid, some sleep beneath the sea,
And none are left of our old class, excepting you and me;
But when our time shall come, Tom, and we are called to go,
I hope we'll meet with those we loved some forty years ago.

Francis Huston [18 –

BEN BOLT

Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt,—
Sweet Alice whose hair was so brown,
Who wept with delight when you gave her a smile,
And trembled with fear at your frown?

In the old churchyard in the valley, Ben Bolt,
In a corner obscure and alone,
They have fitted a slab of the granite so gray,
And Alice lies under the stone.

Under the hickory tree, Ben Bolt,
Which stood at the foot of the hill,
Together we've lain in the noonday shade,
And listened to Appleton's mill.
The mill-wheel has fallen to pieces, Ben Bolt,
The rafters have tumbled in,
And a quiet which crawls round the walls as you gaze
Has followed the olden din.

Do you mind of the cabin of logs, Ben Bolt.
At the edge of the pathless wood,
And the button-ball tree with its motley limbs,
Which nigh by the doorstep stood?
The cabin to ruin has gone, Ben Bolt,
The tree you would seek for in vain;
And where once the lords of the forest waved
Are grass and the golden grain.

And don't you remember the school, Ben Bolt,
With the master so cruel and grim,
And the shaded nook in the running brook
Where the children went to swim?
Grass grows on the master's grave, Ben Bolt,
The spring of the brook is dry,
And of all the boys who were schoolmates then
There are only you and I.

There is change in the things I loved, Ben Bolt,
They have changed from the old to the new;
But I feel in the deeps of my spirit the truth,
There never was change in you.
Twelvemonths twenty have passed, Ben Bolt,
Since first we were friends—yet I hail
Your presence a blessing, your friendship a truth,
Ben Bolt of the salt-sea gale.

Thomas Dunn English [1819–1902]

"BREAK, BREAK, BREAK"

Break, break, break,
  On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
  The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
  That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
  That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on,
  To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
  And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
  At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
  Will never come back to me.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

PART II

POEMS OF LOVE

EROS

THE sense of the world is short,—
Long and various the report,—
To love and be beloved;
Men and gods have not outlearned it;
And, how oft soe'er they've turned it,
'Tis not to be improved.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

"NOW WHAT IS LOVE"

"NOW WHAT IS LOVE"

Now what is Love, I pray thee, tell?
It is that fountain and that well
Where pleasure and repentance dwell;
It is, perhaps, the sauncing bell
That tolls all into heaven or hell;
And this is Love, as I hear teli.

Yet what is Love, I prithee, say?
It is a work on holiday,
It is December matched with May,
When lusty bloods in fresh array
Hear ten months after of the play;
And this is Love, as I hear say.

Yet what is Love, good shepherd, sain?
It is a sunshine mixed with rain,
It is a toothache or like pain,
It is a game where none hath gain;
The lass saith no, yet would full fain;
And this is Love, as I hear sain.

Yet, shepherd, what is Love, I pray?
It is a yes, it is a nay,
A pretty kind of sporting fray,
It is a thing will soon away.
Then, nymphs, take vantage while ye may;
And this is Love, as I hear say.

Yet what is Love, good shepherd, show?
A thing that creeps, it cannot go,
A prize that passeth to and fro,
A thing for one, a thing for moe,
And he that proves shall find it so;
And shepherd, this is Love, I trow.

Walter Raleigh [1552?–1618]

WOOING SONG

From "Christ's Victory"

Love is the blossom where there blows
Every thing that lives or grows:
Love doth make the Heavens to move,
And the Sun doth burn in love:
Love the strong and weak doth yoke,
And makes the ivy climb the oak,
Under whose shadows lions wild,
Softened by love, grow tame and mild:
Love no medicine can appease,
He burns fishes in the seas:
Not all the skill his wounds can stench,
Not all the sea his fire can quench.
Love did make the bloody spear
Once a leavy coat to wear,
While in his leaves there shrouded lay
Sweet birds, for love that sing and play
And of all love's joyful flame
I the bud and blossom am.
Only bend thy knee to me,
Thy wooing shall thy winning be!

See, see the flowers that below
Now as fresh as morning blow;
And of all the virgin rose
That as bright Aurora shows;
How they all unleavèd die,
Losing their virginity!
Like unto a summer shade,
But now born, and now they fade.
Every thing doth pass away;
There is danger in delay:
Come, come, gather then the rose,
Gather it, or it you lose!
All the sand of Tagus' shore
Into my bosom casts his ore:
All the valleys' swimming corn
To my house is yearly borne:

Every grape of every vine
Is gladly bruised to make me wine:
While ten thousand kings, as proud,
To carry up my train have bowed,
And a world of ladies send me
In my chambers to attend me:
All the stars in Heaven that shine,
And ten thousand more, are mine:
Only bend thy knee to me,
Thy wooing shall thy winning be.

Giles Fletcher [1549?–1611]

ROSALIND'S MADRIGAL

From "Rosalind"

Love in my bosom like a bee
Doth suck his sweet:
Now with his wings he plays with me,
Now with his feet.
Within mine eyes he makes his nest,
His bed amidst my tender breast;
My kisses are his daily feast,
And yet he robs me of my rest:
Ah! wanton, will ye?

And if I sleep, then percheth he
With pretty flight,
And makes his pillow of my knee
The livelong night.
Strike I my lute, he tunes the string;
He music plays if so I sing;
He lends me every lovely thing,
Yet cruel he my heart doth sting:
Whist, wanton, still ye!

Else I with roses every day
Will whip you hence,
And bind you, when you long to play,
For your offence.

I'll shut mine eyes to keep you in;
I'll make you fast it for your sin;
I'll count your power not worth a pin.
—Alas! what hereby shall I win
If he gainsay me?

What if I beat the wanton boy
With many a rod?
He will repay me with annoy,
Because a god.
Then sit thou safely on my knee;
Then let thy bower my bosom be;
Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee;
O Cupid, so thou pity me,
Spare not, but play thee!

Thomas Lodge [1558?–1625]

SONG

From "Hymen's Triumph"

Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that with most cutting grows,
Most barren with best using.
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries—
Heigh ho!

Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
And Jove hath made it of a kind
Not well, nor full nor fasting.
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries—
Heigh ho!

Samuel Daniel [1562–1619]

LOVE'S PERJURIES

From "Love's Labor's Lost"

On a day, alack the day!
Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom passing fair
Playing in the wanton air:
Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, 'gan passage find;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wished himself the heaven's breath.
Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow;
Air, would I might triumph so!
But, alack, my hand is sworn
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet;
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet.
Do not call it sin in me
That I am forsworn for thee:
Thou for whom e'en Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were,
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

VENUS' RUNAWAY

From "The Hue and Cry After Cupid"

Beauties, have ye seen this toy,
Callèd Love, a little boy,
Almost naked, wanton, blind;
Cruel now, and then as kind?
If he be amongst ye, say?
He is Venus' runaway.

She that will but now discover
Where the wingèd wag doth hover,
Shall to-night receive a kiss,
How or where herself would wish:

But who brings him to his mother,
Shall have that kiss, and another.

He hath marks about him plenty:
You shall know him among twenty.
All his body is a fire,
And his breath a flame entire,
That, being shot like lightning in,
Wounds the heart, but not the skin.

At his sight, the sun hath turned,
Neptune in the waters burned;
Hell hath felt a greater heat;
Jove himself forsook his seat:
From the centre to the sky,
Are his trophies reared high.

Wings he hath, which though ye clip,
He will leap from lip to lip,
Over liver, lights, and heart,
But not stay in any part;
But if chance his arrow misses,
He will shoot himself in kisses.

He doth bear a golden bow,
And a quiver, hanging low,
Full of arrows, that outbrave
Dian's shafts; where, if he have
Any head more sharp than other,
With that first he strikes his mother.

Still the fairest are his fuel.
When his days are to be cruel,
Lovers' hearts are all his food,
And his baths their warmest blood:
Naught but wounds his hands doth season,
And he hates none like to Reason.

Trust him not; his words, though sweet,
Seldom with his heart do meet.

All his practice is deceit;
Every gift it is a bait;
Not a kiss but poison bears;
And most treason in his tears.

Idle minutes are his reign;
Then, the straggler makes his gain
By presenting maids with toys,
And would have ye think them joys:
'Tis the ambition of the elf
To have all childish as himself.

If by these ye please to know him,
Beauties, be not nice, but show him.
Though ye had a will to hide him,
Now, we hope, ye'll not abide him;
Since you hear his falser play,
And that he's Venus' runaway.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

WHAT IS LOVE?

From "The Captain"

Tell me, dearest, what is love?
'Tis a lightning from above;
'Tis an arrow, 'tis a fire,
'Tis a boy they call Desire.
'Tis a grave,
Gapes to have
Those poor fools that long to prove.

Tell me more, are women true?
Yes, some are, and some as you.
Some are willing, some are strange,
Since you men first taught to change.
And till troth
Be in both,
All shall love, to love anew.

Tell me more yet, can they grieve?
Yes, and sicken sore, but live,
And be wise, and delay,
When you men are wise as they.
Then I see,
Faith will be
Never till they both believe.

John Fletcher [1579–1625]

LOVE'S EMBLEMS

From "Valentinian"

Now the lusty spring is seen;
Golden yellow, gaudy blue,
Daintily invite the view:
Everywhere on every green
Roses blushing as they blow,
And enticing men to pull,
Lilies whiter than the snow,
Woodbines of sweet honey full:
All love's emblems, and all cry,
"Ladies, if not plucked, we die."

Yet the lusty spring hath stayed;
Blushing red and purest white
Daintily to love invite
Every woman, every maid:
Cherries kissing as they grow,
And inviting men to taste,
Apples even ripe below,
Winding gently to the waist:
All love's emblems, and all cry,
"Ladies, if not plucked, we die."

John Fletcher [1579–1625]

THE POWER OF LOVE

From "Valentinian"

Hear, ye ladies that despise
What the mighty Love has done;
Fear examples and be wise:
Fair Callisto was a nun;

Leda, sailing on the stream
To deceive the hopes of man,
Love accounting but a dream,
Doted on a silver swan;
Danaë, in a brazen tower,
Where no love was, loved a shower.

Hear, ye ladies that are coy,
What the mighty Love can do;
Fear the fierceness of the boy:
The chaste Moon he makes to woo;
Vesta, kindling holy fires,
Circled round about with spies,
Never dreaming loose desires,
Doting at the altar dies;
Ilion, in a short hour, higher
He can build, and once more fire.

John Fletcher [1579–1625]

ADVICE TO A LOVER

The sea hath many thousand sands,
The sun hath motes as many;
The sky is full of stars, and Love
As full of woes as any:
Believe me, that do know the elf,
And make no trial by thyself!

It is in truth a pretty toy
For babes to play withal:
But O, the honies of our youth
Are oft our age's gall:
Self-proof in time will make thee know
He was a prophet told thee so:

A prophet that, Cassandra-like,
Tells truth without belief;
For headstrong Youth will run his race,
Although his goal be grief:—
Love's Martyr, when his heat is past,
Proves Care's Confessor at the last.

Unknown

LOVE'S HOROSCOPE

Love, brave Virtue's younger brother,
Erst hath made my heart a mother,
She consults the anxious spheres,
To calculate her young son's years;
She asks if sad or saving powers
Gave omen to his infant hours;
She asks each star that then stood by
If poor Love shall live or die.

Ah, my heart! is that the way?
Are these the beams that rule thy day?
Thou know'st a face in whose each look
Beauty lays ope Love's fortune-book,
On whose fair revolutions wait
The obsequious motions of Love's fate.
Ah, my heart! her eyes and she
Have taught thee new astrology.
Howe'er Love's native hours were set,
Whatever starry synod met,
'Tis in the mercy of her eye,
If poor Love shall live or die.

If those sharp rays, putting on
Points of death, bid Love be gone;—
Though the heavens in council sate
To crown an uncontrollèd fate;
Though their best aspects twined upon
The kindest constellation,
Cast amorous glances on its birth,
And whispered the confederate earth
To pave his paths with all the good
That warms the bed of youth and blood:—
Love has no plea against her eye;
Beauty frowns, and Love must die.

But if her milder influence move,
And gild the hopes of humble Love;—
Though heaven's inauspicious eye
Lay black on Love's nativity;

Though every diamond in Jove's crown
Fixed his forehead to a frown;—
Her eye a strong appeal can give,
Beauty smiles, and Love shall live.

O, if Love shall live, O where,
But in her eye, or in her ear,
In her breast, or in her breath,
Shall I hide poor Love from death?
For in the life aught else can give,
Love shall die, although he live.

Or, if Love shall die, O where,
But in her eye, or in her ear,
In her breath, or in her breast,
Shall I build his funeral nest?
While Love shall thus entombèd lie,
Love shall live, although he die!

Richard Crashaw [1613?–1649]

"AH, HOW SWEET IT IS TO LOVE!"

From "Tyrannic Love"

Ah, how sweet it is to love!
Ah, how gay is young Desire!
And what pleasing pains we prove
When we first approach Love's fire!
Pains of Love be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are.

Sighs which are from lovers blown
Do but gently heave the heart:
Even the tears they shed alone
Cure, like trickling balm, their smart:
Lovers, when they lose their breath,
Bleed away in easy death.

Love and Time with reverence use,
Treat them like a parting friend;
Nor the golden gifts refuse
Which in youth sincere they send:

For each year their price is more,
And they less simple than before.

Love, like spring-tides full and high,
Swells in every youthful vein;
But each tide does less supply,
Till they quite shrink in again:
If a flow in age appear,
'Tis but rain, and runs not clear.

John Dryden [1631–1700]

SONG

Love still has something of the sea,
From whence his Mother rose;
No time his slaves from doubt can free,
Nor give their thoughts repose.

They are becalmed in clearest days,
And in rough weather tossed;
They wither under cold delays,
Or are in tempests lost.

One while they seem to touch the port,
Then straight into the main
Some angry wind, in cruel sport,
The vessel drives again.

At first Disdain and Pride they fear,
Which if they chance to 'scape,
Rivals and Falsehood soon appear,
In a more dreadful shape.

By such degrees to joy they come,
And are so long withstood,
So slowly they receive the sun,
It hardly does them good.

'Tis cruel to prolong a pain;
And to defer a joy,
Believe me, gentle Celemene,
Offends the wingèd boy.

An hundred thousand oaths your fears,
Perhaps, would not remove;
And if I gazed a thousand years,
I could not deeper love.

Charles Sedley [1639?–1710]

THE VINE

The wine of Love is music,
And the feast of Love is song:
And when Love sits down to the banquet,
Love sits long:

Sits long and arises drunken,
But not with the feast and the wine;
He reeleth with his own heart,
That great, rich Vine.

James Thomson [1834–1882]

SONG

Fain would I change that note
To which fond love hath charmed me,
Long, long to sing by rote,
Fancying that that harmed me:
Yet when this thought doth come,—
Love is the perfect sum
Of all delight.
I have no other choice
Either for pen or voice
To sing or write.

O love, they wrong thee much
That say thy sweet is bitter
When thy rich fruit is such
As nothing can be sweeter.
Fair house of joy and bliss
Where truest pleasure is,
I do adore thee:
I know thee what thou art,
I serve thee with my heart,
And fall before thee.

Unknown

CUPID STUNG

Cupid once upon a bed
Of roses laid his weary head;
Luckless urchin, not to see
Within the leaves a slumbering bee.
The bee awaked—with anger wild
The bee awaked, and stung the child.
Loud and piteous are his cries;
To Venus quick he runs, he flies;
"Oh Mother! I am wounded through—
I die with pain—in sooth I do!
Stung by some little angry thing,
Some serpent on a tiny wing—
A bee it was—for once, I know,
I heard a rustic call it so."
Thus he spoke, and she the while
Heard him with a soothing smile;
Then said, "My infant, if so much
Thou feel the little wild bee's touch,
How must the heart, ah, Cupid! be,
The hapless heart that's stung by thee!"

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

CUPID DROWNED

T'other day, as I was twining
Roses, for a crown to dine in,
What, of all things, 'mid the heap,
Should I light on, fast asleep,
But the little desperate elf,
The tiny traitor, Love, himself!
By the wings I picked him up
Like a bee, and in a cup
Of my wine I plunged and sank him,
Then what d'ye think I did?—I drank him.
Faith, I thought him dead. Not he!
There he lives with ten-fold glee;

And now this moment with his wings
I feel him tickling my heart-strings.

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

SONG

Oh! say not woman's heart is bought
With vain and empty treasure.
Oh! say not woman's heart is caught
By every idle pleasure.
When first her gentle bosom knows
Love's flame, it wanders never;
Deep in her heart the passion glows,
She loves, and loves for ever.

Oh! say not woman's false as fair,
That like the bee she ranges!
Still seeking flowers more sweet and rare,
As fickle fancy changes.
Ah! no, the love that first can warm
Will leave her bosom never;
No second passion e'er can charm,
She loves, and loves for ever.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785–1866]

"IN THE DAYS OF OLD"

From "Crotchet Castle"

In the days of old
Lovers felt true passion,
Deeming years of sorrow
By a smile repaid:
Now the charms of gold,
Spells of pride and fashion,
Bid them say Good-morrow
To the best-loved Maid.

Through the forests wild,
O'er the mountains lonely,
They were never weary
Honor to pursue:

If the damsel smiled
Once in seven years only,
All their wanderings dreary
Ample guerdon knew.

Now one day's caprice
Weighs down years of smiling,
Youthful hearts are rovers,
Love is bought and sold.
Fortune's gifts may cease,
Love is less beguiling:
Wiser were the lovers
In the days of old.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785–1866]

SONG

How delicious is the winning
Of a kiss at Love's beginning,
When two mutual hearts are sighing
For the knot there's no untying!

Yet remember, 'midst your wooing,
Love has bliss, but Love has ruing;
Other smiles may make you fickle,
Tears for other charms may trickle.

Love he comes, and Love he tarries,
Just as fate or fancy carries;
Longest stays, when sorest chidden;
Laughs and flies, when pressed and bidden.

Bind the sea to slumber stilly,
Bind its odor to the lily,
Bind the aspen ne'er to quiver,
Then bind Love to last forever!

Love's a fire that needs renewal
Of fresh beauty for its fuel:
Love's wing moults when caged and captured,
Only free, he soars enraptured.

Can you keep the bee from ranging,
Or the ringdove's neck from changing?
No! nor fettered Love from dying
In the knot there's no untying.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

STANZAS

Could Love for ever
Run like a river,
And Time's endeavor
Be tried in vain—
No other pleasure
With this could measure,
And like a treasure
We'd hug the chain.
But since our sighing
Ends not in dying,
And, formed for flying,
Love plumes his wing;
Then for this reason
Let's love a season;
But let that season
Be only Spring.

When lovers parted
Feel broken-hearted,
And, all hopes thwarted,
Expect to die;
A few years older,
Ah! how much colder
They might behold her
For whom they sigh!
When linked together,
In every weather,
They pluck Love's feather
From out his wing—
He'll stay for ever,
But sadly shiver

Without his plumage,
When past the Spring.

Like Chiefs of Faction,
His life is action—
A formal paction
That curbs his reign,
Obscures his glory,
Despot no more, he
Such territory
Quits with disdain.
Still, still advancing,
With banners glancing,
His power enhancing,
He must move on—
Repose but cloys him,
Retreat destroys him,
Love brooks not a
Degraded throne.

Wait not, fond lover!
Till years are over,
And then recover,
As from a dream.
While each bewailing
The other's failing,
With wrath and railing,
All hideous seem—
While first decreasing,
Yet not quite ceasing,
Wait not till teasing
All passion blight:
If once diminished
Love's reign is finished—
Then part in friendship,—
And bid good-night.

So shall Affection
To recollection
The dear connection

Bring back with joy:
You had not waited
Till, tired or hated,
Your passions sated
Began to cloy.
Your last embraces
Leave no cold traces—
The same fond faces
As through the past;
And eyes, the mirrors
Of your sweet errors,
Reflect but rapture—
Not least though last.

True, separations
Ask more than patience;
What desperations
From such have risen!
But yet remaining,
What is't but chaining
Hearts which, once waning,
Beat 'gainst their prison?
Time can but cloy love,
And use destroy love:
The wingèd boy, Love,
Is but for boys—
You'll find it torture
Though sharper, shorter,
To wean and not
Wear out your joys.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

"THEY SPEAK O' WILES"

They speak o' wiles in woman's smiles,
An' ruin in her ee;
I ken they bring a pang at whiles
That's unco' sair to dree;

But mind ye this, the half-ta'en kiss,
The first fond fa'in' tear,
Is, heaven kens, fu' sweet amends,
An' tints o' heaven here.

When two leal hearts in fondness meet,
Life's tempests howl in vain;
The very tears o' love are sweet
When paid with tears again.

Shall hapless prudence shake its pow?
Shall cauldrife caution fear?
Oh, dinna, dinna droun the lowe
That lights a heaven here!

William Thom [1798?–1848]

"LOVE WILL FIND OUT THE WAY"

Over the mountains
And over the waves,
Under the fountains
And under the graves,
Under floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.

Where there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie,
Where there is no space
For receipt of a fly,
Where the midge dares not venture,
Lest herself fast she lay,
If Love come, he will enter,
And find out the way.

You may esteem him
A child for his might,
Or you may deem him
A coward from his flight:

But if she whom Love doth honor
Be concealed from the day,
Set a thousand guards upon her,
Love will find out the way.

Some think to lose him,
By having him confined,
And some do suppose him,
Poor thing, to be blind;
But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
Do the best that you may,
Blind Love, if so ye call him,
Will find out the way.

You may train the eagle
To stoop to your fist,
Or you may inveigle
The phoenix of the east;
The tiger, ye may move her
To give over her prey;
But you'll ne'er stop a lover—
He will find out the way.

Unknown

A WOMAN'S SHORTCOMINGS

She has laughed as softly as if she sighed,
She has counted six, and over,
Of a purse well filled, and a heart well tried—
Oh, each a worthy lover!
They "give her time"; for her soul must slip
Where the world has set the grooving;
She will lie to none with her fair red lip:
But love seeks truer loving.

She trembles her fan in a sweetness dumb,
As her thoughts were beyond recalling;
With a glance for *one*, and a glance for *some*,
From her eyelids rising and falling;

Speaks common words with a blushful air,
  Hears bold words, unreproving;
But her silence says—what she never will swear—
  And love seeks better loving.

Go, lady! lean to the night-guitar,
  And drop a smile to the bringer;
Then smile as sweetly, when he is far,
  At the voice of an in-door singer.
Bask tenderly beneath tender eyes;
  Glance lightly, on their removing;
And join new vows to old perjuries—
  But dare not call it loving!

Unless you can think, when the song is done,
  No other is soft in the rhythm;
Unless you can feel, when left by One,
  That all men else go with him;
Unless you can know, when upraised by his breath,
  That your beauty itself wants proving;
Unless you can swear "For life, for death!"—
  Oh, fear to call it loving!

Unless you can muse in a crowd all day
  On the absent face that fixed you;
Unless you can love, as the angels may,
  With the breadth of heaven betwixt you;
Unless you can dream that his faith is fast,
  Through behoving and unbehoving;
Unless you can *die* when the dream is past—
  Oh, never call it loving!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

"LOVE HATH A LANGUAGE"

From "To My Son"

Love hath a language for all years—
  Fond hieroglyphs, obscure and old—
Wherein the heart reads, writ in tears,
  The tale which never yet was told.

Love hath his meter too, to trace
  Those bounds which never yet were given,—
To measure that which mocks at space,
  Is deep as death, and high as heaven.

Love hath his treasure hoards, to pay
  True faith, or goodly service done,—
Dear priceless nothings, which outweigh
  All riches that the sun shines on.

Helen Selina Sheridan [1807–1867]

SONG

From "Maud"

O, LET the solid ground,
  Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
  What some have found so sweet;
Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
  Not close and darken above me
Before I am quite quite sure
  That there is one to love me!
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

AMATURUS

SOMEWHERE beneath the sun,
  These quivering heart-strings prove it,
Somewhere there must be one
  Made for this soul to move it;

Some one that hides her sweetness
From neighbors whom she slights,
Nor can attain completeness,
Nor give her heart its rights;
Some one whom I could court
With no great change of manner,
Still holding reason's fort,
Though waving fancy's banner;
A lady, not so queenly
As to disdain my hand,
Yet born to smile serenely
Like those that rule the land;
Noble, but not too proud;
With soft hair simply folded,
And bright face crescent-browed,
And throat by Muses moulded;
And eyelids lightly falling
On little glistening seas,
Deep-calm, when gales are brawling,
Though stirred by every breeze;
Swift voice, like flight of dove
Through minster-arches floating,
With sudden turns, when love
Gets overnear to doting;
Keen lips, that shape soft sayings
Like crystals of the snow,
With pretty half-betrayings
Of things one may not know;
Fair hand whose touches thrill,
Like golden rod of wonder,
Which Hermes wields at will
Spirit and flesh to sunder;
Light foot, to press the stirrup
In fearlessness and glee,
Or dance, till finches chirrup,
And stars sink to the sea.

Forth, Love, and find this maid,
Wherever she be hidden:
Speak, Love, be not afraid,
But plead as thou art bidden;

And say, that he who taught thee
His yearning want and pain,
Too dearly, dearly bought thee
To part with thee in vain.

William Johnson-Cory [1823–1892]

THE SURFACE AND THE DEPTHS

Love took my life and thrilled it
Through all its strings,
Played round my mind and filled it
With sound of wings;
But to my heart he never came
To touch it with his golden flame.

Therefore it is that singing
I do rejoice,
Nor heed the slow years bringing
A harsher voice;
Because the songs which he has sung
Still leave the untouched singer young.

But whom in fuller fashion
The Master sways,
For him, swift-winged with passion,
Fleet the brief days.
Betimes the enforced accents come,
And leave him ever after dumb.

Lewis Morris [1833–1907]

A BALLAD OF DREAMLAND

I hid my heart in a nest of roses,
Out of the sun's way, hidden apart;
In a softer bed then the soft white snow's is,
Under the roses I hid my heart.
Why would it sleep not? why should it start,
When never a leaf of the rose-tree stirred?
What made sleep flutter his wings and part?
Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing closes,
And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's dart;
Lie still, for the wind on the warm seas dozes,
And the wind is unquieter yet than thou art.
Does a thought in thee still as a thorn's wound smart?
Does the fang still fret thee of hope deferred?
What bids the lips of thy sleep dispart?
Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm encloses,
It never was writ in the traveller's chart,
And sweet on its trees as the fruit that grows is,
It never was sold in the merchant's mart.
The swallows of dreams through its dim fields dart,
And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops heard;
No hound's note wakens the wildwood hart,
Only the song of a secret bird.

ENVOI

In the world of dreams I have chosen my part,
To sleep for a season and hear no word
Of true love's truth or of light love's art,
Only the song of a secret bird.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

ENDYMION

The rising moon has hid the stars;
Her level rays, like golden bars,
Lie on the landscape green,
With shadows brown between.

And silver white the river gleams,
As if Diana, in her dreams
Had dropped her silver bow
Upon the meadows low.

On such a tranquil night as this,
She woke Endymion with a kiss,
When, sleeping in the grove,
He dreamed not of her love.

Like Dian's kiss, unasked, unsought,
Love gives itself, but is not bought;
Nor voice, nor sound betrays
Its deep, impassioned gaze.

It comes,—the beautiful, the free,
The crown of all humanity,—
In silence and alone
To seek the elected one.

It lifts the boughs, whose shadows deep
Are life's oblivion, the soul's sleep,
And kisses the closed eyes
Of him who slumbering lies.

O weary hearts! O slumbering eyes!
O drooping souls, whose destinies
Are fraught with fear and pain,
Ye shall be loved again!

No one is so accursed by fate,
No one so utterly desolate,
But some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.

Responds,—as if with unseen wings,
An angel touched its quivering strings;
And whispers, in its song,
"Where hast thou stayed so long?"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

FATE

Two shall be born, the whole wide world apart,
And speak in different tongues and have no thought
Each of the other's being, and no heed.
And these, o'er unknown seas, to unknown lands
Shall cross, escaping wreck, defying death;
And all unconsciously shape every act
And bend each wandering step to this one end—
That, one day, out of darkness they shall meet
And read life's meaning in each other's eyes.

And two shall walk some narrow way of life
So nearly side by side that, should one turn
Ever so little space to left or right,
They needs must stand acknowledged, face to face.
And, yet, with wistful eyes that never meet
And groping hands that never clasp and lips
Calling in vain to ears that never hear,
They seek each other all their weary days
And die unsatisfied—and this is Fate!

Susan Marr Spalding [18 - ?]

"GIVE ALL TO LOVE"

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good fame,
Plans, credit, and the Muse,—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high

It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout.
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending,
It will reward,—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor,—
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise,
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;

Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

"O, LOVE IS NOT A SUMMER MOOD"

O, LOVE is not a summer mood,
Nor flying phantom of the brain,
Nor youthful fever of the blood,
Nor dream, nor fate, nor circumstance.
Love is not born of blinded chance,
Nor bred in simple ignorance.

Love is the flower of maidenhood;
Love is the fruit of mortal pain;
And she hath winter in her blood.
True love is steadfast as the skies,
And once alight, she never flies;
And love is strong, and love is wise.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

WHEN WILL LOVE COME?

SOME find Love late, some find him soon,
Some with the rose in May,
Some with the nightingale in June,
And some when skies are gray;
Love comes to some with smiling eyes,
And comes with tears to some;
For some Love sings, for some Love sighs,
For some Love's lips are dumb.

How will you come to me, fair Love?
Will you come late or soon?
With sad or smiling skies above,
By light of sun or moon?

Will you be sad, will you be sweet,
Sing, sigh, Love, or be dumb?
Will it be summer when we meet,
Or autumn ere you come?

Pakenham Beatty [1855–

"AWAKE, MY HEART"

AWAKE, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!
The darkness silvers away, the morn doth break,
It leaps in the sky: unrisen lustres slake
The o'ertaken moon. Awake, O heart, awake!

She too that loveth awaketh and hopes for thee:
Her eyes already have sped the shades that flee,
Already they watch the path thy feet shall take:
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

And if thou tarry from her,—if this could be,—
She cometh herself, O heart, to be loved, to thee;
For thee would unashamèd herself forsake:
Awake, to be loved, my heart, awake, awake!

Awake! The land is scattered with light, and see,
Uncanopied sleep is flying from field and tree;
And blossoming boughs of April in laughter shake:
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

Lo, all things wake and tarry and look for thee:
She looketh and saith, "O sun, now bring him to me.
Come, more adored, O adored, for his coming's sake,
And awake, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!"

Robert Bridges [1855–

THE SECRET

NIGHTINGALES warble about it
All night under blossom and star;
The wild swan is dying without it,
And the eagle crieth afar;

The sun, he doth mount but to find it,
  Searching the green earth o'er;
But more doth a man's heart mind it—
  O more, more, more!

Over the gray leagues of ocean
  The infinite yearneth alone;
The forests with wandering emotion
  The thing they know not intone;
Creation arose but to see it,
  A million lamps in the blue;
But a lover, he shall be it,
  If one sweet maid is true.

George Edward Woodberry [1855–

THE ROSE OF STARS

When Love, our great Immortal,
  Put on mortality,
And down from Eden's portal
  Brought this sweet life to be,
At the sublime archangel
  He laughed with veilèd eyes,
For he bore within his bosom
  The seed of Paradise.

He hid it in his bosom,
  And there such warmth it found,
It brake in bud and blossom,
  And the rose fell on the ground;
As the green light on the prairie,
  As the red light on the sea,
Through fragrant belts of summer
  Came this sweet life to be.

And the grave archangel seeing,
  Spread his mighty wings for flight,
But the glow hung round him fleeing
  Like the rose of an Arctic night;

And sadly moving heavenward
By Venus and by Mars,
He heard the joyful planets
Hail Earth, the Rose of Stars.

George Edward Woodberry [1855–

SONG OF EROS

From "Agathon"

When love in the faint heart trembles,
And the eyes with tears are wet,
O, tell me what resembles
Thee, young Regret?
Violets with dewdrops drooping,
Lilies o'erfull of gold,
Roses in June rains stooping,
That weep for the cold,
Are like thee, young Regret.

Bloom, violets, lilies, and roses!
But what, young Desire,
Like thee, when love discloses
Thy heart of fire?
The wild swan unreturning,
The eagle alone with the sun,
The long-winged storm-gulls burning
Seaward when day is done,
Are like thee, young Desire.

George Edward Woodberry [1855–

LOVE IS STRONG

A viewless thing is the wind,
But its strength is mightier far
Than a phalanxed host in battle line,
Than the limbs of a Samson are.

And a viewless thing is Love,
And a name that vanisheth;
But her strength is the wind's wild strength above,
For she conquers shame and Death.

Richard Burton [1859–

"LOVE ONCE WAS LIKE AN APRIL DAWN"

Love once was like an April dawn:
Song throbbed within the heart by rote,
And every tint of rose or fawn
Was greeted by a joyous note.
How eager was my thought to see
Into that morning mystery!

Love now is like an August noon,
No spot is empty of its shine;
The sun makes silence seem a boon,
And not a voice so dumb as mine.
Yet with what words I'd welcome thee—
Couldst thou return, dear mystery!

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853–

THE GARDEN OF SHADOW

Love heeds no more the sighing of the wind
Against the perfect flowers: thy garden's close
Is grown a wilderness, where none shall find
One strayed, last petal of one last year's rose.

O bright, bright hair! O mouth like a ripe fruit!
Can famine be so nigh to harvesting?
Love, that was songful, with a broken lute
In grass of graveyards goeth murmuring.

Let the wind blow against the perfect flowers,
And all thy garden change and glow with spring:
Love is grown blind with no more count of hours
Nor part in seed-time nor in harvesting.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

THE CALL

Love comes laughing up the valleys,
  Hand in hand with hoyden Spring;
All the Flower-People nodding,
  All the Feathered-Folk a-wing.

"Higher! Higher!" call the thrushes;
  "Wilder! Freer!" breathe the trees;
And the purple mountains beckon
  Upward to their mysteries.

Always farther leagues to wander,
  Peak to peak and slope to slope;
Lips to sing and feet to follow,
  Eyes to dream and heart to hope!

Tarry? Nay, but who can tarry?
  All the world is on the wing;
Love comes laughing up the valleys,
  Hand in hand with hoyden Spring.

Reginald Wright Kauffman [1877–

THE HIGHWAY

All day long on the highway
The King's fleet couriers ride;
  You may hear the tread of their horses sped
Over the country side.
  They ride for life and they ride for death
  And they override who tarrieth.
With show of color and flush of pride
They stir the dust on the highway.

Let them ride on the highway wide.
Love walks in little paths aside.

All day long on the highway
Is a tramp of an army's feet;
  You may see them go in a marshaled row

With the tale of their arms complete:
  They march for war and they march for peace,
  For the lust of gold and fame's increase,
For victories sadder than defeat
They raise the dust on the highway.

All the armies of earth defied,
Love dwells in little paths aside.

All day long on the highway
Rushes an eager band,
  With straining eyes for a worthless prize
That slips from the grasp like sand.
  And men leave blood where their feet have stood
  And bow them down unto brass and wood—
Idols fashioned by their own hand—
Blind in the dust of the highway.

Power and gold and fame denied,
Love laughs glad in the paths aside.

Louise Driscoll [1875–

SONG

Take it, love!
'Twill soon be over,
With the thickening of the clover,
With the calling of the plover,
Take it, take it, lover.

Take it, boy!
The blossom's falling,
And the farewell cuckoo's calling,
While the sun and showers are one,
Take your love out in the sun.

Take it, girl!
And fear no after,
Take your fill of all this laughter,
Laugh or not, the tears will fall,
Take the laughter first of all.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866–

"NEVER GIVE ALL THE HEART"

NEVER give all the heart, for love
Will hardly seem worth thinking of
To passionate women, if it seem
Certain, and they never dream
That it fades out from kiss to kiss;
For everything that's lovely is
But a brief, dreamy, kind delight.
O never give the heart outright
For they, for all smooth lips can say,
Have given their hearts up to the play,
And who can play it well enough
If deaf and dumb and blind with love?
He that made this knows all the cost,
For he gave all his heart and lost.

William Butler Yeats [1865–

SONG

I CAME to the door of the House of Love
  And knocked as the starry night went by;
And my true love cried "Who knocks?" and I said
  "It is I."

And Love looked down from a lattice above
  Where the roses were dry as the lips of the dead:
"There is not room in the House of Love
  For you both," he said.

I plucked a leaf from the porch and crept
  Away through a desert of scoffs and scorns
To a lonely place where I prayed and wept
  And wove me a crown of thorns.

I came once more to the House of Love
  And knocked, ah, softly and wistfully,
And my true love cried "Who knocks?" and I said
  "None now but thee."

And the great doors opened wide apart
And a voice rang out from a glory of light,
"Make room, make room for a faithful heart
In the House of Love, to-night."

Alfred Noyes [1880–

"CHILD, CHILD"

Child, child, love while you can
The voice and the eyes and the soul of a man,
Never fear though it break your heart—
Out of the wound new joy will start;
Only love proudly and gladly and well
Though love be heaven or love be hell.

Child, child, love while you may,
For life is short as a happy day;
Never fear the thing you feel—
Only by love is life made real;
Love, for the deadly sins are seven,
Only through love will you enter heaven.

Sara Teasdale [1884–

WISDOM

The young girl questions: "Whether were it better
To lie for ever, a warm slug-a-bed,
Or to rise up and bide by Fate and Chance,
The rawness of the morning,
The gibing and the scorning
Of the stern Teacher of my ignorance?"
"I know not," Wisdom said.

The young girl questions: "Friend, shall I die calmer,
If I've lain for ever, sheets above the head,
Warm in a dream, or rise to take the worst
Of peril in the highways
Of straying in the by-ways,
Of hunger for the truth, of drought and thirst?"
"We do not know," he said,
"Nor may till we be dead."

Ford Madox Hueffer [1873–

EPILOGUE

FROM "EMBLEMS OF LOVE"

WHAT shall we do for Love these days?
How shall we make an altar-blaze
To smite the horny eyes of men
With the renown of our Heaven,
And to the unbelievers prove
Our service to our dear god, Love?
What torches shall we lift above
The crowd that pushes through the mire,
To amaze the dark heads with strange fire?
I should think I were much to blame,
If never I held some fragrant flame
Above the noises of the world,
And openly 'mid men's hurrying stares,
Worshipped before the sacred fears
That are like flashing curtains furled
Across the presence of our lord Love.
Nay, would that I could fill the gaze
Of the whole earth with some great praise
Made in a marvel for men's eyes,
Some tower of glittering masonries,
Therein such a spirit flourishing
Men should see what my heart can sing:
All that Love hath done to me
Built into stone, a visible glee;
Marble carried to gleaming height
As moved aloft by inward delight;
Not as with toil of chisels hewn,
But seeming poised in a mighty tune.
For of all those who have been known
To lodge with our kind host, the sun,
I envy one for just one thing:
In Cordova of the Moors
There dwelt a passion-minded King,
Who set great bands of marble-hewers
To fashion his heart's thanksgiving
In a tall palace, shapen so

All the wondering world might know
The joy he had of his Moorish lass.
His love, that brighter and larger was
Than the starry places, into firm stone
He sent, as if the stone were glass
Fired and into beauty blown.
  Solemn and invented gravely
In its bulk the fabric stood,
Even as Love, that trusteth bravely
In its own exceeding good
To be better than the waste
Of time's devices; grandly spaced,
Seriously the fabric stood.
But over it all a pleasure went
Of carven delicate ornament,
Wreathing up like ravishment,
Mentioning in sculptures twined
The blitheness Love hath in his mind;
And like delighted senses were
The windows, and the columns there
Made the following sight to ache
As the heart that did them make.
Well I can see that shining song
Flowering there, the upward throng
Of porches, pillars and windowed walls,
Spires like piercing panpipe calls,
Up to the roof's snow-cloud flight;
All glancing in the Spanish light
White as water of arctic tides,
Save an amber dazzle on sunny sides.
You had said, the radiant sheen
Of that palace might have been
A young god's fantasy, ere he came
His serious worlds and suns to frame;
Such an immortal passion
Quivered among the slim hewn stone.
And in the nights it seemed a jar
Cut in the substance of a star,
Wherein a wine, that will be poured
Some time for feasting Heaven, was stored.

But within this fretted shell,
The wonder of Love made visible,
The King a private gentle mood
There placed, of pleasant quietude.
For right amidst there was a court,
Where always muskèd silences
Listened to water and to trees;
And herbage of all fragrant sort,—
Lavender, lad's-love, rosemary,
Basil, tansy, centaury,—
Was the grass of that orchard, hid
Love's amazements all amid.
Jarring the air with rumor cool,
Small fountains played into a pool
With sound as soft as the barley's hiss
When its beard just sprouting is;
Whence a young stream, that trod on moss,
Prettily rimpled the court across.
And in the pool's clear idleness,
Moving like dreams through happiness,
Shoals of small bright fishes were;
In and out weed-thickets bent
Perch and carp, and sauntering went
With mounching jaws and eyes a-stare;
Or on a lotus leaf would crawl
A brindled loach to bask and sprawl,
Tasting the warm sun ere it dipped
Into the water; but quick as fear
Back his shining brown head slipped
To crouch on the gravel of his lair,
Where the cooled sunbeams, broke in wrack,
Spilt shattered gold about his back.
So within that green-veiled air,
Within that white-walled quiet, where
Innocent water thought aloud,—
Childish prattle that must make
The wise sunlight with laughter shake
On the leafage overbowed,—
Often the King and his love-lass
Let the delicious hours pass.

All the outer world could see
Graved and sawn amazingly
Their love's delighted riotise,
Fixed in marble for all men's eyes;
But only these twain could abide
In the cool peace that withinside
Thrilling desire and passion dwelt;
They only knew the still meaning spelt
By Love's flaming script, which is
God's word written in ecstasies.
And where is now that palace gone,
All the magical skilled stone,
All the dreaming towers wrought
By Love as if no more than thought
The unresisting marble was?
How could such a wonder pass?
Ah, it was but built in vain
Against the stupid horns of Rome,
That pushed down into the common loam
The loveliness that shone in Spain.
But we have raised it up again!
A loftier palace, fairer far,
Is ours, and one that fears no war.
Safe in marvellous walls we are;
Wondering sense like builded fires,
High amazement of desires,
Delight and certainty of love,
Closing around, roofing above
Our unapproached and perfect hour
Within the splendors of love's power.

Lascelles Abercrombie [1881–

ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH

Against the green flame of the hawthorn-tree,
His scarlet tunic burns;
And livelier than the green sap's mantling glee
The Spring fire tingles through him headily
As quivering he turns

And stammers out the old amazing tale
Of youth and April weather;
While she, with half-breathed jests that, sobbing, fail,
Sits, tight-lipped, quaking, eager-eyed and pale,
Beneath her purple feather.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson [1878–

ONCE ON A TIME

Once on a time, once on a time,
Before the Dawn began,
There was a nymph of Dian's train
Who was beloved of Pan;
Once on a time a peasant lad
Who loved a lass at home;
Once on a time a Saxon king
Who loved a queen of Rome.

The world has but one song to sing,
And it is ever new,
The first and last of all the songs
For it is ever true—
A little song, a tender song,
The only song it hath;
"There was a youth of Ascalon
Who loved a girl of Gath."

A thousand thousand years have gone,
And æons still shall pass,
Yet shall the world forever sing
Of him who loved a lass—
An olden song, a golden song,
And sing it unafraid:
"There was a youth, once on a time,
Who dearly loved a maid."

Kendall Banning [1879–

IN PRAISE OF HER

FIRST SONG

From "Astrophel and Stella"

Doubt you to whom my Muse these notes intendeth,
Which now my breast, o'ercharged, to music lendeth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only in you my song begins and endeth.

Who hath the eyes which marry state with pleasure?
Who keeps the key of Nature's chiefest treasure?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only for you the heaven forgat all measure.

Who hath the lips where wit in fairness reigneth?
Who womankind at once both decks and staineth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only by you Cupid his crown maintaineth.

Who hath the feet, whose step all sweetness planteth?
Who else, for whom Fame worthy trumpets wanteth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only to you her sceptre Venus granteth.

Who hath the breast, whose milk doth passions nourish?
Whose grace is such, that when it chides doth cherish?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only through you the tree of life doth flourish.

Who hath the hand, which without stroke subdueth?
Who long-dead beauty with increase reneweth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only at you all envy hopeless rueth.

Who hath the hair, which loosest fastest tieth?
Who makes a man live then glad when he dieth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only of you the flatterer never lieth.

Who hath the voice, which soul from senses sunders?
Whose force but yours the bolts of beauty thunders?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only with you not miracles are wonders.

Doubt you to whom my Muse these notes intendeth,
Which now my breast, o'ercharged, to music lendeth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only in you my song begins and endeth.

Philip Sidney [1554–1586]

SILVIA

From "The Two Gentlemen of Verona"

Who is Silvia? What is she?
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admirèd be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness:
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness;
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

CUPID AND CAMPASPE

From "Alexander and Campaspe"

CUPID and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses; Cupid paid:
He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows,
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows;
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how);
With these, the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple on his chin;
All these did my Campaspe win:
And last he set her both his eyes—
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love! has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas! become of me?

John Lyly [1554?–1606]

APOLLO'S SONG

From "Midas"

MY Daphne's hair is twisted gold,
Bright stars apiece her eyes do hold,
My Daphne's brow enthrones the Graces,
My Daphne's beauty stains all faces,
On Daphne's cheek grow rose and cherry,
On Daphne's lip a sweeter berry,
Daphne's snowy hand but touched does melt,
And then no heavenlier warmth is felt,
My Daphne's voice tunes all the spheres,
My Daphne's music charms all ears.
Fond am I thus to sing her praise;
These glories now are turned to bays.

John Lyly [1554?–1606]

"FAIR IS MY LOVE FOR APRIL'S IN HER FACE"

From "Perimedes"

FAIR is my love for April's in her face,
Her lovely breasts September claims his part,
And lordly July in her eyes takes place,
But cold December dwelleth in her heart;

Blest be the months that set my thoughts on fire,
Accurst that month that hindereth my desire.

Like Phoebus' fire, so sparkle both her eyes,
As air perfumed with amber is her breath,
Like swelling waves her lovely breasts do rise,
As earth, her heart, cold, dateth me to death:
Aye me, poor man, that on the earth do live,
When unkind earth death and despair doth give!

In pomp sits mercy seated in her face,
Love 'twixt her breasts his trophies doth imprint,
Her eyes shine favor, courtesy, and grace,
But touch her heart, ah, that is framed of flint!
Therefore my harvest in the grass bears grain;
The rock will wear, washed with a winter's rain.

Robert Greene [1560?–1592]

SAMELA

From "Menaphon"

Like to Diana in her summer weed,
Girt with a crimson robe of brightest dye,
Goes fair Samela;
Whiter than be the flocks that straggling feed,
When washed by Arethusa's Fount they lie,
Is fair Samela.

As fair Aurora in her morning-gray,
Decked with the ruddy glister of her love,
Is fair Samela;
Like lovely Thetis on a calmèd day,
Whenas her brightness Neptune's fancy move,
Shines fair Samela.

Her tresses gold, her eyes like glassy streams,
Her teeth are pearl, the breasts are ivory
Of fair Samela;
Her cheeks like rose and lily yield forth gleams;
Her brows bright arches framed of ebony:
Thus fair Samela

Passèth fair Venus in her bravest hue,
And Juno in the show of majesty,
For she's Samela;
Pallas, in wit,—all three, if you well view,
For beauty, wit, and matchless dignity
Yield to Samela.

Robert Greene [1560?–1592]

DAMELUS' SONG OF HIS DIAPHENIA

Diaphenia like the daffadowndilly,
White as the sun, fair as the lily,
Heigh ho, how I do love thee!
I do love thee as my lambs
Are belovèd of their dams;—
How blest were I if thou would'st prove me.

Diaphenia like the spreading roses,
That in thy sweets all sweets encloses,
Fair sweet, how I do love thee!
I do love thee as each flower
Loves the sun's life-giving power;
For dead, thy breath to life might move me.

Diaphenia like to all things blessèd,
When all thy praises are expressèd,
Dear joy, how I do love thee!
As the birds do love the spring,
Or the bees their careful king:
Then in requite, sweet virgin, love me!

Henry Constable [1562–1613]

MADRIGAL

My love in her attire doth show her wit,
It doth so well become her;
For every season she hath dressings fit,
For Winter, Spring, and Summer.

No beauty she doth miss
When all her robes are on:
But Beauty's self she is
When all her robes are gone.

Unknown

CHLORIS IN THE SNOW

I saw fair Chloris walk alone,
When feathered rain came swiftly down,
As Jove descending from his Tower
To court her in a silver shower:
The wanton snow flew to her breast,
Like pretty birds into their nest,
But, overcome with whiteness there,
For grief it thawed into a tear:
Thence falling on her garment's hem,
To deck her, froze into a gem.

Unknown

"THERE IS A LADY SWEET AND KIND"

There is a lady sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind;
I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.

Her gesture, motion, and her smiles,
Her wit, her voice my heart beguiles,
Beguiles my heart, I know not why,
And yet I love her till I die.

Cupid is wingèd and doth range,
Her country so my love doth change:
But change she earth, or change she sky,
Yet I will love her till I die.

Unknown

CHERRY-RIPE

THERE is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies blow;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow:
There cherries grow which none may buy
Till "Cherry-ripe" themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearl a double row,
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rose-buds filled with snow;
Yet them nor peer nor prince can buy
Till "Cherry-ripe" themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still;
Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threatening with piercing frowns to kill
All that attempt with eye or hand
Those sacred cherries to come nigh,
Till "Cherry-ripe" themselves do cry.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

AMARILLIS

I CARE not for these ladies,
That must be wooed and prayed:
Give me kind Amarillis,
The wanton countrymaid.
Nature art disdaineth,
Her beauty is her own.
Her when we court and kiss,
She cries, Forsooth, let go!
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say No.

If I love Amarillis,
She gives me fruit and flowers:
But if we love these ladies,
We must give golden showers.

Give them gold, that sell love,
Give me the Nut-brown lass,
Who, when we court and kiss,
She cries, Forsooth, let go:
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say No.

These ladies must have pillows,
And beds by strangers wrought;
Give me a bower of willows,
Of moss and leaves unbought,
And fresh Amarillis,
With milk and honey fed;
Who, when we court and kiss,
She cries, Forsooth, let go:
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say No!

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA

You meaner beauties of the night,
That poorly satisfy our eyes
More by your number than your light,
You common people of the skies;
What are you when the moon shall rise?

You curious chanters of the wood,
That warble forth Dame Nature's lays,
Thinking your passions understood
By your weak accents; what's your praise
When Philomel her voice shall raise?

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own;
What are you when the rose is blown?

So, when my mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty of her mind,
By virtue first, then choice, a Queen,
Tell me, if she were not designed
Th' eclipse and glory of her kind.

Henry Wotton [1568–1639]

HER TRIUMPH

From "A Celebration of Charis"

See the Chariot at hand here of Love,
Wherein my Lady rideth!
Each that draws is a swan or a dove,
And well the car Love guideth.
As she goes, all hearts do duty
Unto her beauty;
And, enamored, do wish, so they might
But enjoy such a sight,
That they still were to run by her side,
Through swords, through seas, whither she would ride

Do but look on her eyes, they do light
All that Love's world compriseth!
Do but look on her hair, it is bright
As Love's star when it riseth!
Do but mark, her forehead's smoother
Than words that soothe her!
And from her arched brows such a grace
Sheds itself through the face,
As alone there triumphs to the life
All the gain, all the good, of the elements' strife.

Have you seen but a bright lily grow
Before rude hands have touched it?
Have you marked but the fall o' the snow
Before the soil hath smutched it?
Have you felt the wool of beaver,
Or swan's down ever?

Or have smelt o' the bud o' the brier?
Or the nard in the fire?
Or have tasted the bag o' the bee?
O so white, O so soft, O so sweet is she!

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

OF PHYLLIS

In petticoat of green,
Her hair about her eyne,
Phyllis beneath an oak
Sat milking her fair flock:
Among that sweet-strained moisture, rare delight,
Her hand seemed milk in milk, it was so white.

William Drummond [1585–1649]

A WELCOME

Welcome, welcome, do I sing,
Far more welcome than the spring;
He that parteth from you never
Shall enjoy a spring forever.

He that to the voice is near,
Breaking from your ivory pale,
Need not walk abroad to hear
The delightful nightingale.

He that looks still on your eyes,
Though the winter have begun
To benumb our arteries,
Shall not want the summer's sun.

He that still may see your cheeks,
Where all rareness still reposes,
Is a fool if e'er he seeks
Other lilies, other roses.

He to whom your soft lip yields,
And perceives your breath in kissing,
All the odors of the fields
Never, never shall be missing.

He that question would anew
What fair Eden was of old,
Let him rightly study you,
And a brief of that behold.

Welcome, welcome, then I sing,
Far more welcome than the spring;
He that parteth from you never,
Shall enjoy a spring forever.

William Browne [1591–1643?]

THE COMPLETE LOVER

For her gait, if she be walking;
Be she sitting, I desire her
For her state's sake; and admire her
For her wit if she be talking;
Gait and state and wit approve her;
For which all and each I love her.

Be she sullen, I commend her
For a modest. Be she merry,
For a kind one her prefer I.
Briefly, everything doth lend her
So much grace, and so approve her,
That for everything I love her.

William Browne [1591–1643?]

RUBIES AND PEARLS

Some asked me where the rubies grew,
And nothing I did say,
But with my finger pointed to
The lips of Julia.

Some asked how pearls did grow, and where;
Then spoke I to my girl,
To part her lips, and showed them there
The quarrelets of pearl.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

UPON JULIA'S CLOTHES

WHENAS in silks my Julia goes,
Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
The liquefaction of her clothes!
Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free,
—O how that glittering taketh me!

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO CYNTHIA ON CONCEALMENT OF HER BEAUTY

Do not conceal those radiant eyes,
The starlight of serenest skies;
Lest, wanting of their heavenly light,
They turn to chaos' endless night!

Do not conceal those tresses fair,
The silken snares of thy curled hair;
Lest, finding neither gold nor ore,
The curious silk-worm work no more.

Do not conceal those breasts of thine,
More snow-white than the Apennine;
Lest, if these be like cold and frost,
The lily be for ever lost.

Do not conceal that fragrant scent,
Thy breath, which to all flowers hath lent
Perfumes; lest, if being suppressed,
No spices grow in all the rest.

Do not conceal thy heavenly voice,
Which makes the hearts of gods rejoice;
Lest, music hearing no such thing,
The nightingale forget to sing.

Do not conceal, nor yet eclipse,
Thy pearly teeth with coral lips;
Lest that the seas cease to bring forth
Gems which from thee have all their worth.

Do not conceal no beauty, grace,
That's either in thy mind or face;
Lest virtue overcome by vice
Make men believe no Paradise.

Francis Kynaston [1587–1642]

SONG

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For in pure love heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars 'light
That downwards fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixèd become as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The Phœnix builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

Thomas Carew [1598?–1639?]

A DEVOUT LOVER

I HAVE a mistress, for perfections rare
In every eye, but in my thoughts most fair.
Like tapers on the altar shine her eyes;
Her breath is the perfume of sacrifice;
And wheresoe'er my fancy would begin,
Still her perfection lets religion in.
We sit and talk, and kiss away the hours
As chastely as the morning dews kiss flowers:
I touch her, like my beads, with devout care,
And come unto my courtship as my prayer.

Thomas Randolph [1605–1635]

ON A GIRDLE

THAT which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind;
No monarch but would give his crown
His arms might do what this has done.

It was my Heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer:
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move.

A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair!
Give me but what this ribbon bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round!

Edmund Waller [1606–1687]

CASTARA

LIKE the violet, which alone
Prospers in some happy shade,
My Castara lives unknown,
To no looser eye betrayed:
For she's to herself untrue
Who delights i' the public view.

Such is her beauty as no arts
Have enriched with borrowed grace.
Her high birth no pride imparts,
For she blushes in her place.
Folly boasts a glorious blood;
She is noblest, being good.

Cautious, she knew never yet
What a wanton courtship meant;
Nor speaks loud to boast her wit,
In her silence, eloquent.
Of herself survey she takes,
But 'tween men no difference makes.

She obeys with speedy will
Her grave parents' wise commands;
And so innocent, that ill
She nor acts, nor understands.
Women's feet run still astray
If to ill they know the way.

She sails by that rock, the court,
Where oft virtue splits her mast;
And retiredness thinks the port
Where her fame may anchor cast.
Virtue safely cannot sit
Where vice is enthroned for wit.

She holds that day's pleasure best
Where sin waits not on delight;
Without mask, or ball, or feast,
Sweetly spends a winter's night.
O'er that darkness whence is thrust
Prayer and sleep, oft governs lust.

She her throne makes reason climb,
While wild passions captive lie;
And, each article of time,
Her pure thoughts to heaven fly;
All her vows religious be,
And she vows her love to me.

William Habington [1605–1654]

TO ARAMANTHA

THAT SHE WOULD DISHEVEL HER HAIR

Aramantha, sweet and fair,
Ah, braid no more that shining hair!
As my curious hand or eye
Hovering round thee, let it fly.

Let it fly as unconfined
As its calm ravisher the wind,
Who hath left his darling, th' east,
To wanton in that spicy nest.

Every tress must be confessed;
But neatly tangled at the best;
Like a clew of golden thread
Most excellently ravellèd.

Do not, then, wind up that light
In ribbons, and o'er-cloud in night,
Like the sun in's early ray;
But shake your head and scatter day.

Richard Lovelace [1618–1658]

CHLOE DIVINE

Chloe's a Nymph in flowery groves,
A Nereid in the streams;
Saint-like she in the temple moves,
A woman in my dreams.

Love steals artillery from her eyes,
The Graces point her charms;
Orpheus is rivalled in her voice,
And Venus in her arms.

Never so happily in one
Did heaven and earth combine;
And yet 'tis flesh and blood alone
That makes her so divine.

Thomas D'Urfey [1653–1723]

MY PEGGY

My Peggy is a young thing,
Just entered in her teens,
Fair as the day, and sweet as May,
Fair as the day, and always gay:
My Peggy is a young thing,
And I'm na very auld,
Yet weel I like to meet her at
The wauking o' the fauld.

My Peggy speaks sae sweetly
Whene'er we meet alane,
I wish nae mair to lay my care,
I wish nae mair o' a' that's rare:
My Peggy speaks sae sweetly,
To a' the lave I'm cauld;
But she gars a' my spirits glow
At wauking o' the fauld.

My Peggy smiles sae kindly
Whene'er I whisper love,
That I look doun on a' the toun,
That I look doun upon a croun:
My Peggy smiles sae kindly,
It makes me blithe and bauld,
And naething gi'es me sic delight
As waulking o' the fauld.

My Peggy sings sae saftly,
When on my pipe I play;
By a' the rest it is confessed,
By a' the rest that she sings best:
My Peggy sings sae saftly,
And in her sangs are tauld,
Wi' innocence the wale o' sense,
At wauking o' the fauld.

Allan Ramsay [1686–1758]

SONG

From "Acis and Galatea"

O RUDDIER than the cherry!
O sweeter than the berry!
O nymph more bright
Than moonshine night,
Like kidlings blithe and merry!
Ripe as the melting luster;
Yet hard to tame
As raging flame,
And fierce as storms that bluster!

John Gay [1685–1732]

"TELL ME, MY HEART, IF THIS BE LOVE"

WHEN Delia on the plain appears,
Awed by a thousand tender fears
I would approach, but dare not move:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

Whene'er she speaks, my ravished ear
No other voice than hers can hear,
No other wit but hers approve:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

If she some other youth commend,
Though I was once his fondest friend,
His instant enemy I prove:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

When she is absent, I no more
Delight in all that pleased before—
The clearest spring, or shadiest grove:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

When fond of power, of beauty vain,
Her nets she spread for every swain,
I strove to hate, but vainly strove:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

George Lyttleton [1709–1773]

THE FAIR THIEF

Before the urchin well could go,
She stole the whiteness of the snow;
And more, that whiteness to adorn,
She stole the blushes of the morn;
Stole all the sweetness ether sheds
On primrose buds and violet beds.

Still to reveal her artful wiles
She stole the Graces' silken smiles;
She stole Aurora's balmy breath;
And pilfered orient pearl for teeth;
The cherry, dipped in morning dew,
Gave moisture to her lips, and hue.

These were her infant spoils, a store;
And she, in time, still pilfered more!
At twelve, she stole from Cyprus' queen
Her air and love-commanding mien;
Stole Juno's dignity; and stole
From Pallas sense to charm the soul.

Apollo's wit was next her prey;
Her next, the beam that lights the day;
She sang;—amazed, the Sirens heard,
And to assert their voice appeared.
She played;—the Muses from their hill,
Wondered who thus had stole their skill.

Great Jove approved her crimes and art;
And, t'other day, she stole my heart!
If lovers, Cupid, are thy care,
Exert thy vengeance on this Fair:
To trial bring her stolen charms,
And let her prison be my arms!

Charles Wyndham [1710–1763]

AMORET

If rightly tuneful bards decide,
  If it be fixed in Love's decrees,
That Beauty ought not to be tried
  But by its native power to please,
Then tell me, youths and lovers, tell—
What fair can Amoret excel?

Behold that bright unsullied smile,
  And wisdom speaking in her mien:
Yet—she so artless all the while,
  So little studious to be seen—
We naught but instant gladness know,
Nor think to whom the gift we owe.

But neither music, nor the powers
  Of youth and mirth and frolic cheer,
Add half the sunshine to the hours,
  Or make life's prospect half so clear,
As memory brings it to the eye
From scenes where Amoret was by.

This, sure, is Beauty's happiest part;
  This gives the most unbounded sway;
This shall enchant the subject heart
  When rose and lily fade away;
And she be still, in spite of Time,
Sweet Amoret, in all her prime.

Mark Akenside [1721–1770]

SONG

The shape alone let others prize,
  The features of the fair:
I look for spirit in her eyes,
  And meaning in her air.

A damask cheek, an ivory arm,
  Shall ne'er my wishes win:
Give me an animated form,
  That speaks a mind within.

A face where awful honor shines,
  Where sense and sweetness move,
And angel innocence refines
  The tenderness of love.

These are the soul of beauty's frame;
  Without whose vital aid
Unfinished all her features seem,
  And all her roses dead.

But ah! where both their charms unite,
  How perfect is the view,
With every image of delight,
  With graces ever new:

Of power to charm the greatest woe,
  The wildest rage control,
Diffusing mildness o'er the brow,
  And rapture through the soul.

Their power but faintly to express
  All language must despair;
But go, behold Arpasia's face,
  And read it perfect there.

Mark Akenside [1721–1770]

KATE OF ABERDEEN

The silver moon's enamored beam
  Steals softly through the night,
To wanton with the winding stream,
  And kiss reflected light.
To beds of state go balmy sleep
  ('Tis where you've seldom been),
May's vigil while the shepherds keep
  With Kate of Aberdeen.

Upon the green the virgins wait,
In rosy chaplets gay,
Till morn unbar her golden gate,
And give the promised May.
Methinks I hear the maids declare,
The promised May, when seen,
Not half so fragrant, half so fair,
As Kate of Aberdeen.

Strike up the tabor's boldest notes,
We'll rouse the nodding grove;
The nested birds shall raise their throats,
And hail the maid of love;
And see—the matin lark mistakes,
He quits the tufted green:
Fond bird! 'tis not the morning breaks,—
'Tis Kate of Aberdeen.

Now lightsome o'er the level mead,
Where midnight fairies rove,
Like them the jocund dance we'll lead,
Or tune the reed to love:
For see the rosy May draws nigh,
She claims a virgin Queen;
And hark, the happy shepherds cry,
'Tis Kate of Aberdeen.

John Cunningham [1729–1773]

SONG

Who has robbed the ocean cave,
To tinge thy lips with coral hue?
Who from India's distant wave
For thee those pearly treasures drew?
Who from yonder orient sky
Stole the morning of thine eye?

A thousand charms, thy form to deck,
From sea, and earth, and air are torn;
Roses bloom upon thy cheek,
On thy breath their fragrance borne.

Guard thy bosom from the day,
Lest thy snows should melt away.

But one charm remains behind,
Which mute earth can ne'er impart;
Nor in ocean wilt thou find,
Nor in the circling air, a heart.
Fairest! wouldst thou perfect be,
Take, oh, take that heart from me.

John Shaw [1559–1625]

CHLOE

It was the charming month of May,
When all the flowers were fresh and gay;
One morning, by the break of day,
The youthful, charming Chloe
From peaceful slumber she arose,
Girt on her mantle and her hose,
And o'er the flowery mead she goes,
The youthful, charming Chloe.
Lovely was she by the dawn,
Youthful Chloe, charming Chloe,
Tripping o'er the pearly lawn,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

The feathered people you might see,
Perched all around on every tree,
In notes of sweetest melody
They hail the charming Chloe;
Till, painting gay the eastern skies,
The glorious sun began to rise,
Out-rivalled by the radiant eyes
Of youthful, charming Chloe.
Lovely was she by the dawn,
Youthful Chloe, charming Chloe,
Tripping o'er the pearly lawn,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"O MALLY'S MEEK, MALLY'S SWEET"

As I was walking up the street,
A barefit maid I chanced to meet;
But O the road was very hard
For that fair maiden's tender feet.
O Mally's meek, Mally's sweet,
Mally's modest and discreet,
Mally's rare, Mally's fair,
Mally's every way complete.

It were more meet that those fine feet
Were weel laced up in silken shoon,
And 'twere more fit that she should sit
Within yon chariot gilt aboon.

Her yellow hair, beyond compare,
Comes trinkling down her swan-white neck,
And her two eyes, like stars in skies,
Would keep a sinking ship frae wreck.
O Mally's meek, Mally's sweet,
Mally's modest and discreet,
Mally's rare, Mally's fair,
Mally's every way complete.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

THE LOVER'S CHOICE

You, Damon, covet to possess
The nymph that sparkles in her dress;
Would rustling silks and hoops invade,
And clasp an armful of brocade.

Such raise the price of your delight
Who purchase both their red and white,
And, pirate-like, surprise your heart
With colors of adulterate art.

Me, Damon, me the maid enchants
Whose cheeks the hand of nature paints;
A modest blush adorns her face,
Her air an unaffected grace.

No art she knows, or seeks to know;
No charm to wealthy pride will owe;
No gems, no gold she needs to wear;
She shines intrinsically fair.

Thomas Bedingfield [? –1613]

RONDEAU REDOUBLÉ

My day and night are in my lady's hand;
I have no other sunrise than her sight;
For me her favor glorifies the land;
Her anger darkens all the cheerful light.
Her face is fairer than the hawthorn white,
When all a-flower in May the hedgerows stand;
While she is kind, I know of no affright;
My day and night are in my lady's hand.

All heaven in her glorious eyes is spanned;
Her smile is softer than the summer's night,
Gladder than daybreak on the Faery strand;
I have no other sunrise than her sight.
Her silver speech is like the singing flight
Of runnels rippling o'er the jewelled sand;
Her kiss a dream of delicate delight;
For me her favor glorifies the land.

What if the Winter chase the Summer bland!
The gold sun in her hair burns ever bright.
If she be sad, straightway all joy is banned;
Her anger darkens all the cheerful light.
Come weal or woe, I am my lady's knight
And in her service every ill withstand;
Love is my Lord in all the world's despite
And holdeth in the hollow of his hand
My day and night.

John Payne [fl. 1770–1800]

"MY LOVE SHE'S BUT A LASSIE YET"

My love she's but a lassie yet,
A lightsome lovely lassie yet;
It scarce wad do
To sit an' woo
Down by the stream sae glassy yet.

But there's a braw time coming yet,
When we may gang a-roaming yet;
An' hint wi' glee
O' joys to be,
When fa's the modest gloaming yet.

She's neither proud nor saucy yet,
She's neither plump nor gaucy yet;
But just a jinking,
Bonny blinking,
Hilty-skilty lassie yet.

But O, her artless smile's mair sweet
Than hinny or than marmalete;
An' right or wrang,
Ere it be lang,
I'll bring her to a parley yet.

I'm jealous o' what blesses her,
The very breeze that kisses her,
The flowery beds
On which she treads,
Though wae for ane that misses her.

Then O, to meet my lassie yet,
Up in yon glen sae grassy yet;
For all I see
Are naught to me,
Save her that's but a lassie yet.

James Hogg [1770–1835]

JESSIE, THE FLOWER O' DUNBLANE

THE sun has gane down o'er the lofty Benlomond
And left the red clouds to preside o'er the scene,
While lanely I stray, in the calm simmer gloamin',
To muse on sweet Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

How sweet is the brier, wi' its saft fauldin' blossom,
And sweet is the birk, wi' its mantle o' green;
Yet sweeter and fairer, and dear to this bosom,
Is lovely young Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

She's modest as ony, and blithe as she's bonnie;
For guileless simplicity marks her its ain;
And far be the villain, divested of feeling,
Wha'd blight in its bloom the sweet Flower o' Dunblane.

Sing on, thou sweet mavis, thy hymn to the e'ening!
Thou'rt dear to the echoes of Calderwood glen;
Sae dear to this bosom, sae artless and winning,
Is charming young Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

How lost were my days till I met wi' my Jessie!
The sports o' the city seemed foolish and vain;
I ne'er saw a nymph I would ca' my dear lassie
Till charmed wi' sweet Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

Though mine were the station o' loftiest grandeur,
Amidst its profusion I'd languish in pain,
And reckon as naething the height o' its splendor,
If wanting sweet Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

Robert Tannahill [1774–1810]

MARGARET AND DORA

MARGARET'S beauteous—Grecian arts
Ne'er drew form completer,
Yet why, in my hearts of hearts,
Hold I Dora's sweeter?

Dora's eyes of heavenly blue
  Pass all painting's reach,
Ringdoves' notes are discord to
  The music of her speech.

Artists! Margaret's smile receive,
  And on canvas show it;
But for perfect worship leave
  Dora to her poet.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

DAGONET'S CANZONET

A QUEEN lived in the South;
And music was her mouth,
And sunshine was her hair,
By day, and all the night
The drowsy embers there
Remembered still the light;
  My soul, was she not fair!

But for her eyes—they made
An iron man afraid;
Like sky-blue pools they were,
Watching the sky that knew
Itself transmuted there
Light blue, or deeper blue;
  My soul, was she not fair!

The lifting of her hands
Made laughter in the lands
Where the sun is, in the South:
But my soul learnt sorrow there
In the secrets of her mouth,
Her eyes, her hands, her hair:
  O soul, was she not fair!

Ernest Rhys [1859–

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmèd ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lulled winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep,
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

"FLOWERS I WOULD BRING"

FLOWERS I would bring if flowers could make thee fairer,
And music, if the Muse were dear to thee;
(For loving these would make thee love the bearer)
But sweetest songs forget their melody,
And loveliest flowers would but conceal the wearer:—
A rose I marked, and might have plucked; but she
Blushed as she bent, imploring me to spare her,
Nor spoil her beauty by such rivalry.
Alas! and with what gifts shall I pursue thee,
What offerings bring, what treasures lay before thee;
When earth with all her floral train doth woo thee,
And all old poets and old songs adore thee;
And love to thee is naught; from passionate mood
Secured by joy's complacent plenitude!

Aubrey Thomas de Vere [1814–1902]

"IT IS NOT BEAUTY I DEMAND"

It is not Beauty I demand,
A crystal brow, the moon's despair,
Nor the snow's daughter, a white hand,
Nor mermaid's yellow pride of hair:

Tell me not of your starry eyes,
Your lips that seem on roses fed,
Your breasts, where Cupid tumbling lies
Nor sleeps for kissing of his bed:—

A bloomy pair of vermeil cheeks
Like Hebe's in her ruddiest hours,
A breath that softer music speaks
Than summer winds a-wooing flowers,—

These are but gauds: nay, what are lips?
Coral beneath the ocean-stream,
Whose brink when your adventurer sips
Full oft he perisheth on them.

And what are cheeks but ensigns oft
That wave hot youth to fields of blood?
Did Helen's breast, though ne'er so soft,
Do Greece or Ilium any good?

Eyes can with baleful ardor burn;
Poison can breathe, that erst perfumed;
There's many a white hand holds an urn
With lovers' hearts to dust consumed.

For crystal brows—there's naught within;
They are but empty cells for pride;
He who the Siren's hair would win
Is mostly strangled in the tide.

Give me, instead of Beauty's bust,
A tender heart, a loyal mind
Which with temptation I could trust,
Yet never linked with error find,—

One in whose gentle bosom I
Could pour my secret heart of woes,
Like the care-burthened honey-fly
That hides his murmurs in the rose,—

My earthly Comforter! whose love
So indefeasible might be
That, when my spirit won above,
Hers could not stay, for sympathy.

George Darley [1795–1846]

SONG

She is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be,
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me;
Oh! then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1849]

SONG

A violet in her lovely hair,
A rose upon her bosom fair!
But O, her eyes
A lovelier violet disclose,
And her ripe lips the sweetest rose
That's 'neath the skies.

A lute beneath her graceful hand
Breathes music forth at her command;

But still her tongue
Far richer music calls to birth
Than all the minstrel power on earth
Can give to song.

And thus she moves in tender light,
The purest ray, where all is bright,
Serene, and sweet;
And sheds a graceful influence round,
That hallows e'en the very ground
Beneath her feet!

Charles Swain [1801–1874]

EILEEN AROON

When like the early rose,
Eileen Aroon!
Beauty in childhood blows,
Eileen Aroon!
When, like a diadem,
Buds blush around the stem,
Which is the fairest gem?—
Eileen Aroon!

Is it the laughing eye,
Eileen Aroon!
Is it the timid sigh,
Eileen Aroon!
Is it the tender tone,
Soft as the stringed harp's moan?
O, it is truth alone,—
Eileen Aroon!

When like the rising day,
Eileen Aroon!
Love sends his early ray,
Eileen Aroon!
What makes his dawning glow,
Changeless through joy or woe?
Only the constant know:—
Eileen Aroon!

I know a valley fair,
Eileen Aroon!
I knew a cottage there,
Eileen Aroon!
Far in that valley's shade
I knew a gentle maid,
Flower of a hazel glade,—
Eileen Aroon!

Who in the song so sweet?
Eileen Aroon!
Who in the dance so fleet?
Eileen Aroon!
Dear were her charms to me,
Dearer her laughter free,
Dearest her constancy,—
Eileen Aroon!

Were she no longer true,
Eileen Aroon!
What should her lover do?
Eileen Aroon!
Fly with his broken chain
Far o'er the sounding main,
Never to love again,—
Eileen Aroon!

Youth must with time decay,
Eileen Aroon!
Beauty must fade away,
Eileen Aroon!
Castles are sacked in war,
Chieftains are scattered far,
Truth is a fixèd star,—
Eileen Aroon!

Gerald Griffin [1803–1840]

ANNIE LAURIE

Maxwelton braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true—

Gie'd me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw-drift;
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on—
That e'er the sun shone on—
And dark blue is her ee;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet;
And like the winds in summer sighing,
Her voice is low and sweet—
Her voice is low and sweet—
And she's a' the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

William Douglas [1672?–1748]

TO HELEN

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicæan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

"A VOICE BY THE CEDAR TREE"

From "Maud"

I

A voice by the cedar tree,
In the meadow under the Hall!
She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call!
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.

II

Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honor that cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean,
And myself so languid and base.

III

Silence, beautiful voice!
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

SONG

Nay but you, who do not love her,
Is she not pure gold, my mistress?
Holds earth aught—speak truth—above her?
Aught like this tress, see, and this tress,
And this last fairest tress of all,
So fair, see, ere I let it fall?

Because you spend your lives in praising;
To praise, you search the wide world over:
Then why not witness, calmly gazing,
If earth holds aught—speak truth—above her?
Above this tress, and this, I touch
But cannot praise, I love so much!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE HENCHMAN

My lady walks her morning round,
My lady's page her fleet greyhound,
My lady's hair the fond winds stir,
And all the birds make songs for her.

Her thrushes sing in Rathburn bowers,
And Rathburn side is gay with flowers;
But ne'er like hers, in flower or bird,
Was beauty seen or music heard.

The distance of the stars is hers;
The least of all her worshipers,
The dust beneath her dainty heel,
She knows not that I see or feel.

Oh, proud and calm!—she cannot know
Where'er she goes with her I go;
Oh, cold and fair!—she cannot guess
I kneel to share her hound's caress!

Gay knights beside her hunt and hawk,
I rob their ears of her sweet talk;

Her suitors come from east and west,
I steal her smiles from every guest.

Unheard of her, in loving words,
I greet her with the song of birds;
I reach her with her green-armed bowers,
I kiss her with the lips of flowers.

The hound and I are on her trail,
The wind and I uplift her veil;
As if the calm, cold moon she were,
And I the tide, I follow her.

As unrebuked as they, I share
The license of the sun and air,
And in a common homage hide
My worship from her scorn and pride.

World-wide apart, and yet so near,
I breathe her charmèd atmosphere,
Wherein to her my service brings
The reverence due to holy things.

Her maiden pride, her haughty name,
My dumb devotion shall not shame;
The love that no return doth crave
To knightly levels lifts the slave.

No lance have I, in joust or fight,
To splinter in my lady's sight;
But, at her feet, how blest were I
For any need of hers to die!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

LOVELY MARY DONNELLY

Oh, lovely Mary Donnelly, it's you I love the best!
If fifty girls were round you I'd hardly see the rest.
Be what it may the time of day, the place be where it will,
Sweet looks of Mary Donnelly, they bloom before me still.

Her eyes like mountain water that's flowing on a rock,
How clear they are, how dark they are! they give me many a shock.
Red rowans warm in sunshine and wetted with a shower,
Could ne'er express the charming lip that has me in its power.

Her nose is straight and handsome, her eyebrows lifted up,
Her chin is very neat and pert, and smooth like a china cup,
Her hair's the brag of Ireland, so weighty and so fine;
It's rolling down upon her neck, and gathered in a twine.

The dance o' last Whit-Monday night exceeded all before;
No pretty girl for miles about was missing from the floor;
But Mary kept the belt of love, and O but she was gay!
She danced a jig, she sung a song, that took my heart away.

When she stood up for dancing, her steps were so complete,
The music nearly killed itself to listen to her feet;
The fiddler moaned his blindness, he heard her so much praised,
But blessed his luck he wasn't deaf when once her voice she raised.

And evermore I'm whistling or lilting what you sung,
Your smile is always in my heart, your name beside my tongue;
But you've as many sweethearts as you'd count on both your hands,
And for myself there's not a thumb or little finger stands.

Oh, you're the flower o' womankind in country or in town;
The higher I exalt you, the lower I'm cast down.
If some great lord should come this way, and see your beauty bright,
And you to be his lady, I'd own it was but right.

O might we live together in a lofty palace hall,
Where joyful music rises, and where scarlet curtains fall!
O might we live together in a cottage mean and small,
With sods of grass the only roof, and mud the only wall!

O lovely Mary Donnelly, your beauty's my distress:
It's far too beauteous to be mine, but I'll never wish it less.
The proudest place would fit your face, and I am poor and low;
But blessings be about you, dear, wherever you may go!

William Allingham [1824–1889]

LOVE IN THE VALLEY

Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-sward,
Couched with her arms behind her golden head,
Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.
Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her,
Press her parting lips as her waist I gather slow,
Waking in amazement she could not but embrace me:
Then would she hold me and never let me go?

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the swallow,
Swift as the swallow along the river's light
Circleting the surface to meet his mirrored winglets,
Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her flight.
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-tops,
Wayward as the swallow overhead at set of sun,
She whom I love is hard to catch and conquer,
Hard, but O the glory of the winning were she won!

When her mother tends her before the laughing mirror,
Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,
More love should I have, and much less care.
When her mother tends her before the lighted mirror,
Loosening her laces, combing down her curls,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,
I should miss but one for many boys and girls.

Heartless she is as the shadow in the meadows,
Flying to the hills on a blue and breezy noon.
No, she is athirst and drinking up her wonder:
Earth to her is young as the slip of the new moon.

Deals she an unkindness, 'tis but her rapid measure,
Even as in a dance; and her smile can heal no less:
Like the swinging May-cloud that pelts the flowers with hailstones
Off a sunny border, she was made to bruise and bless.

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweeping
Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.
Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note unvaried,
Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown eve-jar.
Darker grows the valley, more and more forgetting:
So were it with me if forgetting could be willed.
Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bubbling well-spring,
Tell it to forget the source that keeps it filled.

Stepping down the hill with her fair companions,
Arm in arm, all against the raying West,
Boldly she sings, to the merry tune she marches;
Brave in her shape, and sweeter unpossessed.
Sweeter, for she is what my heart first awaking
Whispered the world was; morning light is she.
Love that so desires would fain keep her changeless;
Fain would fling the net, and fain have her free.

Happy happy time, when the white star hovers
Low over dim fields fresh with bloomy dew,
Near the face of dawn, that draws athwart the darkness,
Threading it with color, like yewberries the yew.
Thicker crowd the shades as the grave East deepens
Glowing, and with crimson a long cloud swells.
Maiden still the morn is; and strange she is, and secret;
Strange her eyes; her cheeks are cold as cold sea-shells.

Sunrays, leaning on our southern hills and lighting
Wild cloud-mountains that drag the hills along,
Oft ends the day of your shifting brilliant laughter
Chill as a dull face frowning on a song.
Ay, but shows the South-west a ripple-feathered bosom
Blown to silver while the clouds are shaken and ascend
Scaling the mid-heavens as they stream, there comes a sunset
Rich, deep like love in beauty without end.

When at dawn she sighs, and like an infant to the window
Turns grave eyes craving light, released from dreams,
Beautiful she looks, like a white water-lily
Bursting out of bud in havens of the streams.
When from bed she rises clothed from neck to ankle
In her long nightgown sweet as boughs of May,
Beautiful she looks, like a tall garden-lily
Pure from the night, and splendid for the day.

Mother of the dews, dark eye-lashed twilight,
Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's brim,
Rounding on thy breast sings the dew-delighted skylark,
Clear as though the dewdrops had their voice in him.
Hidden where the rose-flush drinks the rayless planet,
Fountain-full he pours the spraying fountain-showers.
Let me hear her laughter, I would have her ever
Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above the flowers.

All the girls are out with their baskets for the primrose;
Up lanes, woods through, they troop in joyful bands.
My sweet leads: she knows not why, but now she loiters,
Eyes the bent anemones, and hangs her hands.
Such a look will tell that the violets are peeping,
Coming the rose: and unaware a cry
Springs in her bosom for odors and for color,
Covert and the nightingale; she knows not why.

Kerchiefed head and chin she darts between her tulips,
Streaming like a willow gray in arrowy rain:
Some bend beaten cheek to gravel, and their angel
She will be; she lifts them, and on she speeds again.
Black the driving rain cloud breasts the iron gateway:
She is forth to cheer a neighbor lacking mirth.
So when sky and grass met rolling dumb for thunder
Saw I once a white dove, sole light of earth.

Prim little scholars are the flowers of her garden,
Trained to stand in rows, and asking if they please.
I might love them well but for loving more the wild ones:
O my wild ones! they tell me more than these.

You, my wild one, you tell of honied field-rose,
  Violet, blushing eglantine in life; and even as they,
They by the wayside are earnest of your goodness,
  You are of life's, on the banks that line the way.

Peering at her chamber the white crowns the red rose,
  Jasmine winds the porch with stars two and three.
Parted is the window; she sleeps; the starry jasmine
  Breathes a falling breath that carries thoughts of me.
Sweeter unpossessed, have I said of her my sweetest?
  Not while she sleeps: while she sleeps the jasmine breathes,
Luring her to love: she sleeps; the starry jasmine
  Bears me to her pillow under white rose-wreaths.

Yellow with birdfoot-trefoil are the grass-glades;
  Yellow with cinquefoil of the dew-gray leaf;
Yellow with stonecrop; the moss-mounds are yellow;
  Blue-necked the wheat sways, yellowing to the sheaf.
Green-yellow bursts from the copse the laughing yaffle;
  Sharp as a sickle is the edge of shade and shine:
Earth in her heart laughs looking at the heavens,
  Thinking of the harvest: I look and think of mine.

This I may know: her dressing and undressing
  Such a change of light shows as when the skies in sport
Shift from cloud to moonlight; or edging over thunder
  Slips a ray of sun; or sweeping into port
White sails furl; or on the ocean borders
  White sails lean along the waves leaping green.
Visions of her shower before me, but from eyesight
  Guarded she would be like the sun were she seen.

Front door and back of the mossed old farmhouse
  Open with the morn, and in a breezy link
Freshly sparkles garden to stripe-shadowed orchard,
  Green across a rill where on sand the minnows wink.
Busy in the grass the early sun of summer
  Swarms, and the blackbird's mellow fluting notes
Call my darling up with round and roguish challenge:
  Quaintest, richest carol of all the singing throats!

Cool was the woodside; cool as her white dairy
Keeping sweet the cream-pan; and there the boys from school,
Cricketing below, rushed brown and red with sunshine;
O the dark translucence of the deep-eyed cool!
Spying from the farm, herself she fetched a pitcher
Full of milk, and tilted for each in turn the beak.
Then a little fellow, mouth up and on tiptoe,
Said, "I will kiss you": she laughed and leaned her cheek.

Doves of the fir-wood walling high our red roof
Through the long noon coo, crooning through the coo.
Loose droop the leaves, and down the sleepy roadway
Sometimes pipes a chaffinch; loose droops the blue.
Cows flap a slow tail knee-deep in the river,
Breathless, given up to sun and gnat and fly.
Nowhere is she seen; and if I see her nowhere,
Lightning may come, straight rains and tiger sky.

O the golden sheaf, the rustling treasure-armful!
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!
O the treasure-tresses one another over
Nodding! O the girdle slack about the waist!
Slain are the poppies that shot their random scarlet
Quick amid the wheat-ears: wound about the waist,
Gathered, see these brides of Earth one blush of ripeness!
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced.

Large and smoky red the sun's cold disk drops,
Clipped by naked hills, on violet shaded snow:
Eastward large and still lights up a bower of moonrise,
Whence at her leisure steps the moon aglow.
Nightlong on black print-branches our beech-tree
Gazes in this whiteness: nightlong could I.
Here may life on death or death on life be painted.
Let me clasp her soul to know she cannot die!

Gossips count her faults; they scour a narrow chamber
Where there is no window, read not heaven or her.
"When she was a tiny," one aged woman quavers,
Plucks at my heart and leads me by the ear.

Faults she had once as she learned to run and tumbled:
Faults of feature some see, beauty not complete.
Yet, good gossips, beauty that makes holy
Earth and air, may have faults from head to feet.

Hither she comes; she comes to me; she lingers,
Deepens her brown eyebrows, while in new surprise
High rise the lashes in wonder of a stranger;
Yet am I the light and living of her eyes.
Something friends have told her fills her heart to brimming,
Nets her in her blushes, and wounds her, and tames.—
Sure of her haven, O like a dove alighting,
Arms up, she dropped: our souls were in our names.

Soon will she lie like a white frost sunrise.
Yellow oats and brown wheat, barley pale as rye,
Long since your sheaves have yielded to the thresher,
Felt the girdle loosened, seen the tresses fly.
Soon will she lie like a blood-red sunset.
Swift with the to-morrow, green-winged Spring!
Sing from the South-west, bring her back the truants,
Nightingale and swallow, song and dipping wing.

Soft new beech-leaves, up to beamy April
Spreading bough on bough a primrose mountain, you,
Lucid in the moon, raise lilies to the skyfields,
Youngest green transfused in silver shining through:
Fairer than the lily, than the wild white cherry:
Fair as in image my seraph love appears
Borne to me by dreams when dawn is at my eyelids:
Fair as in the flesh she swims to me on tears.

Could I find a place to be alone with heaven,
I would speak my heart out: heaven is my need.
Every woodland tree is flushing like the dogwood,
Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like the reed.
Flushing like the dogwood crimson in October;
Streaming like the flag-reed South-west blown;
Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted whitebeam:
All seem to know what is for heaven alone.

George Meredith [1828–1909]

MARIAN

She can be as wise as we,
  And wiser when she wishes;
She can knit with cunning wit,
  And dress the homely dishes.
She can flourish staff or pen,
  And deal a wound that lingers;
She can talk the talk of men,
  And touch with thrilling fingers.

Match her ye across the sea,
  Natures fond and fiery;
Ye who zest the turtle's nest
  With the eagle's eyrie.
Soft and loving is her soul,
  Swift and lofty soaring;
Mixing with its dove-like dole
  Passionate adoring.

Such a she who'll match with me?
  In flying or pursuing,
Subtle wiles are in her smiles
  To set the world a-wooing.
She is steadfast as a star,
  And yet the maddest maiden:
She can wage a gallant war,
  And give the peace of Eden.

George Meredith [1828–1909]

PRAISE OF MY LADY

My lady seems of ivory
Forehead, straight nose, and cheeks that be
Hollowed a little mournfully.
Beata mea Domina!

Her forehead, overshadowed much
By bows of hair, has a wave such
As God was good to make for me.
Beata mea Domina!

Not greatly long my lady's hair,
Nor yet with yellow color fair,
But thick and crispèd wonderfully:
Beata mea Domina!

Heavy to make the pale face sad,
And dark, but dead as though it had
Been forged by God most wonderfully
Beata mea Domina!

Of some strange metal, thread by thread,
To stand out from my lady's head,
Not moving much to tangle me.
Beata mea Domina!

Beneath her brows the lids fall slow,
The lashes a clear shadow throw
Where I would wish my lips to be.
Beata mea Domina!

Her great eyes, standing far apart,
Draw up some memory from her heart,
And gaze out very mournfully;
Beata mea Domina!

So beautiful and kind they are,
But most times looking out afar,
Waiting for something, not for me.
Beata mea Domina!

I wonder if the lashes long
Are those that do her bright eyes wrong,
For always half tears seem to be
Beata mea Domina!

Lurking below the underlid,
Darkening the place where they lie hid:
If they should rise and flow for me!
Beata mea Domina!

Her full lips being made to kiss,
Curled up and pensive each one is;
This makes me faint to stand and see.
Beata mea Domina!

Her lips are not contented now,
Because the hours pass so slow
Towards a sweet time: (pray for me),
Beata mea Domina!

Nay, hold thy peace! for who can tell?
But this at least I know full well,
Her lips are parted longingly,
Beata mea Domina!

So passionate and swift to move,
To pluck at any flying love,
That I grow faint to stand and see.
Beata mea Domina!

Yea! there beneath them is her chin,
So fine and round, it were a sin
To feel no weaker when I see
Beata mea Domina!

God's dealings; for with so much care
And troublous, faint lines wrought in there,
He finishes her face for me.
Beata mea Domina!

Of her long neck what shall I say?
What things about her body's sway,
Like a knight's pennon or slim tree
Beata mea Domina!

Set gently waving in the wind;
Or her long hands that I may find
On some day sweet to move o'er me?
Beata mea Domina!

God pity me though, if I missed
The telling, how along her wrist
The veins creep, dying languidly
Beata mea Domina!

Inside her tender palm and thin.
Now give me pardon, dear, wherein
My voice is weak and vexes thee.
Beata mea Domina!

All men that see her any time,
I charge you straightly in this rhyme,
What, and wherever you may be,
Beata mea Domina!

To kneel before her; as for me
I choke and grow quite faint to see
My lady moving graciously.
Beata mea Domina!

William Morris [1834–1896]

MADONNA MIA

Under green apple boughs
That never a storm will rouse,
My lady hath her house
Between two bowers;
In either of the twain
Red roses full of rain;
She hath for bondwomen
All kind of flowers.

She hath no handmaid fair
To draw her curled gold hair
Through rings of gold that bear
Her whole hair's weight;
She hath no maids to stand
Gold-clothed on either hand;
In all that great green land
None is so great.

She hath no more to wear
But one white hood of vair
Drawn over eyes and hair,
Wrought with strange gold,
Made for some great queen's head,
Some fair great queen since dead;
And one strait gown of red
Against the cold.

Beneath her eyelids deep
Love lying seems asleep,
Love, swift to wake, to weep,
To laugh, to gaze;
Her breasts are like white birds,
And all her gracious words
As water-grass to herds
In the June-days.

To her all dews that fall
And rains are musical;
Her flowers are fed from all,
Her joys from these;
In the deep-feathered firs
Their gift of joy is hers,
In the least breath that stirs
Across the trees.

She grows with greenest leaves,
Ripens with reddest sheaves,
Forgets, remembers, grieves,
And is not sad;
The quiet lands and skies
Leave light upon her eyes;
None knows her, weak or wise,
Or tired or glad.

None knows, none understands,
What flowers are like her hands;
Though you should search all lands
Wherein time grows,
What snows are like her feet,
Though his eyes burn with heat
Through gazing on my sweet,—
Yet no man knows.

Only this thing is said;
That white and gold and red,
God's three chief words, man's bread
And oil and wine,

Were given her for dowers,
And kingdom of all hours,
And grace of goodly flowers
And various vine.

This is my lady's praise:
God after many days
Wrought her in unknown ways,
In sunset lands;
This is my lady's birth;
God gave her might and mirth.
And laid his whole sweet earth
Between her hands.

Under deep apple boughs
My lady hath her house;
She wears upon her brows
The flower thereof;
All saying but what God saith
To her is as vain breath;
She is more strong than death,
Being strong as love.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

"MEET WE NO ANGELS, PANSIE?"

Came, on a Sabbath morn, my sweet,
In white, to find her lover;
The grass grew proud beneath her feet,
The green elm-leaves above her:—
Meet we no angels, Pansie?

She said, "We meet no angels now";
And soft lights streamed upon her;
And with white hand she touched a bough;
She did it that great honor:—
What! meet no angels, Pansie?

O sweet brown hat, brown hair, brown eyes,
Down-dropped brown eyes, so tender!
Then what said I?—gallant replies
Seem flattery, and offend her:—
But,—meet we no angels, Pansie?

Thomas Ashe [1836–1889]

TO DAPHNE

Like apple-blossoms, white and red;
Like hues of dawn, which fly too soon;
Like bloom of peach, so softly spread;
Like thorn of May and rose of June—
Oh, sweet! oh, fair! beyond compare,
Are Daphne's cheeks,
Are Daphne's blushing cheeks, I swear.

That pretty rose, which comes and goes
Like April sunshine in the sky,
I can command it when I choose—
See how it rises if I cry:
Oh, sweet! oh, fair! beyond compare,
Are Daphne's cheeks,
Are Daphne's blushing cheeks, I swear.

Ah! when it lies round lips and eyes,
And fades away, again to spring,
No lover, sure, could ask for more
Than still to cry, and still to sing:
Oh, sweet! oh, fair! beyond compare,
Are Daphne's cheeks,
Are Daphne's blushing cheeks, I swear.

Walter Besant [1836–1901]

"GIRL OF THE RED MOUTH"

Girl of the red mouth,
Love me! Love me!
Girl of the red mouth,
Love me!

'Tis by its curve, I know,
Love fashioneth his bow,
And bends it—ah, even so!
Oh, girl of the red mouth, love me!

Girl of the blue eye,
Love me! Love me!
Girl of the dew eye,
Love me!
Worlds hang for lamps on high;
And thought's world lives in thy
Lustrous and tender eye—
Oh, girl of the blue eye, love me!

Girl of the swan's neck,
Love me! Love me!
Girl of the swan's neck,
Love me!
As a marble Greek doth grow
To his steed's back of snow,
Thy white neck sits thy shoulder so,—
Oh, girl of the swan's neck, love me!

Girl of the low voice,
Love me! Love me!
Girl of the sweet voice,
Love me!
Like the echo of a bell,—
Like the bubbling of a well,—
Sweeter! Love within doth dwell,—
Oh, girl of the low voice, love me!

Martin MacDermott [1823–1905]

THE DAUGHTER OF MENDOZA

O LEND to me, sweet nightingale,
Your music by the fountain,
And lend to me your cadences,
O river of the mountain!

That I may sing my gay brunette,
A diamond spark in coral set,
Gem for a prince's coronet—
The daughter of Mendoza.

How brilliant is the morning star,
The evening star how tender,—
The light of both is in her eyes,
Their softness and their splendor.
But for the lash that shades their light
They were too dazzling for the sight,
And when she shuts them, all is night—
The daughter of Mendoza.

O ever bright and beauteous one,
Bewildering and beguiling,
The lute is in thy silvery tones,
The rainbow in thy smiling;
And thine, is, too, o'er hill and dell,
The bounding of the young gazelle,
The arrow's flight and ocean's swell—
Sweet daughter of Mendoza!

What though, perchance, we no more meet,—
What though too soon we sever?
Thy form will float like emerald light
Before my vision ever.
For who can see and then forget
The glories of my gay brunette—
Thou art too bright a star to set,
Sweet daughter of Mendoza!

Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar [1798–1859]

"IF SHE BE MADE OF WHITE AND RED"

If she be made of white and red,
As all transcendent beauty shows;
If heaven be blue above her head,
And earth be golden, as she goes:
Nay, then thy deftest words restrain;
Tell not that beauty, it is vain.

If she be filled with love and scorn,
As all divinest natures are;
If 'twixt her lips such words are born,
As can but Heaven or Hell confer:
Bid Love be still, nor ever speak,
Lest he his own rejection seek.

Herbert P. Horne [1864–

THE LOVER'S SONG

Lend me thy fillet, Love!
I would no longer see:
Cover mine eyelids close awhile,
And make me blind like thee.

Then might I pass her sunny face,
And know not it was fair;
Then might I hear her voice, nor guess
Her starry eyes were there.

Ah! banished so from stars and sun—
Why need it be my fate?
If only she might dream me good
And wise, and be my mate!

Lend her thy fillet, Love!
Let her no longer see:
If there is hope for me at all,
She must be blind like thee.

Edward Rowland Sill [1841–1887]

"WHEN FIRST I SAW HER"

When first I saw her, at the stroke
The heart of nature in me spoke;
The very landscape smiled more sweet,
Lit by her eyes, pressed by her feet;
She made the stars of heaven more bright
By sleeping under them at night;
And fairer made the flowers of May
By being lovelier than they.

O, soft, soft, where the sunshine spread,
Dark in the grass I laid my head;
And let the lights of earth depart
To find her image in my heart;
Then through my being came and went
Tones of some heavenly instrument,
As if where its blind motions roll
The world should wake and be a soul.

George Edward Woodberry [1855-

MY APRIL LADY

When down the stair at morning
The sunbeams round her float,
Sweet rivulets of laughter
Are rippling in her throat;
The gladness of her greeting
Is gold without alloy;
And in the morning sunlight
I think her name is Joy.

When in the evening twilight
The quiet book-room lies,
We read the sad old ballads,
While from her hidden eyes
The tears are falling, falling,
That give her heart relief;
And in the evening twilight,
I think her name is Grief.

My little April lady,
Of sunshine and of showers
She weaves the old spring magic,
And breaks my heart in flowers!
But when her moods are ended,
She nestles like a dove;
Then, by the pain and rapture,
I know her name is Love.

Henry Van Dyke [1852-

THE MILKMAID

A NEW SONG TO AN OLD TUNE

Across the grass I see her pass;
  She comes with tripping pace,—
A maid I know,—and March winds blow
  Her hair across her face;—
    With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
      Dolly shall be mine,
    Before the spray is white with May,
      Or blooms the eglantine.

The March winds blow. I watch her go:
  Her eye is brown and clear;
Her cheek is brown, and soft as down,
  (To those who see it near!)—
    With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
      Dolly shall be mine,
    Before the spray is white with May,
      Or blooms the eglantine.

What has she not that those have got,—
  The dames that walk in silk!
If she undo her kerchief blue,
  Her neck is white as milk.
    With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
      Dolly shall be mine,
    Before the spray is white with May,
      Or blooms the eglantine.

Let those who will be proud and chill!
  For me, from June to June,
My Dolly's words are sweet as curds—
  Her laugh is like a tune;—
    With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
      Dolly shall be mine,
    Before the spray is white with May,
      Or blooms the eglantine.

Break, break to hear, O crocus-spear!
O tall Lent-lilies flame!
There'll be a bride at Easter-tide,
And Dolly is her name.
With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

Austin Dobson [1840–

SONG

This peach is pink with such a pink
As suits the peach divinely;
The cunning color rarely spread
Fades to the yellow finely;
But where to spy the truest pink
Is in my Love's soft cheek, I think.

The snowdrop, child of windy March,
Doth glory in her whiteness;
Her golden neighbors, crocuses,
Unenvious praise her brightness!
But I do know where, out of sight,
My sweetheart keeps a warmer white.

Norman Gale [1862–

IN FEBRUARY

My Lady's birthday crowns the growing year;
A flower of Spring before the Spring is here;
To sing of her and this fair day to keep
The very Loves forsake their Winter sleep;
Where'er she goes their circling wings they spread,
And shower celestial roses o'er her head.
I, too, would chant her worth and dare to raise
A hymn to what's beyond immortal praise.
Go, little verse, and lay in vesture meet
Of poesy, my homage at her feet.

Henry Simpson [1868–

"LOVE, I MARVEL WHAT YOU ARE"

Love, I marvel what you are!
Heaven in a pearl of dew,
Lilies hearted with a star—
All are you.

Spring along your forehead shines
And the summer blooms your breast.
Graces of autumnal vines
Round you rest.

Birds about a limpid rose
Making song and light of wing
While the warm wind sunny blows,—
So you sing.

Darling, if the little dust,
That I know is merely I,
Have availed to win your trust,
Let me die.

Trumbull Stickney [1874–1904]

BALLADE OF MY LADY'S BEAUTY

Squire Adam had two wives, they say,
Two wives had he for his delight;
He kissed and clypt them all the day,
And clypt and kissed them all the night.
Now Eve like ocean foam was white,
And Lilith, roses dipped in wine,
But though they were a goodly sight,
No lady is so fair as mine.

To Venus some folk tribute pay,
And Queen of Beauty she is hight,
And Sainte Marie the world doth sway,
In cerule napery bedight.
My wonderment these twain invite,
Their comeliness it is divine;
And yet I say in their despite,
No lady is so fair as mine.

Dame Helen caused a grievous fray,
For love of her brave men did fight,
The eyes of her made sages fey
And put their hearts in woeful plight.
To her no rhymes will I indite,
For her no garlands will I twine;
Though she be made of flowers and light,
No lady is so fair as mine.

L'ENVOI

Prince Eros, Lord of lovely might,
Who on Olympus doth recline,
Do I not tell the truth aright?
No lady is so fair as mine.

Joyce Kilmer [1886–

URSULA

I SEE her in the festal warmth to-night,
Her rest all grace, her motion all delight.
Endowed with all the woman's arts that please,
In her soft gown she seems a thing of ease,
Whom sorrow may not reach or evil blight.

To-morrow she will toil from floor to floor
To smile upon the unreplying poor,
To stay the tears of widows, and to be
Confessor to men's erring hearts . . . ah me!
She knows not I am beggar at her door.

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853–

VILLANELLE OF HIS LADY'S TREASURES

I TOOK her dainty eyes, as well
As silken tendrils of her hair:
And so I made a Villanelle!

I took her voice, a silver bell,
As clear as song, as soft as prayer;
I took her dainty eyes as well.

It may be, said I, who can tell,
These things shall be my less despair?
And so I made a Villanelle!

I took her whiteness virginal
And from her cheeks two roses rare:
I took her dainty eyes as well.

I said: "It may be possible
Her image from my heart to tear!"
And so I made a Villanelle!

I stole her laugh, most musical:
I wrought it in with artful care;
I took her dainty eyes as well;
And so I made a Villanelle.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

SONG

Love, by that loosened hair
Well now I know
Where the lost Lilith went
So long ago.

Love, by those starry eyes
I understand
How the sea maidens lure
Mortals from land.

Love, by that welling laugh
Joy claims his own
Sea-born and wind-wayward
Child of the sun.

Bliss Carman [1861-

SONG

O, like a queen's her happy tread,
And like a queen's her golden head!
But O, at last, when all is said,
Her woman's heart for me!

We wandered where the river gleamed
'Neath oaks that mused and pines that dreamed,
A wild thing of the woods she seemed,
So proud, and pure, and free!

All heaven drew nigh to hear her sing,
When from her lips her soul took wing;
The oaks forgot their pondering,
The pines their reverie.

And O, her happy, queenly tread,
And O, her queenly golden head!
But O, her heart, when all is said,
Her woman's heart for me!

William Watson [1858–

ANY LOVER, ANY LASS

Why are her eyes so bright, so bright,
Why do her lips control
The kisses of a summer night,
When I would love her soul?

God set her brave eyes wide apart
And painted them with fire;
They stir the ashes of my heart
To embers of desire.

Her lips so tenderly are wrought
In so divine a shape,
That I am servant to my thought
And can no wise escape.

Her body is a flower, her hair
About her neck doth play;
I find her colors everywhere,
They are the pride of day.

Her little hands are soft, and when
I see her fingers move
I know in very truth that men
Have died for less than love.

Ah, dear, live, lovely thing! my eyes
  Have sought her like a prayer;
It is my better self that cries
  "Would she were not so fair!"

Would I might forfeit ecstasy
  And find a calmer place,
Where I might undesirous see
  Her too desired face:

Nor find her eyes so bright, so bright,
  Nor hear her lips unroll
Dream after dream the lifelong night,
  When I would love her soul.

Richard Middleton [1882–1911]

SONGS ASCENDING

Love has been sung a thousand ways—
  So let it be;
The songs ascending in your praise
Through all my days
  Are three.

Your cloud-white body first I sing;
  Your love was heaven's blue,
And I, a bird, flew carolling
In ring on ring
  Of you.

Your nearness is the second song;
  When God began to be,
And bound you strongly, right or wrong,
With his own thong,
  To me.

But oh, the song, eternal, high,
  That tops these two!—
You live forever, you who die,
I am not I
  But you.

Witter Bynner [1881–

SONG

"Oh! Love," they said, "is King of Kings,
And Triumph is his crown.
Earth fades in flame before his wings,
And Sun and Moon bow down."—
But that, I knew, would never do;
And Heaven is all too high.
So whenever I meet a Queen, I said,
I will not catch her eye.

"Oh! Love," they said, and "Love," they said,
"The gift of Love is this;
A crown of thorns about thy head,
And vinegar to thy kiss!"—
But Tragedy is not for me;
And I'm content to be gay.
So whenever I spied a Tragic Lady,
I went another way.

And so I never feared to see
You wander down the street,
Or come across the fields to me
On ordinary feet.
For what they'd never told me of,
And what I never knew;
It was that all the time, my love,
Love would be merely you.

Rupert Brooke [1887–1915]

SONG

How do I love you?
I do not know.
Only because of you
Gladly I go.

Only because of you
Labor is sweet,
And all the song of you
Sings in my feet.

Only the thought of you
  Trembles and lies
Just where the world begins—
  Under my eyes.

Irene Rutherford McLeod [18

TO . . . IN CHURCH

If I was drawn here from a distant place,
'Twas not to pray nor hear our friend's address,
But, gazing once more on your winsome face,
To worship there Ideal Loveliness.
On that pure shrine that has too long ignored
The gifts that once I brought so frequently
I lay this votive offering, to record
How sweet your quiet beauty seemed to me.
Enchanting girl, my faith is not a thing
By futile prayers and vapid psalm-singing
To vent in crowded nave and public pew.
My creed is simple: that the world is fair,
And beauty the best thing to worship there,
And I confess it by adoring you.

Alan Seeger [1888-1916]

AFTER TWO YEARS

She is all so slight
And tender and white
  As a May morning.
She walks without hood
At dusk. It is good
  To hear her sing.

It is God's will
That I shall love her still
  As He loves Mary.
And night and day
I will go forth to pray
  That she love me.

She is as gold
Lovely, and far more cold.
Do thou pray with me,
For if I win grace
To kiss twice her face
God has done well to me.

Richard Aldington [1892–

PRAISE

Dear, they are praising your beauty,
The grass and the sky:
The sky in a silence of wonder,
The grass in a sigh.

I too would sing for your praising,
Dearest, had I
Speech as the whispering grass,
Or the silent sky.

These have an art for the praising
Beauty so high.
Sweet, you are praised in a silence,
Sung in a sigh.

Seumas O'Sullivan [1879–

PLAINTS AND PROTESTATIONS

"FORGET NOT YET"

THE LOVER BESEECHETH HIS MISTRESS NOT TO FORGET HIS STEADFAST FAITH AND TRUE INTENT

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent,
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since when
The suit, the service, none tell can;
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in delays,
Forget not yet!

Forget not! O, forget not this!—
How long ago hath been, and is,
The mind that never meant amiss—
Forget not yet!

Forget not then thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved:
Forget not this!

Thomas Wyatt [1503?–1542]

FAWNIA

From "Pandosto"

Ah! were she pitiful as she is fair,
Or but as mild as she is seeming so,
Then were my hopes greater than my despair,
Then all the world were heaven, nothing woe.

Ah! were her heart relenting as her hand,
That seems to melt even with the mildest touch,
Then knew I where to seat me in a land
Under wide heavens, but yet there is not such.
So as she shows she seems the budding rose,
Yet sweeter far than is an earthly flower;
Sovereign of beauty, like the spray she grows;
Compassed she is with thorns and cankered flower.
  Yet were she willing to be plucked and worn,
  She would be gathered, though she grew on thorn.

Ah! when she sings, all music else be still,
For none must be comparèd to her note;
Ne'er breathed such glee from Philomela's bill,
Nor from the morning-singer's swelling throat.
Ah! when she riseth from her blissful bed
She comforts all the world as doth the sun,
And at her sight the night's foul vapor's fled;
When she is set the gladsome day is done.
  O glorious sun, imagine me the west,
  Shine in my arms, and set thou in my breast!

Robert Greene [1560?–1592]

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

Come live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
Or woods or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-linèd slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy-buds
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love.

Christopher Marlowe [1564–1593]

THE NYMPH'S REPLY TO THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee, and be thy Love.

But Time drives flocks from field to fold;
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward Winter reckoning yields:
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,
Soon break, soon wither,—soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy-buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,—
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy Love.

But could youth last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy Love.

Walter Raleigh [1552?–1618]

"WRONG NOT, SWEET EMPRESS OF MY HEART"

Wrong not, sweet empress of my heart,
The merit of true passion,
With thinking that he feels no smart,
That sues for no compassion.

Silence in love bewrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty:
A beggar that is dumb, you know,
May challenge double pity.

Then wrong not, dearest to my heart,
My true, though secret passion;
He smarteth most that hides his smart,
And sues for no compassion.

Walter Raleigh [1552?–1618]

TO HIS COY LOVE

I pray thee, leave, love me no more,
Call home the heart you gave me!
I but in vain that saint adore
That can but will not save me.
These poor half-kisses kill me quite—
Was ever man thus servèd:
Amidst an ocean of delight
For pleasure to be starvèd!

Show me no more those snowy breasts
  With azure riverets branchèd,
Where, whilst mine eye with plenty feasts,
  Yet is my thirst not stanchèd;
O Tantalus, thy pains ne'er tell!
  By me thou art prevented:
'Tis nothing to be plagued in Hell,
  But thus in Heaven tormented.

Clip me no more in those dear arms,
  Nor thy life's comfort call me,
O these are but too powerful charms,
  And do but more enthral me!
But see how patient I am grown
  In all this coil about thee:
Come, nice thing, let my heart alone,
  I cannot live without thee!

Michael Drayton [1563–1631]

HER SACRED BOWER

Where she her sacred bower adorns,
  The rivers clearly flow,
The groves and meadows swell with flowers,
  The winds all gently blow.
Her sun-like beauty shines so fair,
  Her spring can never fade:
Who then can blame the life that strives
  To harbor in her shade?

Her grace I sought, her love I wooed;
  Her love thought to obtain;
No time, no toil, no vow, no faith,
  Her wishèd grace can gain.
Yet truth can tell my heart is hers
  And her will I adore;
And from that love when I depart,
  Let heaven view me no more!

Her roses with my prayers shall spring;
And when her trees I praise,
Their boughs shall blossom, mellow fruit
Shall strew her pleasant ways.
The words of hearty zeal have power
High wonders to effect;
O, why should then her princely ear
My words or zeal neglect?

If she my faith misdeems, or worth,
Woe worth my hapless fate!
For though time can my truth reveal,
That time will come too late.
And who can glory in the worth
That cannot yield him grace?
Content in everything is not,
Nor joy in every place.

But from her Bower of Joy since I
Must now excluded be,
And she will not relieve my cares,
Which none can help but she;
My comfort in her love shall dwell,
Her love lodge in my breast,
And though not in her bower, yet I
Shall in her temple rest.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

TO LESBIA *

AFTER CATULLUS

My sweetest Lesbia, let us live and love,
And though the sager sort our deeds reprove,
Let us not weigh them. Heaven's great lamps do dive
Into their west, and straight again revive:
But soon as once set is our little light,
Then must we sleep one ever-during night.

If all would lead their lives in love like me,
Then bloody swords and armor should not be;
No drum nor trumpet peaceful sleeps should move,
Unless alarm came from the Camp of Love:

* For the original of this poem see page 3827.

But fools do live and waste their little light,
And seek with pain their ever-during night.

When timely death my life and fortune ends,
Let not my hearse be vexed with mourning friends;
But let all lovers, rich in triumph, come
And with sweet pastimes grace my happy tomb:
And, Lesbia, close up thou my little light,
And crown with love my ever-during night.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

"LOVE ME OR NOT"

Love me or not, love her I must or die;
Leave her or not, follow her needs must I.
O that her grace would my wished comforts give!
How rich in her, how happy should I live!

All my desire, all my delight should be
Her to enjoy, her to unite to me;
Envy should cease, her would I love alone:
Who loves by looks, is seldom true to one.

Could I enchant, and that it lawful were,
Her would I charm softly that none should hear;
But love enforced rarely yields firm content:
So would I love that neither should repent.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

"THERE IS NONE, O NONE BUT YOU"

There is none, O none but you,
That from me estrange the sight,
Whom mine eyes affect to view,
And chainèd ears hear with delight.

Other beauties others move:
In you I all graces find;
Such is the effect of Love,
To make them happy that are kind.

Women in frail beauty trust,
  Only seem you fair to me:
Still prove truly kind and just,
  For that may not dissembled be.

Sweet, afford me then your sight,
  That, surveying all your looks,
Endless volumes I may write,
  And fill the world with envied books:

Which, when after-ages view,
  All shall wonder and despair,—
Woman, to find a man so true,
  Or man, a woman half so fair!

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

OF CORINNA'S SINGING

When to her lute Corinna sings,
Her voice revives the leaden strings,
And doth in highest notes appear,
As any challenged echo clear:
But when she doth of mourning speak,
E'en with her sighs, the strings do break.

And as her lute doth live or die,
Led by her passion, so must I!
For when of pleasure she doth sing,
My thoughts enjoy a sudden spring:
But if she doth of sorrow speak,
E'en from my heart the strings do break.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

"WERE MY HEART AS SOME MEN'S ARE"

Were my heart as some men's are, thy errors would not move me;
But thy faults I curious find, and speak because I love thee:
Patience is a thing divine, and far, I grant, above me.

Foes sometimes befriend us more, our blacker deeds objecting,
Than the obsequious bosom-guest with false respect affecting:
Friendship is the Glass of Truth, our hidden stains detecting.

When I use of eyes enjoy, and inward light of reason,
Thy observer will I be and censor, but in season:
Hidden mischief to conceal in State and Love is treason.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

"KIND ARE HER ANSWERS"

Kind are her answers,
But her performance keeps no day;
Breaks time, as dancers
From their own music when they stray.
All her free favors
And smooth words wing my hopes in vain.
O, did ever voice so sweet but only feign?
Can true love yield such delay,
Converting joy to pain?

Lost is our freedom
When we submit to women so:
Why do we need 'em
When, in their best, they work our woe?
There is no wisdom
Can alter ends by fate prefixed.
O, why is the good of man with evil mixed?
Never were days yet called two
But one night went betwixt.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

TO CELIA

From "The Forest"

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.

The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee!

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

SONG

From "The Forest"

O, do not wanton with those eyes,
Lest I be sick with seeing;
Nor cast them down, but let them rise,
Lest shame destroy their being.

O, be not angry with those fires,
For then their threats will kill me;
Nor look too kind on my desires,
For then my hopes will spill me.

O, do not steep them in thy tears,
For so will sorrow slay me;
Nor spread them as distract with fears;
Mine own enough betray me.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

SONG

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,
Or who cleft the Devil's foot;

Teach me to hear mermaid's singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be'st born to strange sights,
Things invisible go see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights
Till Age snow white hairs on thee;
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear
No where
Lives a woman true and fair.

If thou find'st one, let me know;
Such a pilgrimage were sweet.
Yet do not; I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet.
Though she were true when you met her,
And last till you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

John Donne [1573–1631]

THE MESSAGE

Send home my long-strayed eyes to me,
Which, O! too long have dwelt on thee:
But if from you they've learned such ill,
To sweetly smile,
And then beguile,
Keep the deceivers, keep them still.

Send home my harmless heart again,
Which no unworthy thought could stain:
But if it has been taught by thine
To forfeit both
Its word and oath,
Keep it, for then 'tis none of mine.

Yet send me back my heart and eyes,
For I'll know all thy falsities;
That I one day may laugh, when thou
Shalt grieve and mourn—
Of one the scorn,
Who proves as false as thou art now.

John Donne [1573–1631]

SONG

Ladies, though to your conquering eyes
Love owes his chiefest victories,
And borrows those bright arms from you
With which he does the world subdue,
Yet you yourselves are not above
The empire nor the griefs of love.

Then rack not lovers with disdain,
Lest Love on you revenge their pain:
You are not free because you're fair:
The Boy did not his Mother spare.
Beauty's but an offensive dart:
It is no armor for the heart.

George Etherege [1635?–1691]

TO A LADY ASKING HIM HOW LONG HE WOULD LOVE HER

It is not, Celia, in our power
To say how long our love will last;
It may be we within this hour
May lose those joys we now do taste:
The Blessèd, that immortal be,
From change in love are only free.

Then since we mortal lovers are,
Ask not how long our love will last;
But while it does, let us take care
Each minute be with pleasure passed:
Were it not madness to deny
To live because we're sure to die?

George Etherege [1635?–1691]

TO ÆNONE

What conscience, say, is it in thee,
When I a heart had one,
To take away that heart from me,
And to retain thy own?

For shame or pity now incline
To play a loving part;
Either to send me kindly thine,
Or give me back my heart.

Covet not both; but if thou dost
Resolve to part with neither,
Why, yet to show that thou art just,
Take me and mine together!

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO ANTHEA, WHO MAY COMMAND HIM ANYTHING

Bid me to live, and I will live
Thy Protestant to be;
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay
To honor thy decree;
Or bid it languish quite away,
And 't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep,
While I have eyes to see;
And having none, yet will I keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair,
Under that cypress tree;
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death, to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me;
And hast command of every part,
To live and die for thee.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

THE BRACELET: TO JULIA

Why I tie about thy wrist,
Julia, this silken twist;
For what other reason is't
But to show thee how, in part,
Thou my pretty captive art?
But thy bond-slave is my heart:
'Tis but silk that bindeth thee,
Snap the thread and thou art free;
But 'tis otherwise with me:
I am bound and fast bound, so
That from thee I cannot go;
If I could, I would not so.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO THE WESTERN WIND

Sweet western wind, whose luck it is,
Made rival with the air,
To give Perenna's lip a kiss,
And fan her wanton hair:

Bring me but one, I'll promise thee,
Instead of common showers,
Thy wings shall be embalmed by me,
And all beset with flowers.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO MY INCONSTANT MISTRESS

When thou, poor Excommunicate
From all the joys of Love, shalt see
The full reward and glorious fate
Which my strong faith shall purchase me,
Then curse thine own Inconstancy.

A fairer hand than thine shall cure
That heart which thy false oaths did wound;
And to my soul a soul more pure
Than thine shall by Love's hand be bound,
And both with equal glory crowned.

Then shalt thou weep, entreat, complain
To Love, as I did once to thee:
When all thy tears shall be as vain
As mine were then: for thou shalt be
Damned for thy false Apostasy.

Thomas Carew [1598?-1639?]

PERSUASIONS TO ENJOY

If the quick spirits in your eye
Now languish and anon must die;
If every sweet and every grace
Must fly from that forsaken face:
Then, Celia, let us reap our joys
Ere Time such goodly fruit destroys.

Or, if that golden fleece must grow
For ever free from aged snow;
If those bright suns must know no shade,
Nor your fresh beauties ever fade:
Then fear not, Celia, to bestow
What, still being gathered, still must grow.

Thus either Time his sickle brings
In vain, or else in vain his wings.

Thomas Carew [1598?–1639?]

MEDIOCRITY IN LOVE REJECTED

Give me more love, or more disdain:
The torrid, or the frozen zone
Bring equal ease unto my pain;
The temperate affords me none:
Either extreme, of love or hate,
Is sweeter than a calm estate.

Give me a storm; if it be love,
Like Danaë in that golden shower,
I swim in pleasure; if it prove
Disdain, that torrent will devour
My vulture-hopes; and he's possessed
Of heaven, that's but from hell released.

Then crown my joys, or cure my pain:
Give me more love, or more disdain.

Thomas Carew [1598?–1639?]

THE MESSAGE

Ye little birds that sit and sing
Amidst the shady valleys,
And see how Phillis sweetly walks
Within her garden-alleys;
Go, pretty birds, about her bower;
Sing, pretty birds, she may not lower;
Ah me! methinks I see her frown!
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

Go tell her through your chirping bills,
As you by me are bidden,
To her is only known my love,
Which from the world is hidden.
Go, pretty birds, and tell her so,
See that your notes strain not too low,
For still methinks I see her frown;
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

Go tune your voices' harmony
And sing, I am her lover;
Strain loud and sweet, that every note
With sweet content may move her:
And she that hath the sweetest voice,
Tell her I will not change my choice;
—Yet still methinks I see her frown!
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

O fly! make haste! see, see, she falls
Into a pretty slumber!
Sing round about her rosy bed
That waking she may wonder:
Say to her, 'tis her lover true
That sendeth love to you, to you!
And when you hear her kind reply,
Return with pleasant warblings.

Thomas Heywood [? –1650?]

"HOW CAN THE HEART FORGET HER"

At her fair hands how have I grace entreated
With prayers oft repeated!
Yet still my love is thwarted:
Heart, let her go, for she'll not be converted—
Say, shall she go?
O no, no, no, no, no!
She is most fair, though she be marble-hearted.

How often have my sighs declared my anguish,
Wherein I daily languish!
Yet still she doth procure it:
Heart, let her go, for I cannot endure it—
Say, shall she go?
O no, no, no, no, no!
She gave the wound, and she alone must cure it.

But shall I still a true affection owe her,
Which prayers, sighs, tears do show her,

And shall she still disdain me?
Heart, let her go, if they no grace can gain me—
Say, shall she go?
O no, no, no, no, no!
She made me hers, and hers she will retain me.

But if the love that hath and still doth burn me
No love at length return me,
Out of my thoughts I'll set her:
Heart, let her go, O heart I pray thee, let her!
Say, shall she go?
O no, no, no, no, no!
Fixed in the heart, how can the heart forget her?

Francis Davison [fl. 1602]

TO ROSES IN THE BOSOM OF CASTARA

Ye blushing virgins happy are
In the chaste nunnery of her breasts—
For he'd profane so chaste a fair,
Whoe'er should call them Cupid's nests.

Transplanted thus how bright ye grow!
How rich a perfume do ye yield!
In some close garden cowslips so
Are sweeter than in the open field.

In those white cloisters live secure
From the rude blasts of wanton breath!—
Each hour more innocent and pure,
Till you shall wither into death.

Then that which living gave you room,
Your glorious sepulcher shall be.
There wants no marble for a tomb
Whose breast hath marble been to me.

William Habington [1605–1654]

TO FLAVIA

'Tis not your beauty can engage
My wary heart;
The sun, in all his pride and rage,
Has not that art;

And yet he shines as bright as you,
If brightness could our souls subdue.

'Tis not the pretty things you say,
Nor those you write,
Which can make Thyrsis' heart your prey:
For that delight,
The graces of a well-taught mind,
In some of our own sex we find.

No, Flavia, 'tis your love I fear;
Love's surest darts,
Those which so seldom fail him, are
Headed with hearts:
Their very shadows make us yield;
Dissemble well, and win the field!

Edmund Waller [1606–1687]

"LOVE NOT ME FOR COMELY GRACE"

Love not me for comely grace,
For my pleasing eye or face;
Nor for any outward part,
No, nor for a constant heart:
For these may fail or turn to ill,
So thou and I shall sever.
Keep, therefore, a true woman's eye,
And love me still, but know not why;
So hast thou the same reason still
To doat upon me ever.

Unknown

"WHEN, DEAREST, I BUT THINK OF THEE"

When, dearest, I but think of thee,
Methinks all things that lovely be
Are present, and my soul delighted:
For beauties that from worth arise
Are like the grace of deities,
Still present with us, though unsighted.

Thus while I sit and sigh the day
With all his borrowed lights away,
  Till night's black wings do overtake me,
Thinking on thee, thy beauties then,
As sudden lights do sleepy men,
  So they by their bright rays awake me.

Thus absence dies, and dying proves
No absence can subsist with loves
  That do partake of fair perfection:
Since in the darkest night they may
By love's quick motion find a way
  To see each other by reflection.

The waving sea can with each flood
Bathe some high promont that hath stood
  Far from the main up in the river:
O think not then but love can do
As much! for that's an ocean too,
  Which flows not every day, but ever!

John Suckling [1609–1642]

A DOUBT OF MARTYRDOM

O FOR some honest lover's ghost,
  Some kind unbodied post
    Sent from the shades below!
  I strangely long to know
Whether the noble chaplets wear
Those that their mistress' scorn did bear
    Or those that were used kindly.

For whatsoe'er they tell us here
  To make those sufferings dear,
    'Twill there, I fear, be found
  That to the being crowned
To have loved alone will not suffice,
Unless we also have been wise
    And have our loves enjoyed.

What posture can we think him in
That, here unloved, again
Departs, and's thither gone
Where each sits by his own?
Or how can that Elysium be
Where I my mistress still must see
Circled in other's arms?

For there the judges all are just,
And Sophonisba must
Be his whom she held dear,
Not his who loved her here.
The sweet Philoclea, since she died,
Lies by her Pirocles his side,
Not by Amphialus.

Some bays, perchance, or myrtle bough
For difference crowns the brow
Of those kind souls that were
The noble martyrs here:
And if that be the only odds
(As who can tell?), ye kinder gods,
Give me the woman here!

John Suckling [1609–1642]

TO CHLOE

WHO FOR HIS SAKE WISHED HERSELF YOUNGER

Chloe, why wish you that your years
Would backwards run, till they met mine?
That perfect likeness, which endears
Things unto things, might us combine.
Our ages so in date agree,
That twins do differ more than we.

There are two births; the one when light
First strikes the new awakened sense;
The other when two souls unite,
And we must count our life from thence:

When you loved me and I loved you
Then both of us were born anew.

Love then to us new souls did give
  And in those souls did plant new powers;
Since when another life we live,
  The breath we breathe is his, not ours:
Love makes those young whom age doth chill.
And whom he finds young keeps young still.

Love, like that angel that shall call
  Our bodies from the silent grave,
Unto one age doth raise us all;
  None too much, none too little have;
Nay, that the difference may be none,
He makes two not alike, but one.

And now since you and I are such,
  Tell me what's yours, and what is mine?
Our eyes, our ears, our taste, smell, touch,
  Do, like our souls, in one combine;
So, by this, I as well may be
Too old for you, as you for me.

William Cartwright [1611–1643]

"I'LL NEVER LOVE THEE MORE"

My dear and only Love, I pray
  This little world of thee
Be governed by no other sway
  Than purest monarchy;
For if confusion have a part,
  Which virtuous souls abhor,
And hold a synod in thy heart,
  I'll never love thee more.

Like Alexander I will reign,
  And I will reign alone;
My thoughts did evermore disdain
  A rival on my throne.

He either fears his fate too much,
  Or his deserts are small,
That dares not put it to the touch
  To gain or lose it all.

But I must rule and govern still,
  And always give the law,
And have each subject at my will
  And all to stand in awe.
But 'gainst my batteries if I find
  Thou kick, or vex me sore,
As that thou set me up a blind,
  I'll never love thee more!

Or in the empire of thy heart,
  Where I should solely be,
If others do pretend a part
  And dare to vie with me,
Or if committees thou erect,
  And go on such a score,
I'll laugh and sing at thy neglect,
  And never love thee more.

But if thou wilt be faithful, then,
  And constant of thy word,
I'll make thee glorious by my pen
  And famous by my sword;
I'll serve thee in such noble ways
  Were never heard before;
I'll crown and deck thee all with bays,
  And love thee evermore.

James Graham [1612–1650]

TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON

When Love with unconfinèd wings
  Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
  To whisper at the grates;

When I lie tangled in her hair
And fettered to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free—
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlargèd winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage;
If I have freedom in my love
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

Richard Lovelace [1618–1658]

WHY I LOVE HER

'Tis not her birth, her friends, nor yet her treasure,
Nor do I covet her for sensual pleasure,
Nor for that old morality
Do I love her, 'cause she loves me.

Sure he that loves his lady 'cause she's fair,
Delights his eye, so loves himself, not her.
Something there is moves me to love, and I
Do know I love, but know not how, nor why.

Alexander Brome [1620–1666]

TO HIS COY MISTRESS

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find: I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.
But at my back I always hear
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song: then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honor turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life:
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

Andrew Marvell [1621–1678]

A DEPOSITION FROM BEAUTY

Though when I loved thee thou wert fair,
Thou art no longer so;
These glories all the pride they wear
Unto opinion owe.
Beauties, like stars, in borrowed luster shine;
And 'twas my love that gave thee thine.

The flames that dwelt within thine eye
Do now with mine expire;
Thy brightest graces fade and die
At once with my desire.
Love's fires thus mutual influence return;
Thine cease to shine, when mine to burn.

Then, proud Celinda, hope no more
To be implored or wooed,
Since by thy scorn thou dost restore
Thy wealth my love bestowed:
And thy despised disdain too late shall find
That none are fair but who are kind.

Thomas Stanley [1625–1678]

"LOVE IN THY YOUTH, FAIR MAID"

Love in thy youth, fair maid, be wise,
Old Time will make thee colder,
And though each morning new arise,
Yet we each day grow older.

Thou as heaven art fair and young,
Thine eyes like twin stars shining;
But ere another day be sprung,
All these will be declining;

Then winter comes with all his fears,
And all thy sweets shall borrow;
Too late then wilt thou shower thy tears,
And I, too late, shall sorrow.

Unknown

TO CELIA

When, Celia, must my old day set,
And my young morning rise
In beams of joy so bright as yet
Ne'er blessed a lover's eyes?
My state is more advanced than when
I first attempted thee:
I sued to be a servant then,
But now to be made free.

I've served my time faithful and true,
Expecting to be placed
In happy freedom, as my due,
To all the joys thou hast:
Ill husbandry in love is such
A scandal to love's power,
We ought not to misspend so much
As one poor short-lived hour.

Yet think not, sweet, I'm weary grown,
That I pretend such haste;
Since none to surfeit e'er was known
Before he had a taste:

My infant love could humbly wait
When, young, it scarce knew how
To plead; but grown to man's estate,
He is impatient now.

Charles Cotton [1630–1687]

TO CELIA

Not, Celia, that I juster am
Or better than the rest!
For I would change each hour, like them,
Were not my heart at rest.

But I am tied to very thee
By every thought I have;
Thy face I only care to see,
Thy heart I only crave.

All that in woman is adored
In thy dear self I find—
For the whole sex can but afford
The handsome and the kind.

Why then should I seek further store,
And still make love anew?
When change itself can give no more,
'Tis easy to be true!

Charles Sedley [1639–1701]

A SONG

My dear mistress has a heart
Soft as those kind looks she gave me;
When with love's resistless art,
And her eyes, she did enslave me.
But her constancy's so weak,
She's so wild and apt to wander,
That my jealous heart would break
Should we live one day asunder.

Melting joys about her move,
  Killing pleasures, wounding blisses;
She can dress her eyes in love,
  And her lips can arm with kisses.
Angels listen when she speaks;
  She's my delight, all mankind's wonder;
But my jealous heart would break
  Should we live one day asunder.

John Wilmot [1647–1680]

LOVE AND LIFE

All my past life is mine no more;
  The flying hours are gone,
Like transitory dreams given o'er,
Whose images are kept in store
  By memory alone.

The time that is to come is not;
  How can it then be mine?
The present moment's all my lot;
And that, as fast as it is got,
  Phillis, is only thine.

Then talk not of inconstancy,
  False hearts, and broken vows;
If I by miracle can be
This live-long minute true to thee,
  'Tis all that Heaven allows.

John Wilmot [1647–1680]

CONSTANCY

I cannot change as others do,
  Though you unjustly scorn;
Since that poor swain that sighs for you
  For you alone was born.
No, Phillis, no; your heart to move
  A surer way I'll try;
And, to revenge my slighted love,
  Will still love on and die.

When killed with grief Amyntas lies,
And you to mind shall call
The sighs that now unpitied rise,
The tears that vainly fall—
That welcome hour, that ends this smart,
Will then begin your pain;
For such a faithful tender heart
Can never break in vain.

John Wilmot [1647–1680]

SONG

Too late, alas! I must confess,
You need not arts to move me;
Such charms by nature you possess,
'Twere madness not to love ye.

Then spare a heart you may surprise,
And give my tongue the glory
To boast, though my unfaithful eyes
Betray a tender story.

John Wilmot [1647–1680]

SONG

Come, Celia, let's agree at last
To love and live in quiet;
Let's tie the knot so very fast
That time shall ne'er untie it.
Love's dearest joys they never prove,
Who free from quarrels live;
'Tis sure a godlike part of love
Each other to forgive.

When least I seemed concerned I took
No pleasure, nor had rest;
And when I feigned an angry look,
Alas! I loved you best.
Say but the same to me, you'll find
How blest will be our fate;
Sure to be grateful, to be kind,
Can never be too late.

John Sheffield [1648–1721]

THE ENCHANTMENT

I DID but look and love awhile,
'Twas but for one half-hour;
Then to resist I had no will,
And now I have no power.

To sigh and wish is all my ease;
Sighs which do heat impart
Enough to melt the coldest ice,
Yet cannot warm your heart.

O would your pity give my heart
One corner of your breast,
'Twould learn of yours the winning art,
And quickly steal the rest.

Thomas Otway [1652–1685]

SONG

ONLY tell her that I love:
Leave the rest to her and Fate:
Some kind planet from above
May perhaps her pity move:
Lovers on their stars must wait.—
Only tell her that I love!

Why, O why should I despair!
Mercy's pictured in her eye:
If she once vouchsafe to hear,
Welcome Hope and farewell Fear!
She's too good to let me die.—
Why, O why should I despair?

John Cutts [1661–1707]

"FALSE THOUGH SHE BE"

FALSE though she be to me and love,
I'll ne'er pursue revenge;
For still the charmer I approve,
Though I deplore her change.

In hours of bliss we oft have met:
They could not always last;
And though the present I regret,
I'm grateful for the past.

William Congreve [1670–1729]

TO SILVIA

From "The Cautious Lovers"

Silvia, let us from the crowd retire,
For what to you and me
(Who but each other do desire)
Is all that here we see?

Apart we'll live, though not alone;
For who *alone* can call
Those who in deserts live with one
If in that one they've all?

The world a vast meander is,
Where hearts confusedly stray;
Where few do hit, whilst thousands miss,
The happy mutual way.

Anne Finch [? –1720]

"WHY, LOVELY CHARMER"

Why, lovely charmer, tell me why,
So very kind, and yet so shy?
Why does that cold, forbidding air
Give damps of sorrow and despair?
Or why that smile my soul subdue,
And kindle up my flames anew?

In vain you strive with all your art,
By turns to fire and freeze my heart;
When I behold a face so fair,
So sweet a look, so soft an air,
My ravished soul is charmed all o'er,
I cannot love thee less or more.

Unknown

AGAINST INDIFFERENCE

More love or more disdain I crave;
Sweet, be not still indifferent:
O send me quickly to my grave,
Or else afford me more content!
Or love or hate me more or less,
For love abhors all lukewarmness.

Give me a tempest if 'twill drive
Me to the place where I would be;
Or if you'll have me still alive,
Confess you will be kind to me.
Give hopes of bliss or dig my grave:
More love or more disdain I crave.

Charles Webbe [c. 1678]

A SONG TO AMORET

If I were dead, and, in my place,
Some fresher youth designed
To warm thee, with new fires; and grace
Those arms I left behind:

Were he as faithful as the Sun,
That's wedded to the Sphere;
His blood as chaste and temperate run,
As April's mildest tear;

Or were he rich; and, with his heap
And spacious share of earth,
Could make divine affection cheap,
And court his golden birth;

For all these arts, I'd not believe
(No! though he should be thine!),
The mighty Amorist could give
So rich a heart as mine!

Fortune and beauty thou might'st find,
And greater men than I;
But my true resolvèd mind
They never shall come nigh.

For I not for an hour did love,
Or for a day desire,
But with my soul had from above
This endless holy fire.

Henry Vaughan [1622–1695]

THE LASS OF RICHMOND HILL

On Richmond Hill there lives a lass
More bright than May-day morn,
Whose charms all other maids surpass,—
A rose without a thorn.

This lass so neat, with smiles so sweet,
Has won my right good-will;
I'd crowns resign to call her mine,
Sweet lass of Richmond Hill.

Ye zephyrs gay, that fan the air,
And wanton through the grove,
O, whisper to my charming fair,
I die for her I love.

How happy will the shepherd be
Who calls this nymph his own!
O, may her choice be fixed on me!
Mine's fixed on her alone.

James Upton [1670–1749]

SONG

Let my voice ring out and over the earth,
Through all the grief and strife,
With a golden joy in a silver mirth:
Thank God for life!

Let my voice swell out through the great abyss
To the azure dome above,
With a chord of faith in the harp of bliss:
Thank God for Love!

Let my voice thrill out beneath and above,
The whole world through:
O my Love and Life, O my Life and Love,
Thank God for you!

James Thomson [1834–1882]

GIFTS

Give a man a horse he can ride,
Give a man a boat he can sail;
And his rank and wealth, his strength and health,
On sea nor shore shall fail.

Give a man a pipe he can smoke,
Give a man a book he can read:
And his home is bright with a calm delight,
Though the room be poor indeed.

Give a man a girl he can love,
As I, O my love, love thee;
And his heart is great with the pulse of Fate,
At home, on land, on sea.

James Thomson [1834–1882]

AMYNTA

My sheep I neglected, I broke my sheep-crook,
And all the gay haunts of my youth I forsook;
No more for Amynta fresh garlands I wove;
For ambition, I said would soon cure me of love.

Oh, what had my youth with ambition to do?
Why left I Amynta? Why broke I my vow?
Oh, give me my sheep, and my sheep-hook restore,
And I'll wander from love and Amynta no more.

Through regions remote in vain do I rove,
And bid the wide ocean secure me from love!
O fool! to imagine that aught could subdue
A love so well founded, a passion so true!

Alas! 'tis too late at thy fate to repine;
Poor shepherd, Amynta can never be thine:
Thy tears are all fruitless, thy wishes are vain,
The moments neglected return not again.

Gilbert Elliot [1722–1777]

"O NANCY! WILT THOU GO WITH ME"

O Nancy, wilt thou go with me,
Nor sigh to leave the flaunting town:
Can silent glens have charms for thee,
The lowly cot, the russet gown?
No longer dressed in silken sheen,
No longer decked with jewels rare,
Say, canst thou quit each courtly scene
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

O Nancy! when thou'rt far away,
Wilt thou not cast a wish behind?
Say, canst thou face the parching ray,
Nor shrink before the wintry wind?
O! can that soft and gentle mien
Extremes of hardship learn to bear,
Nor, sad, regret each courtly scene
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

O Nancy! canst thou love so true,
Through perils keen with me to go,
Or when thy swain mishap shall rue,
To share with him the pang of woe?
Say, should disease or pain befall,
Wilt thou assume the nurse's care;
Nor wistful those gay scenes recall
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

And when at last thy love shall die,
Wilt thou receive his parting breath?
Wilt thou repress each struggling sigh,
And cheer with smiles the bed of death?
And wilt thou o'er his breathless clay
Strew flowers and drop the tender tear?
Nor *then* regret those scenes so gay
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

Thomas Percy [1729–1811]

CAVALIER'S SONG

If doughty deeds my lady please,
Right soon I'll mount my steed;
And strong his arm and fast his seat,
That bears frae me the meed.
I'll wear thy colors in my cap,
Thy picture in my heart;
And he that bends not to thine eye
Shall rue it to his smart!
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake nae care I'll take,
Though ne'er another trow me.

If gay attire delight thine eye
I'll dight me in array;
I'll tend thy chamber door all night,
And squire thee all the day.
If sweetest sounds can win thine ear,
These sounds I'll strive to catch;
Thy voice I'll steal to woo thysel',
That voice that nane can match.
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake nae care I'll take
Though ne'er another trow me.

But if fond love thy heart can gain,
I never broke a vow;
Nae maiden lays her skaith to me,
I never loved but you.

For you alone I ride the ring,
For you I wear the blue;
For you alone I strive to sing,
O tell me how to woo!
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake nae care I'll take
Though ne'er another trow me.

Robert Cunninghame-Graham [? –1797?]

"MY HEART IS A LUTE"

Alas, that my heart is a lute,
Whereon you have learned to play!
For a many years it was mute,
Until one summer's day
You took it, and touched it, and made it thrill,
And it thrills and throbs, and quivers still!

I had known you, dear, so long!
Yet my heart did not tell me why
It should burst one morn into song,
And wake to new life with a cry,
Like a babe that sees the light of the sun,
And for whom this great world has just begun.

Your lute is enshrined, cased in,
Kept close with love's magic key,
So no hand but yours can win
And wake it to minstrelsy;
Yet leave it not silent too long, nor alone,
Lest the strings should break, and the music be done.

Anne Barnard [1750–1825]

SONG

From "The Duenna"

Had I a heart for falsehood framed,
I ne'er could injure you;
For though your tongue no promise claimed,
Your charms would make me true:

Then, lady, dread not here deceit,
  Nor fear to suffer wrong,
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
  And lovers in the young.

But when they find that you have blessed
  Another with your heart,
They'll bid aspiring passion rest,
  And act a brother's part:
Then, lady, dread not here deceit
  Nor fear to suffer wrong;
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
  And brothers in the young.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan [1751–1816]

MEETING

My Damon was the first to wake
  The gentle flame that cannot die;
My Damon is the last to take
  The faithful bosom's softest sigh:
The life between is nothing worth,
  O cast it from thy thought away!
Think of the day that gave it birth,
  And this its sweet returning day.

Buried be all that has been done,
  Or say that naught is done amiss;
For who the dangerous path can shun
  In such bewildering world as this?
But love can every fault forgive,
  Or with a tender look reprove;
And now let naught in memory live
  But that we meet, and that we love.

George Crabbe [1754–1832]

"O WERE MY LOVE YON LILAC FAIR"

O were my Love yon lilac fair,
  Wi' purple blossoms to the spring,
And I a bird to shelter there,
  When wearied on my little wing;

How I wad mourn when it was torn
By autumn wild and winter rude!
But I wad sing on wanton wing
When youthfu' May its bloom renewed.

O gin my Love were yon red rose
That grows upon the castle wa',
And I mysel a drap o' dew,
Into her bonnie breast to fa';
O there, beyond expression blest,
I'd feast on beauty a' the night;
Sealed on her silk-saft faulds to rest,
Till fleyed awa' by Phœbus' light.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"BONNIE WEE THING"

Bonnie wee thing! cannie wee thing!
Lovely wee thing! wert thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should tine.
Wishfully I look, and languish
In that bonnie face o' thine;
And my heart it stounds wi' anguish,
Lest my wee thing be na mine.

Wit and grace, and love and beauty,
In ae constellation shine;
To adore thee is my duty,
Goddess o' this soul o' mine!
Bonnie wee thing, cannie wee thing,
Lovely wee thing, wert thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should tine.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

ROSE AYLMER

Ah, what avails the sceptered race!
Ah, what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and sighs
I consecrate to thee.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

"TAKE BACK THE VIRGIN PAGE"

WRITTEN ON RETURNING A BLANK BOOK

Take back the Virgin Page
White and unwritten still;
Some hand more calm and sage
The leaf must fill.
Thoughts came as pure as light—
Pure as even *you* require:
But oh! each word I write
Love turns to fire.

Yet let me keep the book:
Oft shall my heart renew,
When on its leaves I look,
Dear thoughts of you.
Like you, 'tis fair and bright;
Like you, too bright and fair
To let wild passion write
One wrong wish there.

Haply, when from those eyes
Far, far away I roam,
Should calmer thoughts arise
Towards you and home;
Fancy may trace some line
Worthy those eyes to meet,
Thoughts that not burn, but shine,
Pure, calm, and sweet.

And as o'er ocean far
Seamen their records keep,
Led by some hidden star

Through the cold deep;
So may the words I write
Tell through what storms I stray,
You still the unseen light
Guiding my way.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS"

Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervor and faith of a soul may be known,
To which time will but make thee more dear!
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns to her god when he sets
The same look which she turned when he rose!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

THE NUN

If you become a nun, dear,
A friar I will be;
In any cell you run, dear,
Pray look behind for me.
The roses all turn pale, too;
The doves all take the veil, too;
The blind will see the show;
What! you become a nun, my dear,
I'll not believe it, no!

If you become a nun, dear,
The bishop Love will be:
The Cupids every one, dear,
Will chant, "We trust in thee!"
The incense will go sighing.
The candles fall a-dying,
The water turn to wine:
What! you go take the vows, my dear?
You may—but they'll be mine.

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

ONLY OF THEE AND ME

Only of thee and me the night wind sings,
Only of us the sailors speak at sea,
The earth is filled with wondered whisperings
Only of thee and me.

Only of thee and me the breakers chant,
Only of us the stir in bush and tree;
The rain and sunshine tell the eager plant
Only of thee and me.

Only of thee and me, till all shall fade;
Only of us the whole world's thoughts can be—
For we are Love, and God Himself is made
Only of thee and me.

Louis Untermeyer [1885–

TO ———

One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And Pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love;
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not:
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

FROM THE ARABIC

My faint spirit was sitting in the light
Of thy looks, my love;
It panted for thee like the hind at noon
For the brooks, my love.
Thy barb, whose hoofs outspeed the tempest's flight,
Bore thee far from me;
My heart, for my weak feet were weary soon,
Did companion thee.

Ah! fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
Or the death they bear,
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove
With the wings of care;
In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,
Shall mine cling to thee,
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
It may bring to thee.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

THE WANDERING KNIGHT'S SONG

My ornaments are arms,
My pastime is in war,
My bed is cold upon the wold,
My lamp yon star.

My journeyings are long,
My slumbers short and broken;
From hill to hill I wander still,
Kissing thy token.

I ride from land to land,
I sail from sea to sea;
Some day more kind I fate may find,
Some night, kiss thee.

John Gibson Lockhart [1794–1854]

SONG

Love's on the highroad,
Love's in the byroad—
Love's on the meadow, and Love's in the mart!
And down every byway
Where I've taken my way
I've met Love a-smiling—for Love's in my heart!

Dana Burnett [1888–

THE SECRET LOVE

You and I have found the secret way,
None can bar our love or say us nay:
All the world may stare and never know
You and I are twined together so.

You and I for all his vaunted width
Know the giant Space is but a myth;
Over miles and miles of pure deceit
You and I have found our lips can meet.

You and I have laughed the leagues apart
In the soft delight of heart to heart.
If there's a gulf to meet or limit set,
You and I have never found it yet.

You and I have trod the backward way
To the happy heart of yesterday,
To the love we felt in ages past.
You and I have found it still to last.

You and I have found the joy had birth
In the angel childhood of the earth,
Hid within the heart of man and maid.
You and I of Time are not afraid.

You and I can mock his fabled wing,
For a kiss is an immortal thing.
And the throb wherein those old lips met
Is a living music in us yet.

A. E. (*George William Russell*) [1867–

THE FLOWER OF BEAUTY

SWEET in her green dell the flower of beauty slumbers,
Lulled by the faint breezes sighing through her hair;
Sleeps she, and hears not the melancholy numbers
Breathed to my sad lute amid the lonely air?

Down from the high cliffs the rivulet is teeming
To wind round the willow-banks that lure him from above:
Oh that, in tears from my rocky prison streaming,
I too could glide to the bower of my love!

Ah, where the woodbines with sleepy arms have wound her,
Opes she her eyelids at the dream of my lay,
Listening like the dove, while the fountains echo round her,
To her lost mate's call in the forest far away?

Come, then, my bird! for the peace thou ever bearest,
Still Heaven's messenger of comfort be to me;
Come! this fond bosom, my faithfulest, my fairest,
Bleeds with its death-wound,—but deeper yet for thee.

George Darley [1795–1846]

MY SHARE OF THE WORLD

I AM jealous: I am true:
Sick at heart for love of you,
O my share of the world!
I am cold, O, cold as stone
To all men save you alone.

Seven times slower creeps the day
When your face is far away,
O my share of the world!

Seven times darker falls the night.
When you gladden not my sight.

Measureless my joy and pride
Would you choose me for your bride,
O my share of the world!
For your face is my delight,
Morn and even, noon and night.

To the dance and to the wake
Still I go but for your sake,
O my share of the world!
Just to see your face awhile,
Meet your eyes and win your smile.

And the gay word on my lip
Never lets my secret slip
To my share of the world!
Light my feet trip over the green—
But my heart cries in the keen!

My poor mother sighs anew
When my looks go after you,
O my share of the world!
And my father's brow grows black
When you smile and turn your back.

I would part with wealth and ease,
I would go beyond the seas,
For my share of the world!
I would leave my hearth and home
If he only whispered "Come!"

Houseless under sun and dew,
I would beg my bread with you,
O my share of the world!
Houseless in the snow and storm,
Your heart's love would keep me warm.

I would pray and I would crave
To be with you in the grave,
O my share of the world!

I would go through fire and flood,
I would give up all but God
For my share of the world!

Alice Furlong [1875–

SONG

A LAKE and a fairy boat
To sail in the moonlight clear,—
And merrily we would float
From the dragons that watch us here!

Thy gown should be snow-white silk,
And strings of orient pearls,
Like gossamers dipped in milk,
Should twine with thy raven curls.

Red rubies should deck thy hands,
And diamonds be thy dower—
But fairies have broke their wands,
And wishing has lost its power!

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

"SMILE AND NEVER HEED ME"

THOUGH, when other maids stand by,
I may deign thee no reply,
Turn not then away, and sigh,—
Smile, and never heed me!
If our love, indeed, be such
As must thrill at every touch,
Why should others learn as much?—
Smile, and never heed me!

Even if, with maiden pride,
I should bid thee quit my side,
Take this lesson for thy guide,—
Smile, and never heed me!

But when stars and twilight meet,
And the dew is falling sweet,
And thou hear'st my coming feet,—
Then—thou then—mayst heed me!

Charles Swain [1801–1874]

ARE THEY NOT ALL MINISTERING SPIRITS?

We see them not—we cannot hear
The music of their wing—
Yet know we that they sojourn near,
The Angels of the spring!

They glide along this lovely ground
When the first violet grows;
Their graceful hands have just unbound
The zone of yonder rose.

I gather it for thy dear breast,
From stain and shadow free:
That which an Angel's touch hath blest
Is meet, my love, for thee!

Robert Stephen Hawker [1803–1875]

MAIDEN EYES

You never bade me hope, 'tis true;
I asked you not to swear:
But I looked in those eyes of blue,
And read a promise there.

The vow should bind, with maiden sighs
That maiden lips have spoken:
But that which looks from maiden eyes
Should last of all be broken.

Gerald Griffin [1803–1840]

HALLOWED PLACES

I PASS my days among the quiet places
Made sacred by your feet.
The air is cool in the fresh woodland spaces,
The meadows very sweet.

The sunset fills the wide sky with its splendor,
The glad birds greet the night;
I stop and listen for a voice strong, tender,
I wait those dear eyes' light.

You are the heart of every gleam of glory,
Your presence fills the air,
About you gathers all the fair year's story;
I read you everywhere.

Alice Freeman Palmer [1855–1902]

THE LADY'S "YES"

"YES," I answered you last night;
"No," this morning, sir, I say:
Colors seen by candle-light
Will not look the same by day.

When the viols played their best,
Lamps above, and laughs below,
Love me sounded like a jest,
Fit for *yes* or fit for *no*.

Call me false or call me free,
Vow, whatever light may shine,—
No man on your face shall see
Any grief for change on mine.

Yet the sin is on us both;
Time to dance is not to woo;
Wooing light makes fickle troth,
Scorn of *me* recoils on *you*.

Learn to win a lady's faith
  Nobly, as the thing is high,
Bravely, as for life and death,
  With a loyal gravity.

Lead her from the festive boards,
  Point her to the starry skies,
Guard her, by your truthful words,
  Pure from courtship's flatteries.

By your truth she shall be true,
  Ever true, as wives of yore;
And her *yes*, once said to you,
  Shall be Yes for evermore.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

SONG

From "The Miller's Daughter"

It is the miller's daughter,
  And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
  That trembles in her ear;
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
  About her dainty, dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
  In sorrow and in rest;
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
  And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom
  With her laughter or her sighs;

And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasped at night.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

LILIAN

Airy, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Clasps her tiny hand above me,
Laughing all she can;
She'll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lilian.

When my passion seeks
Pleasance in love-sighs,
She, looking through and through me,
Thoroughly to undo me,
Smiling, never speaks:
So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,
From beneath her gathered wimple
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughters dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks;
Then away she flies.

Prithee weep, May Lilian!
Gaiety without eclipse
Wearieth me, May Lilian:
Through my very heart it thrilleth,
When from crimson-threaded lips
Silver-treble laughter thrilleth:
Prithee weep, May Lilian!

Praying all I can,
If prayers will not hush thee,
Airy Lilian,
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,
Fairy Lilian.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

BUGLE SONG

From "The Princess"

THE splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

RONSARD TO HIS MISTRESS

"Quand vous serez bien vieille, le soir à la chandelle
Assise auprès du feu devisant et filant,
Direz, chantant mes vers en vous esmerveillant,
Ronsard m'a célébré du temps que j'étois belle."

SOME winter night, shut snugly in
Beside the fagot in the hall,
I think I see you sit and spin,
Surrounded by your maidens all.
Old tales are told, old songs are sung,
Old days come back to memory;
You say, "When I was fair and young,
A poet sang of me!"

There's not a maiden in your hall,
  Though tired and sleepy ever so,
But wakes, as you my name recall,
  And longs the history to know.
And, as the piteous tale is said,
  Of lady cold and lover true,
Each, musing, carries it to bed,
  And sighs and envies you!

"Our lady's old and feeble now,"
  They'll say: "she once was fresh and fair,
And yet she spurned her lover's vow,
  And heartless left him to despair:
The lover lies in silent earth,
  No kindly mate the lady cheers;
She sits beside a lonely hearth,
  With threescore and ten years!"

Ah! dreary thoughts and dreams are those,
  But wherefore yield me to despair,
While yet the poet's bosom glows,
  While yet the dame is peerless fair!
Sweet lady mine! while yet 'tis time
  Requite my passion and my truth,
And gather in their blushing prime
  The roses of your youth!

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

"WHEN YOU ARE OLD"

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

William Butler Yeats [1865–

SONG

From "Pippa Passes"

You'll love me yet!—and I can tarry
  Your love's protracted growing:
June reared that bunch of flowers you carry,
  From seeds of April's sowing.

I plant a heartfull now: some seed
  At least is sure to strike,
And yield—what you'll not pluck indeed,
  Not love, but, may be, like.

You'll look at least on love's remains,
  A grave's one violet:
Your look?—that pays a thousand pains.
  What's death? You'll love me yet!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

LOVE IN A LIFE

Room after room,
I hunt the house through
We inhabit together.
Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her—
Next time, herself!—not the trouble behind her
Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume!
As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath blossomed anew:
Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave of her feather.

Yet the day wears,
And door succeeds door;
I try the fresh fortune—
Range the wide house from the wing to the center.

Still the same chance! she goes out as I enter.
Spend my whole day in the quest,—who cares?
But 'tis twilight, you see,—with such suites to explore,
Such closets to search, such alcoves to importune!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

LIFE IN A LOVE

Escape me?
Never—
Beloved!
While I am I, and you are you,
So long as the world contains us both,
Me the loving and you the loth,
While the one eludes, must the other pursue.
My life is a fault at last, I fear:
It seems too much like a fate, indeed!
Though I do my best I shall scarce succeed.
But what if I fail of my purpose here?
It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
And, baffled, get up and begin again,—
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.
While, look but once from your farthest bound
At me so deep in the dust and dark,
No sooner the old hope drops to ground
Than a new one, straight to the self-same mark,
I shape me—
Ever
Removed!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE WELCOME

Come in the evening, or come in the morning;
Come when you're looked for, or come without warning:
Kisses and welcome you'll find here before you,
And the oftener you come here the more I'll adore you!
Light is my heart since the day we were plighted;
Red is my cheek that they told me was blighted;

The green of the trees looks far greener than ever,
And the linnets are singing, "True lovers don't sever!"

I'll pull you sweet flowers, to wear if you choose them,—
Or, after you've kissed them, they'll lie on my bosom;
I'll fetch from the mountain its breeze to inspire you;
I'll fetch from my fancy a tale that won't tire you.
Oh! your step's like the rain to the summer-vexed farmer,
Or saber and shield to a knight without armor;
I'll sing you sweet songs till the stars rise above me,
Then, wandering, I'll wish you in silence to love me.

We'll look through the trees at the cliff and the eyrie;
We'll tread round the rath on the track of the fairy;
We'll look on the stars, and we'll list to the river,
Till you ask of your darling what gift you can give her:
Oh! she'll whisper you—"Love, as unchangeably beaming,
And trust, when in secret, most tunefully streaming;
Till the starlight of heaven above us shall quiver,
As our souls flow in one down eternity's river."

So come in the evening, or come in the morning;
Come when you're looked for, or come without warning:
Kisses and welcome you'll find here before you,
And the oftener you come here the more I'll adore you!
Light is my heart since the day we were plighted;
Red is my cheek that they told me was blighted;
The green of the trees looks far greener than ever,
And the linnets are singing, "True lovers don't sever!"

Thomas Osborne Davis [1814–1845]

URANIA

She smiles and smiles, and will not sigh,
While we for hopeless passion die;
Yet she could love, those eyes declare,
Were but men nobler than they are.

Eagerly once her gracious ken
Was turned upon the sons of men;

But light the serious visage grew—
She looked, and smiled, and saw them through.

Our petty souls, our strutting wits,
Our labored, puny passion-fits—
Ah, may she scorn them still, till we
Scorn them as bitterly as she!

Yet show her once, ye heavenly Powers,
One of some worthier race than ours!
One for whose sake she once might prove
How deeply she who scorns can love.

His eyes be like the starry lights;
His voice like sounds of summer nights;
In all his lovely mien let pierce
The magic of the universe!

And she to him will reach her hand,
And gazing in his eyes will stand,
And know her friend, and weep for glee,
And cry, Long, long I've looked for thee!

Then will she weep—with smiles, till then
Coldly she mocks the sons of men.
Till then her lovely eyes maintain
Their pure, unwavering, deep disdain.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

THREE SHADOWS

I LOOKED and saw your eyes in the shadow of your hair,
As a traveler sees the stream in the shadow of the wood;—
And I said, "My faint heart sighs, ah me! to linger there,
To drink deep and to dream in that sweet solitude."

I looked and saw your heart in the shadow of your eyes,
As a seeker sees the gold in the shadow of the stream;
And I said, "Ah, me! what art should win the immortal prize,
Whose want must make life cold and Heaven a hollow dream?"

I looked and saw your love in the shadow of your heart,
As a diver sees the pearl in the shadow of the sea;
And I murmured, not above my breath, but all apart,—
"Ah! you can love, true girl, and is your love for me?"

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

SINCE WE PARTED

Since we parted yester eve,
I do love thee, love, believe,
Twelve times dearer, twelve hours longer,—
One dream deeper, one night stronger,
One sun surer,—thus much more
Than I loved thee, love, before.

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831–1891]

A MATCH

If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,
Blown fields or flowerful closes,
Green pleasure or gray grief;
If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather

With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

A BALLAD OF LIFE

I FOUND in dreams a place of wind and flowers,
Full of sweet trees and color of glad grass,
In midst whereof there was
A lady clothed like summer with sweet hours,

Her beauty, fervent as a fiery moon
Made my blood burn and swoon
Like a flame rained upon.
Sorrow had filled her shaken eyelids' blue,
And her mouth's sad red heavy rose all through
Seemed sad with glad things gone.

She held a little cithern by the strings,
Shaped heartwise, strung with subtle-colored hair
Of some dead lute player
That in dead years had done delicious things.
The seven strings were named accordingly;
The first string charity,
The second tenderness,
The rest were pleasure, sorrow, sleep, and sin,
And loving kindness, that is pity's kin
And is most pitiless.

There were three men with her, each garmented
With gold, and shod with gold upon the feet;
And with plucked ears of wheat.
The first man's hair was wound upon his head:
His face was red, and his mouth curled and sad;
All his gold garment had
Pale stains of dust and rust.
A riven hood was pulled across his eyes;
The token of him being upon this wise
Made for a sign of Lust.

The next was Shame, with hollow heavy face
Colored like green wood when flame kindles it.
He hath such feeble feet
They may not well endure in any place.
His face was full of gray old miseries.
And all his blood's increase
Was even increase of pain.
The last was Fear, that is akin to Death;
He is Shame's friend, and always as Shame saith
Fear answers him again.

My soul said in me: This is marvelous,
  Seeing the air's face is not so delicate
  Nor the sun's grace so great,
If sin and she be kin or amorous.
And seeing where maidens served her on their knees,
  I bade one crave of these
    To know the cause thereof.
Then Fear said: I am Pity that was dead.
And Shame said: I am Sorrow comforted.
    And Lust said: I am Love.

Thereat her hands began a lute-playing
  And her sweet mouth a song in a strange tongue;
  And all the while she sung
There was no sound but long tears following
Long tears upon men's faces, waxen white
  With extreme sad delight.
    But those three following men
Became as men raised up among the dead;
Great glad mouths open, and fair cheeks made red
    With child's blood come again.

Then I said: Now assuredly I see
  My lady is perfect, and transfigureth
  All sin and sorrow and death,
Making them fair as her own eyelids be,
Or lips wherein my whole soul's life abides;
  Or as her sweet white sides
    And bosom carved to kiss.
Now therefore, if her pity further me,
Doubtless for her sake all my days shall be
    As righteous as she is.

Forth, ballad, and take roses in both arms,
  Even till the top rose touch thee in the throat
Where the least thornprick harms;
  And girdled in thy golden singing-coat,
Come thou before my lady and say this:

Borgia, thy gold hair's color burns in me,
Thy mouth makes beat my blood in feverish rhymes;
Therefore so many as these roses be,
Kiss me so many times.
Then it may be, seeing how sweet she is,
That she will stoop herself none otherwise
Than a blown vine-branch doth,
And kiss thee with soft laughter on thine eyes,
Ballad, and on thy mouth.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

A LEAVE-TAKING

Let us go hence, my songs; she will not hear.
Let us go hence together without fear;
Keep silence now, for singing time is over,
And over all old things and all things dear.
She loves not you nor me as all we love her.
Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear,
She would not hear.

Let us rise up and part; she will not know.
Let us go seaward as the great winds go,
Full of blown sand and foam; what help is there?
There is no help, for all these things are so,
And all the world is bitter as a tear,
And how these things are, though ye strove to show,
She would not know.

Let us go home and hence; she will not weep.
We gave love many dreams and days to keep,
Flowers without scent, and fruits that would not grow,
Saying, "If thou wilt, thrust in thy sickle and reap."
All is reaped now; no grass is left to mow;
And we that sowed, though all we fell on sleep,
She would not weep.

Let us go hence and rest; she will not love.
She shall not hear us if we sing hereof,
Nor see love's ways how sore they are and steep.
Come hence, let be, lie still; it is enough.
Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep;
And though she saw all heaven in flower above,
She would not love.

Let us give up, go down; she will not care.
Though all the stars made gold of all the air,
And the sea moving saw before it move
One moon-flower making all the foam-flowers fair;
Though all those waves went over us, and drove
Deep down the stifling lips and drowning hair,
She would not care.

Let us go hence, go hence; she will not see.
Sing all once more together; surely she,
She too, remembering days and words that were,
Will turn a little towards us, sighing; but we,
We are hence, we are gone, as though we had not been there.
Nay, and though all men seeing had pity on me,
She would not see.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

A LYRIC

There's nae lark loves the lift, my dear,
There's nae ship loves the sea,
There's nae bee loves the heather-bells,
That loves as I love thee, my love,
That loves as I love thee.

The whin shines fair upon the fell,
The blithe broom on the lea:
The muirside wind is merry at heart:
It's a' for love of thee, my love,
It's a' for love of thee.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

MAUREEN

O, you plant the pain in my heart with your wistful eyes,
Girl of my choice, Maureen!
Will you drive me mad for the kisses your shy, sweet mouth denies,
Maureen?

Like a walking ghost I am, and no words to woo,
White rose of the West, Maureen:
For it's pale you are, and the fear that's on you is over me too,
Maureen!

Sure it's one complaint that's on us, asthore, this day,
Bride of my dreams, Maureen:
The smart of the bee that stung us his honey must cure, they say,
Maureen!

I'll coax the light to your eyes, and the rose to your face,
Mavourneen, my own Maureen!
When I feel the warmth of your breast, and your nest is my arm's embrace,
Maureen!

O where was the King o' the World that day—only me?
My one true love, Maureen!
And you the Queen with me there, and your throne in my heart, machree,
Maureen!

John Todhunter [1839–

A LOVE SYMPHONY

Along the garden ways just now
I heard the flowers speak;
The white rose told me of your brow,
The red rose of your cheek;

The lily of your bended head,
The bindweed of your hair;
Each looked its loveliest and said
You were more fair.

I went into the wood anon,
And heard the wild birds sing,
How sweet you were, they warbled on,
Piped, trilled, the selfsame thing.
Thrush, blackbird, linnet, without pause
The burden did repeat,
And still began again because
You were more sweet.

And then I went down to the sea,
And heard it murmuring too,
Part of an ancient mystery,
All made of me and you:
How many a thousand years ago
I loved, and you were sweet—
Longer I could not stay, and so
I fled back to your feet.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844–1881]

LOVE ON THE MOUNTAIN

My love comes down from the mountain
Through the mists of dawn;
I look, and the star of the morning
From the sky is gone.

My love comes down from the mountain,
At dawn, dewy sweet;
Did you step from the star to the mountain,
O little white feet?

O whence came your twining tresses
And your shining eyes,
But out of the gold of the morning
And the blue of the skies?

The misty mountain is burning
In the sun's red fire,
And the heart in my breast is burning
And lost in desire.

I follow you into the valley
But no word can I say;
To the East or the West I will follow
Till the dusk of my day.

Thomas Boyd [1867-

KATE TEMPLE'S SONG

Only a touch, and nothing more:
Ah! but never so touched before!
Touch of lip, was it? Touch of hand?
Either is easy to understand.
Earth may be smitten with fire or frost—
Never the touch of true love lost.

Only a word, was it? Scarce a word!
Musical whisper, softly heard,
Syllabled nothing—just a breath—
'Twill outlast life and 'twill laugh at death.
Love with so little can do so much—
Only a word, sweet! Only a touch!

Mortimer Collins [1827–1876]

MY QUEEN

When and how shall I earliest meet her?
What are the words she first will say?
By what name shall I learn to greet her?
I know not now; it will come some day!
With the selfsame sunlight shining upon her,
Shining down on her ringlets' sheen,
She is standing somewhere—she I shall honor
She that I wait for, my queen, my queen!

Whether her hair be golden or raven,
Whether her eyes be hazel or blue,
I know not now; but 'twill be engraven
Some day hence as my loveliest hue.
Many a girl I have loved for a minute,
Worshipped many a face I have seen:
Ever and aye there was something in it,
Something that could not be hers, my queen!

I will not dream of her tall and stately,
She that I love may be fairy light;
I will not say she must move sedately,—
Whatever she does it will then be right.
She may be humble or proud, my lady,
Or that sweet calm which is just between;
And whenever she comes she will find me ready
To do her homage, my queen, my queen!

But she must be courteous, she must be holy,
Pure in her spirit, this maiden I love;
Whether her birth be noble or lowly
I care no more than the spirits above.
But I'll give my heart to my lady's keeping,
And ever her strength on mine shall lean;
And the stars may fall, and the saints be weeping
Ere I cease to love her, my queen, my queen!

Unknown

"DARLING, TELL ME YES"

One little minute more, Maud,
One little whisper more;
I have a word to speak, Maud,
I never breathed before.
What can it be but *love*, Maud;
And do I rightly guess
'Tis pleasant to your ear, Maud?
O darling! tell me *yes!*

The burden of my heart, Maud,
  There's little need to tell;
There's little need to say, Maud,
  I've loved you long and well.
There's language in a sigh, Maud,
  One's meaning to express,
And yours—was it for *me*, Maud?
  O darling! tell me *yes!*

My eyes have told my love, Maud,
  And on my burning cheek,
You've read the tender thought, Maud,
  My lips refused to speak.
I gave you all my heart, Maud,
  'Tis needless to confess;
And did you give me yours, Maud?
  O darling! tell me *yes!*

'Tis sad to starve a love, Maud,
  So worshipful and true;
I know a little cot, Maud,
  Quite large enough for two;
And you will be my wife, Maud?
  So may you ever bless
Through all your sunny life, Maud,
  The day you answered *yes!*

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

"DO I LOVE THEE?"

Do I love thee? Ask the bee
If she loves the flowery lea,
Where the honeysuckle blows
And the fragrant clover grows.
  As she answers, Yes or No,
  Darling! take my answer so.

Do I love thee? Ask the bird
When her matin song is heard,

If she loves the sky so fair,
Fleecy cloud and liquid air.
As she answers, Yes or No,
Darling! take my answer so.

Do I love thee? Ask the flower
If she loves the vernal shower,
Or the kisses of the sun,
Or the dew, when day is done.
As she answers, Yes or No,
Darling! take my answer so.

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

"O WORLD, BE NOBLER"

O WORLD, be nobler, for her sake!
If she but knew thee what thou art,
What wrongs are borne, what deeds are done
In thee, beneath thy daily sun,
Know'st thou not that her tender heart
For pain and very shame would break?
O World, be nobler, for her sake!

Laurence Binyon [1869–

"IN THE DARK, IN THE DEW"

IN the dark, in the dew,
I am smiling back at you;
But you cannot see the smile,
And you're thinking all the while
How I turn my face from you,
In the dark, in the dew.

In the dark, in the dew,
All my love goes out to you,
Flutters like a bird in pain,
Dies and comes to life again;
While you whisper, "Sweetest, hark;
Someone's sighing in the dark,
In the dark, in the dew!"

In the dark, in the dew,
All my heart cries out to you,
As I cast it at your feet,
Sweet indeed, but not too sweet;
Wondering will you hear it beat,
Beat for you, and bleed for you,
In the dark, in the dew!

Mary Newmarch Prescott [1849–1888]

NANNY

Oh, for an hour when the day is breaking,
Down by the shore where the tide is making,
Fair as a white cloud, thou, love, near me,
None but the waves and thyself to hear me!
Oh, to my breast how these arms would press thee!
Wildly my heart in its joy would bless thee!
Oh, how the soul thou has won would woo thee,
Girl of the snow neck, closer to me!

Oh, for an hour as the day advances,
Out where the breeze on the broom-bush dances,
Watching the lark, with the sun-ray o'er us,
Winging the notes of his Heaven-taught chorus!
Oh, to be there, and my love before me,
Soft as a moonbeam smiling o'er me!
Thou would'st but love, and I would woo thee,
Girl of the dark eye, closer to me!

Oh, for an hour where the sun first found us,
Out in the eve with its red sheets round us,
Brushing the dew from the gale's soft winglets,
Pearly and sweet, with thy long dark ringlets!
Oh, to be there on the sward beside thee,
Telling my tale, though I know you'd chide me!
Sweet were thy voice, though it should undo me,—
Girl of the dark locks, closer to me!

Oh, for an hour by night or by day, love,
Just as the Heavens and thou might say, love!

Far from the stare of the cold-eyed many,
Bound in the breath of my dove-souled Nanny!
Oh, for the pure chains that have bound me,
Warm from thy red lips circling round me!
Oh, in my soul, as the light above me,
Queen of the pure hearts, do I love thee!

Francis Davis [1810–1885]

A TRIFLE

I KNOW not why, but even to me
My songs seem sweet when read to thee.

Perhaps in this the pleasure lies—
I read my thoughts within thine eyes,

And so dare fancy that my art
May sink as deeply as thy heart.

Perhaps I love to make my words
Sing round thee like so many birds,

Or, maybe, they are only sweet
As they seem offerings at thy feet.

Or haply, Lily, when I speak,
I think, perchance, they touch thy cheek,

Or with a yet more precious bliss,
Die on thy red lips in a kiss.

Each reason here—I cannot tell—
Or all perhaps may solve the spell.

But if she watch when I am by,
Lily may deeper see than I.

Henry Timrod [1829–1867]

ROMANCE

I WILL make you brooches and toys for your delight
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
I will make a palace fit for you and me,
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom,
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear!
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

"OR EVER THE KNIGHTLY YEARS WERE GONE"

Or ever the knightly years were gone
With the old world to the grave,
I was a King in Babylon
And you were a Christian Slave.

I saw, I took, I cast you by,
I bent and broke your pride.
You loved me well, or I heard them lie,
But your longing was denied.
Surely I knew that by and by
You cursed your gods and died.

And a myriad suns have set and shone
Since then upon the grave
Decreed by the King in Babylon
To her that had been his Slave.

The pride I trampled is now my scathe,
For it tramples me again.
The old resentment lasts like death,
For you love, yet you refrain.
I break my heart on your hard unfaith,
And I break my heart in vain.

Yet not for an hour do I wish undone
The deed beyond the grave,
When I was a King in Babylon
And you were a Virgin Slave.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

RUS IN URBE

Poets are singing the whole world over
Of May in melody, joys for June;
Dusting their feet in the careless clover,
And filling their hearts with the blackbird's tune.
The "brown bright nightingale" strikes with pity
The sensitive heart of a count or clown;
But where is the song for our leafy city,
And where the rhymes for our lovely town?

"O for the Thames, and its rippling reaches,
Where almond rushes, and breezes sport!
Take me a walk under Burnham Beeches;
Give me a dinner at Hampton Court!"
Poets, be still, though your hearts I harden;
We've flowers by day and have scents at dark,
The limes are in leaf in the cockney garden,
And lilacs blossom in Regent's Park.

"Come for a blow," says a reckless fellow,
Burned red and brown by passionate sun;
"Come to the downs, where the gorse is yellow;
The season of kisses has just begun!
Come to the fields where bluebells shiver,
Hear cuckoo's carol, or plaint of dove;
Come for a row on the silent river;
Come to the meadows and learn to love!"

Yes, I will come when this wealth is over
Of softened color and perfect tone—
The lilac's better than fields of clover;
I'll come when blossoming May has flown.
When dust and dirt of a trampled city
Have dragged the yellow laburnum down,
I'll take my holiday—more's the pity—
And turn my back upon London town.

Margaret! am I so wrong to love it,
This misty town that your face shines through?
A crown of blossom is waved above it;
But heart and life of the whirl—*'tis you!*

Margaret! pearl! I have sought and found you;
And, though the paths of the wind are free,
I'll follow the ways of the world around you,
And build my nest on the nearest tree!

Clement Scott [1841–1904]

MY ROAD

THERE'S a road to heaven, a road to hell,
A road for the sick and one for the well;
There's a road for the false and a road for the true,
But the road for me is the road to you.

There's a road through prairie and forest and glen,
A road to each place in human ken;
There's a road over earth and a road over sea,
But the road to you is the road for me.

There's a road for animal, bird, and beast,
A road for the greatest, a road for the least;
There's a road that is old and a road that is new,
But the road for me is the road to you.

There's a road for the heart and a road for the soul,
There's a road for a part and a road for the whole;
There's a road for love,—which few ever see,—
'Tis the road to you and the road for me.

Oliver Opdyke [1878–

A WHITE ROSE

THE red rose whispers of passion,
And the white rose breathes of love;
Oh, the red rose is a falcon,
And the white rose is a dove.

But I send you a cream white rosebud
With a flush on its petal tips;
For the love that is purest and sweetest
Has a kiss of desire on the lips.

John Boyle O'Reilly [1844–1890]

"SOME DAY OF DAYS"

Some day, some day of days, threading the street
With idle, heedless pace,
Unlooking for such grace
I shall behold your face!
Some day, some day of days, thus may we meet.

Perchance the sun may shine from skies of May,
Or winter's icy chill
Touch whitely vale and hill.
What matter? I shall thrill
Through every vein with summer on that day.

Once more life's perfect youth will all come back,
And for a moment there
I shall stand fresh and fair,
And drop the garment care;
Once more my perfect youth will nothing lack.

I shut my eyes now, thinking how 'twill be—
How face to face each soul
Will slip its long control,
Forget the dismal dole
Of dreary Fate's dark, separating sea;

And glance to glance, and hand to hand in greeting,
The past with all its fears,
Its silences and tears,
Its lonely, yearning years,
Shall vanish in the moment of that meeting.

Nora Perry [1832–1896]

THE TELEPHONE

"When I was just as far as I could walk
From here to-day,
There was an hour
All still
When leaning with my head against a flower

I heard you talk.
Don't say I didn't, for I heard you say—
You spoke from that flower on the window sill—
Do you remember what it was you said?"

"First tell me what it was you thought you heard."

"Having found the flower and driven a bee away,
I leaned my head,
And holding by the stalk,
I listened and I thought I caught the word—
What was it? Did you call me by my name?
Or did you say—
Someone said 'Come'—I heard it as I bowed."

"I may have thought as much, but not aloud."

"Well, so I came."

Robert Frost [1875–

WHERE LOVE IS

By the rosy cliffs of Devon, on a green hill's crest,
I would build me a house as a swallow builds its nest;
I would curtain it with roses, and the wind should breathe to me
The sweetness of the roses and the saltness of the sea.

Where the Tuscan olives whiten in the hot blue day,
I would hide me from the heat in a little hut of gray,
While the singing of the husbandmen should scale my lattice green
From the golden rows of barley that the poppies blaze between.

Narrow is the street, Dear, and dingy are the walls
Wherein you wait my coming as the twilight falls.
All day with dreams I gild the grime till at your step I start—
Ah Love, my country in your arms—my home upon your heart!

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878–

THAT DAY YOU CAME

Such special sweetness was about
That day God sent you here,
I knew the lavender was out,
And it was mid of year.

Their common way the great winds blew,
The ships sailed out to sea;
Yet ere that day was spent I knew
Mine own had come to me.

As after song some snatch of tune
Lurks still in grass or bough,
So, somewhat of the end o' June
Lurks in each weather now.

The young year sets the buds astir,
The old year strips the trees;
But ever in my lavender
I hear the brawling bees.

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-

AMANTIUM IRÆ

When this, our rose, is faded,
And these, our days, are done,
In lands profoundly shaded
From tempest and from sun:
Ah, once more come together,
Shall we forgive the past,
And safe from worldly weather
Possess our souls at last?

Or in our place of shadows
Shall still we stretch an hand
To green, remembered meadows,
Of that old pleasant land?

And vainly there foregathered,
Shall we regret the sun?
The rose of love, ungathered?
The bay, we have not won?

Ah, child! the world's dark marges
May lead to Nevermore,
The stately funeral barges
Sail for an unknown shore,
And love we vow to-morrow,
And pride we serve to-day:
What if they both should borrow
Sad hues of yesterday?

Our pride! Ah, should we miss it,
Or will it serve at last?
Our anger, if we kiss it,
Is like a sorrow past.
While roses deck the garden,
While yet the sun is high,
Doff sorry pride for pardon,
Or ever love go by.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

IN A ROSE GARDEN

A HUNDRED years from now, dear heart,
We shall not care at all.
It will not matter then a whit,
The honey or the gall.
The summer days that we have known
Will all forgotten be and flown;
The garden will be overgrown
Where now the roses fall.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
We shall not mind the pain;
The throbbing crimson tide of life
Will not have left a stain.

The song we sing together, dear,
The dream we dream together here,
Will mean no more than means a tear
Amid a summer rain.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
The grief will all be o'er;
The sea of care will surge in vain
Upon a careless shore.
These glasses we turn down to-day
Here at the parting of the way—
We shall be wineless then as they,
And shall not mind it more.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
We'll neither know nor care
What came of all life's bitterness,
Or followed love's despair.
Then fill the glasses up again,
And kiss me through the rose-leaf rain;
We'll build one castle more in Spain,
And dream one more dream there.

John Bennett [1865–

"GOD BLESS YOU, DEAR, TO-DAY"

If there be graveyards in the heart
From which no roses spring,
A place of wrecks and old gray tombs
From which no birds take wing,
Where linger buried hopes and dreams
Like ghosts among the graves,
Why, buried hopes are dismal things,
And lonely ghosts are knaves!

If there come dreary winter days,
When summer roses fall
And lie, forgot, in withered drifts
Along the garden wall;

If all the wreaths a lover weaves
  Turn thorns upon the brow,—
Then out upon the silly fool
  Who makes not merry now!

For if we cannot keep the past,
  Why care for what's to come?
The instant's prick is all that stings,
  And then the place is numb.
If Life's a lie, and Love's a cheat,
  As I have heard men say,
Then here's a health to fond deceit—
  God bless you, dear, to-day!

John Bennett [1865–

TO-DAY

I BRING you all my olden days,
  My childhood's morning glow;
I love you down the meadow ways
  Where early blossoms blow:
And up deep lanes of long-gone-by,
  Shining with dew-drops yet,—
I wander still, till you and I
  Over the world are met.

I bring you all my lonely days,
  My heart that hungered so;
I love you through the wistful haze
  Of autumns burning low;
And on pale seas, beneath wan sky,
  By weary tides beset,
I voyage still, till you and I
  Over the world are met.

I bring you all my happy days,—
  Armfuls of flowers—oh,
I love you as the sunlight stays
  On mountains heaped with snow:
And where the dearest dream-buds lie,
  With tears and dew-drops wet,
I toss to-day; for you and I
  Over the world are met!

Benjamin R. C. Low [1880–

TO ARCADY

Across the hills of Arcady
  Into the Land of Song—
Ah, dear, if you will go with me
  The way will not be long!

It will not lead through solitudes
  Of wind-blown woods or sea;
Dear, no! the city's weariest moods
  May scarce veil Arcady.

'Tis in no unfamiliar land
  Lit by some distant star.
No! Arcady is where you stand,
  And Song is where you are!

So walk but hand in hand with me—
  No road can lead us wrong;
These are the hills of Arcady—
  Here is the Land of Song!

Charles Buxton Going [1863–

WILD WISHES

I wish, because the sweetness of your passing
  Makes all the earth a garden where you tread,
That I might be the meanest of your roses,
  To pave your path with petals passion-red!

I wish, because the softness of your breathing
  Stirs the white jasmine at your window frame,
That I might be the fragrance of a flower,
  To stir the night breeze with your dearest name!

I wish, because the glory of your dreaming
  Strews all the field of heaven with throbbing stars,
That I might storm the portals of your slumber,
  And soar with you beyond night's golden bars!

I wish to be the day you die, Beloved,
Though at its close my foolish heart must break!
But most of all, I wish, my dearest darling,
To be the Blessed Morning when you wake!

Ethel M. Hewitt [18 –

"BECAUSE OF YOU"

SWEET have I known the blossoms of the morning
Tenderly tinted to their hearts of dew:
But now my flowers have found a fuller fragrance,
Because of you.

Long have I worshiped in my soul's enshrining
High visions of the noble and the true—
Now all my aims and all my prayers are purer,
Because of you.

Wise have I seen the uses of life's labor;
To all its puzzles found some answering clue.
But now my life has learned a nobler meaning,
Because of you.

In the past days I chafed at pain and waiting,
Grasping at gladness as the children do;
Now it is sweet to wait and joy to suffer,
Because of you.

In the long years of silences that part us
Dimmed by my tears and darkened to my view,
Close shall I hold my memories and my madness,
Because of you.

Whether our lips shall touch or hands shall hunger,
Whether our love be fed or joys be few,
Life will be sweeter and more worth the living,
Because of you.

Sophia Almon Hensley [1866–

THEN

I GIVE thee treasures hour by hour,
That old-time princes asked in vain,
And pined for in their useless power,
Or died of passion's eager pain.

I give thee love as God gives light,
Aside from merit, or from prayer,
Rejoicing in its own delight,
And freer than the lavish air.

I give thee prayers, like jewels strung
On golden threads of hope and fear;
And tenderer thoughts than ever hung
In a sad angel's pitying tear.

As earth pours freely to the sea
Her thousand streams of wealth untold,
So flows my silent life to thee,
Glad that its very sands are gold.

What care I for thy carelessness?
I give from depths that overflow,
Regardless that their power to bless
Thy spirit cannot sound or know.

Far lingering on a distant dawn,
My triumph shines, more sweet than late;
When, from these mortal mists withdrawn,
Thy heart shall know me—I can wait.

Rose Terry Cooke [1827–1892]

THE MISSIVE

I THAT tremble at your feet
Am a rose;
Nothing dewier or more sweet
Buds or blows;
He that plucked me, he that threw me
Breathed in fire his whole soul through me.

How the cold air is infused
With the scent!
See, this satin leaf is bruised—
Bruised and bent,
Lift me, lift the wounded blossom,
Soothe it at your rosier bosom!

Frown not with averted eyes!
Joy's a flower
That is born a god, and dies
In an hour.
Take me, for the Summer closes,
And your life is but a rose's.

Edmund Gosse [1849–

PLYMOUTH HARBOR

Oh, what know they of harbors
Who toss not on the sea!
They tell of fairer havens
But none so fair there be

As Plymouth town outstretching
Her quiet arms to me;
Her breast's broad welcome spreading
From Mewstone to Penlee.

Ah, with this home-thought, darling,
Come crowding thoughts of thee.
Oh, what know they of harbors
Who toss not on the sea!

Mrs. Ernest Radford [1858–

THE SERF'S SECRET

I know a secret, such a one
The hawthorn blossoms spider-spun,
The dew-damp daisies in the grass
Laugh up to greet me as I pass
To meet the upland sun.

It is that I would rather be
The little page, on bended knee,
Who stoops to gather up her train
Beneath the porch-lamp's ruby rain
Than hold a realm in fee.

It is that in her scornful eye,
Too hid for courtly sneer to spy,
I saw, one day, a look which said
That I, and only I, might shed
Love-light across her sky.

I know a secret, such a one
The hawthorn blossoms spider-spun,
The dew-damp daisies in the grass
Laugh up to greet me as I pass
To meet the upland sun.

William Vaughn Moody [1869–1910]

"O, INEXPRESSIBLE AS SWEET"

O, INEXPRESSIBLE as sweet,
Love takes my voice away;
I cannot tell thee when we meet
What most I long to say.

But hadst thou hearing in thy heart
To know what beats in mine,
Then shouldst thou walk, where'er thou art,
In melodies divine.

So warbling birds lift higher notes
Than to our ears belong;
The music fills their throbbing throats,
But silence steals the song.

George Edward Woodberry [1855–

THE CYCLAMEN

OVER the plains where Persian hosts
Laid down their lives for glory
Flutter the cyclamens, like ghosts
That witness to their story.

Oh, fair! Oh, white! Oh, pure as snow!
On countless graves how sweet they grow!

Or crimson, like the cruel wounds
From which the life-blood, flowing,
Poured out where now on grassy mounds
The low, soft winds are blowing:
Oh, fair! Oh, red! Like blood of slain;
Not even time can cleanse that stain.

But when my dear these blossoms holds,
All loveliness her dower,
All woe and joy the past enfolds
In her find fullest flower.
Oh, fair! Oh, pure! Oh, white and red!
If she but live, what are the dead!

Arlo Bates [1850–

THE WEST-COUNTRY LOVER

THEN, lady, at last thou art sick of my sighing?
Good-bye!
So long as I sue, thou wilt still be denying?
Good-bye!
Ah, well! shall I vow then to serve thee forever,
And swear no unkindness our kinship can sever?
Nay, nay, dear my lass! here's an end of endeavor.
Good-bye!

Yet let no sweet ruth for my misery grieve thee.
Good-bye!
The man who has loved knows as well how to leave thee.
Good-bye!
The gorse is enkindled, there's bloom on the heather,
And love is my joy, and so too is fair weather;
I still ride abroad, though we ride not together.
Good-bye!

My horse is my mate; let the wind be my master.
Good-bye!
Though Care may pursue, yet my hound follows faster.
Good-bye!

The red deer's a-tremble in coverts unbroken.
He hears the hoof-thunder; he scents the death-token.
Shall I mope at home, under vows never spoken?
Good-bye!

The brown earth's my book, and I ride forth to read it.
Good-bye!
The stream runneth fast, but my will shall outspeed it.
Good-bye!
I love thee, dear lass, but I hate the hag Sorrow.
As sun follows rain, and to-night has its morrow,
So I'll taste of joy, though I steal, beg, or borrow!
Good-bye!

Alice Brown [1857–

"BE YE IN LOVE WITH APRIL-TIDE"

Be ye in love with April-tide?
I' faith, in love am I!
For now 'tis sun, and now 'tis shower,
And now 'tis frost and now 'tis flower,
And now 'tis Laura laughing-eyed,
And now 'tis Laura shy!

Ye doubtful days, O slower glide!
Still smile and frown, O sky!
Some beauty unforeseen I trace
In every change of Laura's face;—
Be ye in love with April-tide?
I' faith, in love am I!

Clinton Scollard [1860–

UNITY

Heart of my heart, the world is young:
Love lies hidden in every rose!
Every song that the skylark sung
Once, we thought, must come to a close:
Now we know the spirit of song,
Song that is merged in the chant of the whole,
Hand in hand as we wander along,
What should we doubt of the years that roll?

Heart of my heart, we can not die!
  Love triumphant in flower and tree,
Every life that laughs at the sky
  Tells us nothing can cease to be;
One, we are one with a song to-day,
  One with the clover that scents the wold,
One with the Unknown, far away,
  One with the stars, when earth grows old.

Heart of my heart, we are one with the wind,
  One with the clouds that are whirled o'er the lea,
One in many, O broken and blind,
  One as the waves are at one with the sea!
Ay! when life seems scattered apart,
  Darkens, ends as a tale that is told,
One, we are one, O heart of my heart,
  One, still one, while the world grows old.

Alfred Noyes [1880–

THE QUEEN

He loves not well whose love is bold!
  I would not have thee come too nigh:
The sun's gold would not seem pure gold
  Unless the sun were in the sky:
To take him thence and chain him near
Would make his glory disappear.

He keeps his state,—keep thou in thine,
  And shine upon me from afar!
So shall I bask in light divine,
  That falls from love's own guiding star;
So shall thy eminence be high,
And so my passion shall not die;

But all my life shall reach its hands
  Of lofty longing toward thy face,
And be as one who, speechless, stands
  In rapture at some perfect grace!
My love, my hope, my all shall be
To look to heaven and look to thee!

Thy eyes shall be the heavenly lights,
  Thy voice the gentle summer breeze,—
What time it sways, on moonlit nights,
  The murmuring tops of leafy trees;
And I shall touch thy beauteous form
In June's red roses, rich and warm.

But thou thyself shall come not down
  From that pure region far above;
But keep thy throne and wear thy crown,
  Queen of my heart and queen of love!
A monarch in thy realm complete,
And I a monarch—at thy feet!

William Winter [1836–1917]

A LOVER'S ENVY

I ENVY every flower that blows
Beside the pathway where she goes,
  And every bird that sings to her,
  And every breeze that brings to her
    The fragrance of the rose.

I envy every poet's rhyme
That moves her heart at eventime,
  And every tree that wears for her
  Its brightest bloom, and bears for her
    The fruitage of its prime.

I envy every Southern night
That paves her path with moonbeams white,
  And silvers all the leaves for her,
  And in their shadow weaves for her
    A dream of dear delight.

I envy none whose love requires
Of her a gift, a task that tires:
  I only long to live to her,
  I only ask to give to her
    All that her heart desires.

Henry Van Dyke [1852–

STAR SONG

When sunset flows into golden glows
And the breath of the night is new,
Love, find afar eve's eager star—
That is my thought of you.

O tear-wet eye that scans the sky
Your lonely lattice through:
Choose any one, from sun to sun—
That is my thought of you.

And when you wake at the morning's break
To rival rose and dew,
The star that stays till the leaping rays—
That is my thought of you.

Ay, though by day they seem away
Beyond or cloud or blue,
From dawn to night unquenched their light—
As are my thoughts of you.

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853-

"MY HEART SHALL BE THY GARDEN"

My heart shall be thy garden. Come, my own,
Into thy garden; thine be happy hours
Among my fairest thoughts, my tallest flowers,
From root to crowning petal, thine alone.
Thine is the place from where the seeds are sown
Up to the sky inclosed, with all its showers.
But ah, the birds, the birds! Who shall build bowers
To keep these thine? O friend, the birds have flown.

For as these come and go, and quit our pine
To follow the sweet season, or, new-comers,
Sing one song only from our alder-trees,
My heart has thoughts, which, though thine eyes hold mine,
Flit to the silent world and other summers,
With wings that dip beyond the silver seas.

Alice Meynell [1853-

AT NIGHT

Home, home from the horizon far and clear,
  Hither the soft wings sweep;
Flocks of the memories of the day draw near
  The dovecote doors of sleep.

Oh which are they that come through sweetest light
  Of all these homing birds?
Which with the straightest and the swiftest flight?
  Your words to me, your words!

Alice Meynell [1853–

SONG

Song is so old,
  Love is so new—
Let me be still
  And kneel to you.

Let me be still
  And breathe no word,
Save what my warm blood
  Sings unheard.

Let my warm blood
  Sing low of you—
Song is so fair,
  Love is so new!

Hermann Hagedorn [1882–

"ALL LAST NIGHT"

All last night I had quiet
  In a fragrant dream and warm:
She had become my Sabbath,
  And round my neck, her arm.

I knew the warmth in my dreaming;
  The fragrance, I suppose,
Was her hair about me,
  Or else she wore a rose.

Her hair, I think; for likest
Woodruffe 'twas, when Spring
Loitering down wet woodways
Treads it sauntering.

No light, nor any speaking;
Fragrant only and warm.
Enough to know my lodging,
The white Sabbath of her arm.

Lascelles Abercrombie [1881–

THE LAST WORD

When I have folded up this tent
And laid the soiled thing by,
I shall go forth 'neath different stars,
Under an unknown sky.

And yet whatever house I find
Beneath the grass or snow
Will ne'er be tenantless of love
Or lack the face I know.

O lips—wild roses wet with rain!
Blown hair of drifted brown!
O passionate eyes! O panting heart—
When in that colder town

I lie, the one inhabitant,
My hands across my breast,
How warm through all eternity
The summer of my rest!

To each frail root beneath the ground
That thrusts its flower above,
I shall impart a fiercer sap—
I who have known your love!

And growing things will lean to me
To learn what love hath won,
Till I shall whisper to the dust
That secret of the Sun.

Yea, though my spirit never wake
To hear the voice I knew,
Even an endless sleep would be
Stirred by the dreams of You!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869–1905]

"HEART OF MY HEART"

HEART of my heart, my life, my light!
If you were lost what should I do?
I dare not let you from my sight
Lest Death should fall in love with you.

Such countless terrors lie in wait!
The gods know well how dear you are!
What if they left me desolate
And plucked and set you for their star!

Then hold me close, the gods are strong,
And perfect joy so rare a flower
No man may hope to keep it long—
And I may lose you any hour.

Then kiss me close, my star, my flower!
So shall the future grant me this:
That there was not a single hour
We might have kissed, and did not kiss!

Unknown

MY LADDIE

OH, my laddie, my laddie,
I lo'e your very plaidie,
I lo'e your very bonnet
Wi' the silver buckle on it,
I lo'e your collie Harry,
I lo'e the kent ye carry;
But oh! it's past my power to tell
How much, how much I lo'e yoursel!

Oh, my dearie, my dearie,
I could luik an' never weary
At your een sae blue an' laughin',
That a heart o' stane wad saften,
While your mouth sae proud an' curly
Gars my heart gang tirlie-wirlie;
But oh! yoursel, your very sel,
I lo'e ten thousand times as well!

Oh! my darlin', my darlin',
Let's flit whaur flits the starlin',
Let's loll upo' the heather
A' this bonny, bonny weather;
Ye shall fauld me in your plaidie,
My luve, my luve, my laddie;
An' close, an' close into your ear
I'll tell ye how I lo'e ye, dear.

Amélie Rives [1863–

THE SHADED POOL

A LAUGHING knot of village maids
Goes gaily tripping to the brook,
For water-nymphs they mean to be,
And seek some still, secluded nook.
Here Laura goes, my own delight,
And Colin's love, the madcap Jane,
And half a score of goddesses
Trip over daisies in the plain:
Already now they loose their hair
And peep from out the tangled gold,
Or speed the flying foot to reach
The brook that's only summer-cold;
The lovely locks stream out behind
The shepherdesses on the wing,
And Laura's is the wealth I love,
And Laura's is the gold I sing.

A-row upon the bank they pant,
And all unlace the country shoe;
Their fingers tug the garter-knots
To loose the hose of varied hue.

The flashing knee at last appears,
The lower curves of youth and grace,
Whereat the girls intently scan
The mazy thickets of the place.
But who's to see except the thrush
Upon the wild crab-apple tree?
Within his branchy haunt he sits—
A very Peeping Tom is he!
Now music bubbles in his throat,
And now he pipes the scene in song—
The virgins slipping from their robes,
The cheated stockings lean and long,
The swift-descending petticoat,
The breasts that heave because they ran,
The rounded arms, the brilliant limbs,
The pretty necklaces of tan.
Did ever amorous God in Greece,
In search of some young mouth to kiss,
By any river chance upon
A sylvan scene as bright as this?
But though each maid is pure and fair,
For one alone my heart I bring,
And Laura's is the shape I love,
And Laura's is the snow I sing.

And now upon the brook's green brink,
A milk-white bevy, lo, they stand,
Half shy, half frightened, reaching back
The beauty of a poising hand!
How musical their little screams
When ripples kiss their shrinking feet,
And then the brook embraces all
Till gold and white and water meet!
Within the streamlet's soft cool arms
Delight and love and gracefulness
Sport till a flock of tiny waves
Swamps all the beds of floating cress;
And on his shining face are seen
Great yellow lilies drifting down
Beyond the ringing apple-tree,
Beyond the empty homespun gown.

Did ever Orpheus with his lute,
When making melody of old,
E'er find a stream in Attica
So ripely full of pink and gold?

At last they climb the sloping bank
And shake upon the thirsty soil
A treasury of diamond-drops
Not gained by aught of grimy toil.
Again the garters clasp the hose,
Again the velvet knee is hid,
Again the breathless babble tells
What Colin said, what Colin did.
In grace upon the grass they lie
And spread their tresses to the sun,
And rival, musical as they,
The blackbird's alto shake and run.
Did ever Love, on hunting bent,
Come idly humming through the hay,
And, to his sudden joyfulness,
Find fairer game at close of day?
Though every maid's a lily-rose,
And meet to sway a sceptred king,
Yet Laura's is the face I love,
And Laura's are the lips I sing.

Norman Gale [1862–

GOOD-NIGHT

Good-night. Good-night. Ah, good the night
That wraps thee in its silver light.
Good-night. No night is good for me
That does not hold a thought of thee.
Good-night.

Good-night. Be every night as sweet
As that which made our love complete,
Till that last night when death shall be
One brief "Good-night," for thee and me.
Good-night.

S. Weir Mitchell [1829–1914]

THE MYSTIC

By seven vineyards on one hill
We walked. The native wine
In clusters grew beside us two,
For your lips and for mine,

When, "Hark!" you said,—"Was that a bell
Or a bubbling spring we heard?"
But I was wise and closed my eyes
And listened to a bird;

For as summer leaves are bent and shake
With singers passing through,
So moves in me continually
The winged breath of you.

You tasted from a single vine
And took from that your fill—
But I inclined to every kind,
All seven on one hill.

Witter Bynner [1881–

"I AM THE WIND"

I am the wind that wavers,
You are the certain land;
I am the shadow that passes
Over the sand.

I am the leaf that quivers,
You the unshaken tree;
You are the stars that are steadfast,
I am the sea.

You are the light eternal,
Like a torch I shall die. . . .
You are the surge of deep music,
I—but a cry!

Zoë Akins [1886–

"I LOVE MY LIFE, BUT NOT TOO WELL"

I LOVE my life, but not too well
To give it to thee like a flower,
So it may pleasure thee to dwell
Deep in its perfume but an hour.
I love my life, but not too well.

I love my life, but not too well
To sing it note by note away,
So to thy soul the song may tell
The beauty of the desolate day.
I love my life, but not too well.

I love my life, but not too well
To cast it like a cloak on thine,
Against the storms that sound and swell
Between thy lonely heart and mine.
I love my life, but not too well.

Harriet Monroe [1860–

"THIS IS MY LOVE FOR YOU"

I HAVE brought the wine
And the folded raiment fine,
Pilgrim staff and shoe—
This is my love for you.

I will smooth your bed,
Lay away your coverlid,
Sing the whole day through.
This is my love for you.

Mayhap in the night,
When the dark beats back the light,
I shall struggle too . . .
This is my love for you.

In your dream, once more,
Will a star lead to my door?
To stars and dreams be true!
This is my love for you . . .

Grace Fallow Norton [18

MY LADY'S LIPS

LIPS AND EYES

From "Blurt, Master Constable"

Love for such a cherry lip
Would be glad to pawn his arrows;
Venus here to take a sip
Would sell her doves and team of sparrows.
But they shall not so;
Hey nonny, nonny no!
None but I this lip must owe;
Hey nonny, nonny no!

Did Jove see this wanton eye,
Ganymede must wait no longer;
Phœbe here one night did lie,
Would change her face and look much younger.
But they shall not so;
Hey nonny, nonny no!
None but I this lip must owe;
Hey nonny, nonny no!

Thomas Middleton [1570?–1627]

THE KISS

From "Cynthia's Revels"

O that joy so soon should waste!
Or so sweet a bliss
As a kiss
Might not for ever last!
So sugared, so melting, so soft, so delicious,
The dew that lies on roses,
When the morn herself discloses,
Is not so precious.

O, rather than I would it smother,
Were I to taste such another,
It should be my wishing
That I might die with kissing.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

"TAKE, O TAKE THOSE LIPS AWAY"

Take, O take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn,
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn;
But my kisses bring again,
Seals of love, but sealed in vain.

Hide, O hide those hills of snow,
Which thy frozen bosom bears,
On whose tops the pinks that grow
Are of those that April wears!
But first set my poor heart free,
Bound in those icy chains by thee.

The first stanza from "Measure for Measure," by William Shakespeare [1564–1616]
The second stanza from "The Bloody Brothers," by John Fletcher [1579–1625]

A STOLEN KISS

Now gentle sleep hath closèd up those eyes
Which, waking, kept my boldest thoughts in awe;
And free access unto that sweet lip lies,
From which I long the rosy breath to draw.
Methinks no wrong it were, if I should steal
From those two melting rubies one poor kiss;
None sees the theft that would the theft reveal,
Nor rob I her of aught that she can miss;
Nay, should I twenty kisses take away,
There would be little sign I would do so;
Why then should I this robbery delay?
O, she may wake, and therewith angry grow!
Well if she do, I'll back restore that one,
And twenty hundred thousand more for loan.

George Wither [1588–1667]

SONG

My Love bound me with a kiss
That I should no longer stay;
When I felt so sweet a bliss
I had less power to part away:
Alas! that women do not know
Kisses make men loath to go.

Yes, she knows it but too well,
For I heard when Venus' dove
In her ear did softly tell
That kisses were the seals of love:
O muse not then though it be so,
Kisses make men loath to go.

Wherefore did she thus inflame
My desires, heat my blood,
Instantly to quench the same
And starve whom she had given food?
Ay, ay, the common sense can show,
Kisses make men loath to go.

Had she bid me go at first
I would ne'er have grieved my heart
Hope delayed had been the worst;
But ah to kiss and then to part!
How deep it struck, speak, gods! you know
Kisses make men loath to go.

Unknown

TO ELECTRA

I DARE not ask a kiss,
I dare not beg a smile,
Lest having that, or this,
I might grow proud the while.

No, no, the utmost share
Of my desire shall be
Only to kiss that air
That lately kissèd thee.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

"COME, CHLOE, AND GIVE ME SWEET KISSES"

Come, Chloe, and give me sweet kisses,
For sweeter sure never girl gave;
But why in the midst of my blisses,
Do you ask me how many I'd have?
I'm not to be stinted in pleasure,
Then, prithee, my charmer, be kind,
For whilst I love thee above measure,
To numbers I'll ne'er be confined.

Count the bees that on Hybla are playing,
Count the flowers that enamel its fields,
Count the flocks that on Tempe are straying,
Or the grain that rich Sicily yields,
Go number the stars in the heaven,
Count how many sands on the shore,
When so many kisses you've given,
I still shall be craving for more.

To a heart full of love, let me hold thee,
To a heart that, dear Chloe, is thine;
In my arms I'll for ever enfold thee,
And twist round thy limbs like a vine.
What joy can be greater than this is?
My life on thy lips shall be spent!
But the wretch that can number his kisses,
With few will be ever content.

Charles Hanbury Williams [1708–1759]

A RIDDLE

I am just two and two, I am warm, I am cold,
And the parent of numbers that cannot be told,
I am lawful, unlawful—a duty, a fault—
I am often sold dear, good for nothing when bought;
An extraordinary boon, and a matter of course,
And yielded with pleasure when taken by force.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

TO A KISS

Soft child of love, thou balmy bliss,
Inform me, O delicious kiss,
Why thou so suddenly art gone,
Lost in the moment thou art won?

Yet go! For wherefore should I sigh?
On Delia's lips, with raptured eye,
On Delia's blushing lips I see
A thousand full as sweet as thee.

John Wolcot [1738–1819]

SONG

Often I have heard it said
That her lips are ruby-red.
Little heed I what they say,
I have seen as red as they.
Ere she smiled on other men,
Real rubies were they then.

When she kissed me once in play,
Rubies were less bright than they,
And less bright than those which shone
In the palace of the Sun.
Will they be as bright again?
Not if kissed by other men.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

THE FIRST KISS OF LOVE

Ἁ βάρβιτος δὲ χορδαῖς
Ἔρωτα μοῦνον ἠχεῖ—Anacreon

Away with your fictions of flimsy romance,
Those tissues of falsehood which folly has wove!
Give me the mild beam of the soul-breathing glance,
Or the rapture which dwells on the first kiss of love.

Ye rhymers, whose bosoms with phantasy glow,
  Whose pastoral passions are made for the grove;
From what blest inspiration your sonnets would flow,
  Could you ever have tasted the first kiss of love!

If Apollo should e'er his assistance refuse,
  Or the Nine be disposed from your service to rove,
Invoke them no more, bid adieu to the muse,
  And try the effect of the first kiss of love.

I hate you, ye cold compositions of art!
  Though prudes may condemn me, and bigots reprove,
I court the effusions that spring from the heart,
  Which throbs with delight to the first kiss of love.

Your shepherds, your flocks, those fantastical themes,
  Perhaps may amuse, yet they never can move:
Arcadia displays but a region of dreams;
  What are visions like these to the first kiss of love?

Oh! cease to affirm that man, since his birth,
  From Adam till now, has with wretchedness strove;
Some portion of Paradise still is on earth,
  And Eden revives in the first kiss of love.

When age chills the blood, when our pleasures are past—
  For years fleet away with the wings of the dove—
The dearest remembrance will still be the last,
  Our sweetest memorial the first kiss of love.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

"JENNY KISSED ME"

Jenny kissed me when we met,
  Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
  Sweets into your list, put that in!
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
  Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
    Jenny kissed me.

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

"I FEAR THY KISSES, GENTLE MAIDEN"

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden;
Thou needest not fear mine;
My spirit is too deeply laden
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion;
Thou needest not fear mine;
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix forever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle;—
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea;
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

SONG

From "In a Gondola"

THE moth's kiss, first!
Kiss me as if you made believe
You were not sure, this eve,

How my face, your flower, had pursed
Its petals up; so, here and there
You brush it, till I grow aware
Who wants me, and wide ope I burst.

The bee's kiss, now!
Kiss me as if you entered gay
My heart at some noonday,
A bud that dares not disallow
The claim, so all is rendered up,
And passively its shattered cup
Over your head to sleep I bow.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

SUMMUM BONUM

All the breath and the bloom of the year in the bag of one bee:
All the wonder and wealth of the mine in the heart of one gem:
In the core of one pearl all the shade and the shine of the sea:
Breath and bloom, shade and shine,—wonder, wealth, and—how far above them—
Truth, that's brighter than gem,
Trust, that's purer than pearl,—
Brightest truth, purest trust in the universe—all were for me
In the kiss of one girl.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE FIRST KISS

If only in dreams may man be fully blest,
Is heaven a dream? Is she I clasped a dream?
Or stood she here even now where dewdrops gleam
And miles of furze shine golden down the West?
I seem to clasp her still—still on my breast
Her bosom beats,—I see the blue eyes beam:—
I think she kissed these lips, for now they seem
Scarce mine: so hallowed of the lips they pressed!

Yon thicket's breath—can that be eglantine?
Those birds—can they be morning's choristers?
Can this be earth? Can these be banks of furze?
Like burning bushes fired of God they shine!
I seem to know them, though this body of mine
Passed into spirit at the touch of hers!

Theodore Watts-Dunton [1836–1914]

TO MY LOVE

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Malice has ever a vigilant ear;
What if Malice were lurking near?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Envy, too, has a watchful ear;
What if Envy should chance to hear?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Trust me, darling, the time is near
When lovers may love with never a fear;
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

TO LESBIA

Give me kisses! Do not stay,
Counting in that careful way.
All the coins your lips can print
Never will exhaust the mint.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment—and again!

Give me kisses! Do not stop,
Measuring nectar by the drop.

Though to millions they amount,
They will never drain the fount.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment—and again!

Give me kisses! All is waste
Save the luxury we taste;
And for kissing,—kisses live
Only when we take or give.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment—and again!

Give me kisses! Though their worth
Far exceeds the gems of earth,
Never pearls so rich and pure
Cost so little, I am sure.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment—and again!

Give me kisses! Nay, 'tis true
I am just as rich as you;
And for every kiss I owe,
I can pay you back, you know,
Kiss me, then,
Every moment—and again!

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

MAKE BELIEVE

Kiss me, though you make believe;
Kiss me, though I almost know
You are kissing to deceive:
Let the tide one moment flow
Backward ere it rise and break,
Only for poor pity's sake!

Give me of your flowers one leaf,
Give me of your smiles one smile,
Backward roll this tide of grief
Just a moment, though, the while,

I should feel and almost know
You are trifling with my woe.

Whisper to me sweet and low;
Tell me how you sit and weave
Dreams about me, though I know
It is only make believe!
Just a moment, though 'tis plain
You are jesting with my pain.

Alice Cary [1820–1871]

KISSING'S NO SIN

Some say that kissing's a sin;
But I think it's nane ava,
For kissing has wonn'd in this warld
Since ever that there was twa.

O, if it wasna lawfu'
Lawyers wadna allow it;
If it wasna holy,
Ministers wadna do it.

If it wasna modest,
Maidens wadna tak' it;
If it wasna plenty,
Puir folk wadna get it.

Unknown

TO ANNE

How many kisses do I ask?
Now you set me to my task.
First, sweet Anne, will you tell me
How many waves are in the sea?
How many stars are in the sky?
How many lovers you make sigh?
How many sands are on the shore?
I shall want just one kiss more.

William Stirling-Maxwell [1818–1878]

SONG

THERE is many a love in the land, my love,
But never a love like this is;
Then kill me dead with your love, my love,
And cover me up with kisses.

So kill me dead and cover me deep
Where never a soul discovers;
Deep in your heart to sleep, to sleep,
In the darlingest tomb of lovers.

Joaquin Miller [1841–1913]

PHILLIS AND CORYDON

PHILLIS took a red rose from the tangles of her hair,—
Time, the Golden Age; the place, Arcadia, anywhere,—

Phillis laughed, the saucy jade: "Sir Shepherd, wilt have this,
Or"—Bashful god of skipping lambs and oaten reeds!—"a kiss?"

Bethink thee, gentle Corydon! A rose lasts all night long,
A kiss but slips from off your lips like a thrush's evening song.

A kiss that goes, where no one knows! A rose, a crimson rose!
Corydon made his choice and took—Well, which do you suppose?

Arthur Colton [1868–

AT HER WINDOW

"HARK, HARK, THE LARK"

From "Cymbeline"

HARK, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With everything that pretty bin,
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

"SLEEP, ANGRY BEAUTY"

SLEEP, angry beauty, sleep and fear not me!
For who a sleeping lion dares provoke?
It shall suffice me here to sit and see
Those lips shut up, that never kindly spoke:
What sight can more content a lover's mind
Than beauty seeming harmless, if not kind?

My words have charmed her, for secure she sleeps,
Though guilty much of wrong done to my love;
And in her slumber, see! she close-eyed weeps:
Dreams often more than waking passions move.
Plead, Sleep, my cause, and make her soft like thee:
That she is peace may wake and pity me.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

MATIN SONG

RISE, Lady Mistress, rise!
The night hath tedious been;
No sleep hath fallen into mine eyes
Nor slumbers made me sin.

Is not she a saint then, say,
Thoughts of whom keep sin away?

Rise, Madam! rise and give me light,
Whom darkness still will cover,
And ignorance, darker than night,
Till thou smile on thy lover.
All want day till thy beauty rise;
For the gray morn breaks from thine eyes.

Nathaniel Field [1587–1633]

THE NIGHT-PIECE: TO JULIA

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
The shooting stars attend thee;
And the elves also,
Whose little eyes glow
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will-o'-the-wisp mislight thee,
Nor snake or slow-worm bite thee;
But on, on thy way
Not making a stay,
Since ghost there's none to affright thee.

Let not the dark thee cumber:
What though the moon does slumber?
The stars of the night
Will lend thee their light
Like tapers clear without number.

Then, Julia, let me woo thee,
Thus, thus to come unto me;
And when I shall meet
Thy silvery feet,
My soul I'll pour unto thee.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

MORNING

The lark now leaves his watery nest,
And climbing shakes his dewy wings,
He takes your window for the east,
And to implore your light, he sings;

Awake, awake, the morn will never rise,
Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes.

The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,
The ploughman from the sun his season takes;
But still the lover wonders what they are,
Who look for day before his mistress wakes;
Awake, awake, break through your veils of lawn!
Then draw your curtains and begin the dawn.

William D'Avenant [1606–1668]

MATIN-SONG

From "The Rape of Lucrece"

PACK, clouds, away, and welcome, day,
With night we banish sorrow.
Sweet air, blow soft; mount, lark, aloft
To give my Love good-morrow!
Wings from the wind to please her mind
Notes from the lark I'll borrow:
Bird, prune thy wing, nightingale, sing,
To give my Love good-morrow;
To give my Love good-morrow
Notes from them both I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, Robin-red-breast,
Sing, birds, in every furrow;
And from each hill, let music shrill
Give my fair Love good-morrow!
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow,
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves
Sing my fair Love good-morrow;
To give my Love good-morrow
Sing, birds, in every furrow!

Thomas Heywood [? –1650?]

THE ROSE

SWEET, serene, sky-like flower,
Haste to adorn the bower;
From thy long-cloudy bed,
Shoot forth thy damask head.

New-startled blush of Flora,
The grief of pale Aurora
(Who will contest no more),
Haste, haste to strew her floor!

Vermilion ball that's given
From lip to lip in Heaven;
Love's couch's coverled,
Haste, haste to make her bed.

Dear offspring of pleased Venus
And jolly, plump Silenus,
Haste, haste to deck the hair
Of the only sweetly fair!

See! rosy is her bower,
Her floor is all this flower
Her bed a rosy nest
By a bed of roses pressed.

But early as she dresses,
Why fly you her bright tresses?
Ah! I have found, I fear,—
Because her cheeks are near.

Richard Lovelace [1618–1658]

SONG

See, see, she wakes! Sabina wakes!
And now the sun begins to rise;
Less glorious is the morn that breaks
From his bright beams, than her fair eyes.

With light united, day they give;
But different fates ere night fulfil;
How many by his warmth will live!
How many will her coldness kill!

William Congreve [1670–1729]

MARY MORISON

O Mary, at thy window be,
It is the wished, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor:

How blithely wad I bide the stour
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison!

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed through the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard nor saw:
Though this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sighed, and said amang them a',
"Ye arena Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only faut is loving thee?
If love for love thou wiltna gie,
At least be pity to me shown;
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

WAKE, LADY!

Up! quit thy bower! late wears the hour,
Long have the rooks cawed round the tower;
O'er flower and tree loud hums the bee,
And the wild kid sports merrily.
The sun is bright, the sky is clear:
Wake, lady, wake! and hasten here.

Up! maiden fair, and bind thy hair,
And rouse thee in the breezy air!
The lulling stream that soothed thy dream
Is dancing in the sunny beam.
Waste not these hours, so fresh and gay;
Leave thy soft couch, and haste away!

Up! Time will tell the morning bell
Its service-sound has chimèd well;

The aged crone keeps house alone,
The reapers to the fields are gone.
Lose not these hours, so cool and gay:
Lo! while thou sleep'st they haste away!

Joanna Baillie [1762–1851]

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

Sleep on, and dream of Heaven awhile—
Though shut so close thy laughing eyes,
Thy rosy lips still wear a smile
And move, and breathe delicious sighs!

Ah, now soft blushes tinge her cheeks
And mantle o'er her neck of snow:
Ah, now she murmurs, now she speaks
What most I wish—and fear to know!

She starts, she trembles, and she weeps!
Her fair hands folded on her breast:
—And now, how like a saint she sleeps!
A seraph in the realms of rest!

Sleep on secure! Above control
Thy thoughts belong to Heaven and thee:
And may the secret of thy soul
Remain within its sanctuary!

Samuel Rogers [1763–1855]

"THE YOUNG MAY MOON"

The young May moon is beaming, love,
The glow-worm's lamp is gleaming, love;
How sweet to rove
Through Morna's grove,
When the drowsy world is dreaming, love!
Then awake!—the heavens look bright, my dear,
'Tis never too late for delight, my dear;
And the best of all ways
To lengthen our days
Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear!

Now all the world is sleeping, love,
But the Sage, his star-watch keeping, love,
And I, whose star
More glorious far
Is the eye from that casement peeping, love.
Then awake!—till rise of sun, my dear,
The Sage's glass we'll shun, my dear,
Or in watching the flight
Of bodies of light
He might happen to take thee for one, my dear!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"ROW GENTLY HERE"

Row gently here,
My gondolier,
So softly wake the tide,
That not an ear,
On earth, may hear,
But hers to whom we glide.
Had Heaven but tongues to speak, as well
As starry eyes to see,
Oh think what tales 'twould have to tell
Of wandering youths like me!

Now rest thee here,
My gondolier;
Hush, hush, for up I go,
To climb yon light
Balcony's height,
While thou keep'st watch below.
Ah! did we take for Heaven above
But half such pains as we
Take, day and night, for woman's love,
What angels we should be!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

MORNING SERENADE

Awake! the dawn is on the hills!
Behold, at her cool throat a rose,
Blue-eyed and beautiful she goes,
Leaving her steps in daffodils.—

Awake! arise! and let me see
Thine eyes, whose deeps epitomize
All dawns that were or are to be,
O love, all Heaven in thine eyes!—
Awake! arise! come down to me!

Behold! the dawn is up: behold!
How all the birds around her float,
Wild rills of music, note on note,
Spilling the air with mellow gold.—
Arise! awake! and, drawing near,
Let me but hear thee and rejoice!
Thou, who keep'st captive, sweet and clear,
All song, O love, within thy voice!
Arise! awake! and let me hear!

See, where she comes, with limbs of day,
The dawn! with wild-rose hands and feet,
Within whose veins the sunbeams beat,
And laughters meet of wind and ray.
Arise! come down! and, heart to heart,
Love, let me clasp in thee all these—
The sunbeam, of which thou art part,
And all the rapture of the breeze!—
Arise! come down! loved that thou art!

Madison Cawein [1865–1914]

SERENADE

Softly, O midnight Hours!
Move softly o'er the bowers
Where lies in happy sleep a girl so fair!
For ye have power, men say,
Our hearts in sleep to sway,
And cage cold fancies in a moonlight snare.
Round ivory neck and arm
Enclasp a separate charm;
Hang o'er her poised, but breathe nor sigh nor prayer:
Silently ye may smile,
But hold your breath the while,
And let the wind sweep back your cloudy hair!

Bend down your glittering urns,
Ere yet the dawn returns,

And star with dew the lawn her feet shall tread;
Upon the air rain balm,
Bid all the woods be calm,
Ambrosial dreams with healthful slumbers wed;
That so the Maiden may
With smiles your care repay,
When from her couch she lifts her golden head;
Waking with earliest birds,
Ere yet the misty herds
Leave warm 'mid the gray grass their dusky bed.

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814–1902]

LINES TO AN INDIAN AIR

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream;
The champak odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
O belovèd as thou art!

O lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it must break at last.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

GOOD-NIGHT

GOOD-NIGHT? ah! no; the hour is ill
  Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still,
  Then it will be *good* night.

How can I call the lone night good,
  Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood,
  Then it will be *good* night.

To hearts which near each other move
  From evening close to morning light,
The night *is* good; because, my love,
  They never *say* good-night.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

SERENADE

From "Sylvia"

AWAKE thee, my lady-love,
  Wake thee and rise!
The sun through the bower peeps
  Into thine eyes!

Behold how the early lark
  Springs from the corn!
Hark, hark how the flower-bird
  Winds her wee horn!

The swallow's glad shriek is heard
  All through the air;
The stock-dove is murmuring
  Loud as she dare!

Apollo's winged bugleman
  Cannot contain,
But peals his loud trumpet-call
  Once and again!

Then wake thee, my lady-love—
Bird of my bower!
The sweetest and sleepiest
Bird at this hour!

George Darley [1795–1846]

SERENADE

Ah, sweet, thou little knowest how
I wake and passionate watches keep;
And yet, while I address thee now,
Methinks thou smilest in thy sleep.
'Tis sweet enough to make me weep,
That tender thought of love and thee,
That while the world is hushed so deep,
Thy soul's perhaps awake to me!

Sleep on, sleep on, sweet bride of sleep!
With golden visions for thy dower,
While I this midnight vigil keep,
And bless thee in thy silent bower;
To me 'tis sweeter than the power
Of sleep, and fairy dreams unfurled,
That I alone, at this still hour,
In patient love outwatch the world.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

SERENADE

Look out upon the stars, my love,
And shame them with thine eyes,
On which, than on the lights above,
There hang more destinies.
Night's beauty is the harmony
Of blending shades and light:
Then, lady, up,—look out, and be
A sister to the night!

Sleep not!—thine image wakes for aye
Within my watching breast;
Sleep not!—from her soft sleep should fly,
Who robs all hearts of rest.

Nay, lady, from thy slumbers break,
And make this darkness gay,
With looks whose brightness well might make
Of darker nights a day.

Edward Coate Pinkney [1802–1828]

SERENADE

Hide, happy damask, from the stars,
What sleep enfolds behind your veil,
But open to the fairy cars
On which the dreams of midnight sail;
And let the zephyrs rise and fall
About her in the curtained gloom,
And then return to tell me all
The silken secrets of the room.

Ah! dearest! may the elves that sway
Thy fancies come from emerald plots,
Where they have dozed and dreamed all day
In hearts of blue forget-me-nots.
And one perhaps shall whisper thus:
Awake! and light the darkness, Sweet!
While thou art reveling with us,
He watches in the lonely street.

Henry Timrod [1829–1867]

SERENADE

From "The Spanish Student"

Stars of the summer night!
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Moon of the summer night!
Far down yon western steeps,
Sink, sink in silver light!

She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Wind of the summer night!
Where yonder woodbine creeps,
Fold, fold thy pinions light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Dreams of the summer night!
Tell her, her lover keeps
Watch! while in slumbers light
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

"COME INTO THE GARDEN, MAUD"

From "Maud"

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clashed in the hall:
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
  Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
  Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
  To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
  From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
  She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near";
  And the white rose weeps, "She is late";
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear";
  And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
  Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
  Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
  Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
  And blossom in purple and red.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

AT HER WINDOW

Ah, Minstrel, how strange is
  The carol you sing!
Let Psyche, who ranges
  The garden of spring,
Remember the changes
  December will bring.

Beating Heart! we come again
  Where my Love reposes:
This is Mabel's window-pane;
  These are Mabel's roses.

Is she nested? Does she kneel
  In the twilight stilly,
Lily clad from throat to heel,
  She, my virgin Lily?

Soon the wan, the wistful stars,
  Fading, will forsake her;
Elves of light, on beamy bars,
  Whisper then, and wake her.

Let this friendly pebble plead
  At her flowery grating;
If she hear me will she heed?
  Mabel, I am waiting.

Mabel will be decked anon,
  Zoned in bride's apparel;
Happy zone! Oh hark to yon
  Passion-shaken carol!

Sing thy song, thou trancèd thrush,
  Pipe thy best, thy clearest;—
Hush, her lattice moves, oh hush—
  Dearest Mabel!—dearest. . . .

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

BEDOUIN SONG

From the Desert I come to thee
  On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
  In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
  And the midnight hears my cry:
I love thee, I love but thee,
  With a love that shall not die
    Till the sun grows cold,
    And the stars are old,
    And the leaves of the Judgment
      Book unfold!

Look from thy window and see
  My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
  And I faint in thy disdain.

Let the night-winds touch thy brow
With the heat of my burning sigh,
And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

My steps are nightly driven,
By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

Bayard Taylor [1825–1878]

NIGHT AND LOVE

From "Ernest Maltravers"

When stars are in the quiet skies,
Then most I pine for thee;
Bend on me, then, thy tender eyes,
As stars look on the sea!

For thoughts, like waves that glide by night,
Are stillest when they shine;
Mine earthly love lies hushed in light
Beneath the heaven of thine.

There is an hour when angels keep
Familiar watch o'er men,
When coarser souls are wrapped in sleep—
Sweet spirit, meet me then!

There is an hour when holy dreams
Through slumber fairest glide;
And in that mystic hour it seems
Thou shouldst be by my side.

My thoughts of thee too sacred are
For daylight's common beam:
I can but know thee as my star,
My angel and my dream!

Edward George Earle Bulwer Lytton [1803–1873]

NOCTURNE

Up to her chamber window
A slight wire trellis goes,
And up this Romeo's ladder
Clambers a bold white rose.

I lounge in the ilex shadows,
I see the lady lean,
Unclasping her silken girdle,
The curtain's folds between.

She smiles on her white-rose lover,
She reaches out her hand
And helps him in at the window—
I see it where I stand!

To her scarlet lip she holds him,
And kisses him many a time—
Ah, me! it was he that won her
Because he dared to climb!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

PALABRAS CARIÑOSAS

SPANISH AIR

Good-night! I have to say good-night
To such a host of peerless things!
Good-night unto the slender hand
All queenly with its weight of rings;

Good-night to fond, uplifted eyes,
Good-night to chestnut braids of hair,
Good-night unto the perfect mouth,
And all the sweetness nestled there—
  The snowy hand detains me, then
  I'll have to say Good-night again!

But there will come a time, my love,
When, if I read our stars aright,
I shall not linger by this porch
With my farewells. Till then, good-night!
You wish the time were now? And I.
You do not blush to wish it so?
You would have blushed yourself to death
To own so much a year ago—
  What, both these snowy hands! ah, then
  I'll have to say Good-night again!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

SERENADE

The western wind is blowing fair
  Across the dark Ægean sea,
And at the secret marble stair
  My Tyrian galley waits for thee.
Come down! the purple sail is spread,
  The watchman sleeps within the town;
O leave thy lily-flowered bed,
  O Lady mine, come down, come down!

She will not come, I know her well,
  Of lover's vows she hath no care,
And little good a man can tell
  Of one so cruel and so fair.
True love is but a woman's toy,
  They never know the lover's pain,
And I, who love as loves a boy,
  Must love in vain, must love in vain.

O noble pilot, tell me true,
  Is that the sheen of golden hair?
Or is it but the tangled dew
  That binds the passion-flowers there?
Good sailor, come and tell me now,
  Is that my Lady's lily hand?
Or is it but the gleaming prow,
  Or is it but the silver sand?

No! no! 'tis not the tangled dew,
  'Tis not the silver-fretted sand,
It is my own dear Lady true
  With golden hair and lily hand!
O noble pilot, steer for Troy!
  Good sailor, ply the laboring oar!
This is the Queen of life and joy
  Whom we must bear from Grecian shore!

The waning sky grows faint and blue;
  It wants an hour still of day;
Aboard! aboard! my gallant crew,
  O Lady mine, away! away!
O noble pilot, steer for Troy!
  Good sailor, ply the laboring oar!
O loved as only loves a boy!
  O loved for ever, evermore!

Oscar Wilde [1856–1900]

THE LITTLE RED LARK

O SWAN of slenderness,
Dove of tenderness,
  Jewel of joys, arise!
The little red lark,
Like a soaring spark
  Of song, to his sunburst flies;
But till thou art arisen,
Earth is a prison,
  Full of my lonesome sighs:
Then awake and discover,
To thy fond lover,
  The morn of thy matchless eyes.

The dawn is dark to me,
Hark! oh, hark to me,
Pulse of my heart, I pray!
And out of thy hiding
With blushes gliding,
Dazzle me with thy day.
Ah, then once more to thee
Flying I'll pour to thee
Passion so sweet and gay,
The larks shall listen,
And dew-drops glisten,
Laughing on every spray.

Alfred Perceval Graves [1846–

SERENADE

By day my timid passions stand
Like begging children at your gate,
Each with a mute, appealing hand
To ask a dole of Fate;
But when night comes, released from doubt,
Like merry minstrels they appear,
The stars ring out their hopeful shout,
Beloved, can you hear?

They dare not sing to you by day
Their all-desirous song, or take
The world with their adventurous lay
For your enchanted sake.
But when the night-wind wakes and thrills
The shadows that the night unbars,
Their music fills the dreamy hills,
And folds the friendly stars.

Beloved, can you hear? They sing
Words that no mortal lips can sound;
Love through the world has taken wing,
My passions are unbound.
And now, and now, my lips, my eyes,
Are stricken dumb with hope and fear,
It is my burning soul that cries,
Beloved, can you hear?

Richard Middleton [1882–1911]

THE COMEDY OF LOVE

A LOVER'S LULLABY

Sing lullaby, as women do,
  Wherewith they bring their babes to rest;
And lullaby can I sing too,
  As womanly as can the best.
With lullaby they still the child;
And if I be not much beguiled,
Full many a wanton babe have I,
Which must be stilled with lullaby.

First lullaby my youthful years,
  It is now time to go to bed:
For crookèd age and hoary hairs
  Have won the haven within my head.
With lullaby, then, youth be still;
With lullaby content thy will;
Since courage quails and comes behind,
Go sleep, and so beguile thy mind!

Next lullaby my gazing eyes,
  Which wonted were to glance apace;
For every glass may now suffice
  To show the furrows in thy face.
With lullaby then wink awhile;
With lullaby your looks beguile;
Let no fair face, nor beauty bright,
Entice you eft with vain delight.

And lullaby my wanton will;
  Let reason's rule now reign thy thought;
Since all too late I find by skill
  How dear I have thy fancies bought;

With lullaby now take thine ease,
With lullaby thy doubts appease;
For trust to this, if thou be still,
My body shall obey thy will.

Thus lullaby my youth, mine eyes,
  My will, my ware, and all that was:
I can no more delays devise;
  But welcome pain, let pleasure pass.
With lullaby now take your leave;
With lullaby your dreams deceive;
And when you rise with waking eye,
Remember then this lullaby.

George Gascoigne [1525?–1577]

PHILLIDA AND CORIDON

In the merry month of May,
In a morn by break of day,
Forth I walked by the wood-side
When as May was in his pride:
There I spièd all alone
Phillida and Coridon.
Much ado there was, God wot!
He would love and she would not.
She said, Never man was true;
He said, None was false to you.
He said, He had loved her long;
She said, Love should have no wrong.
Coridon would kiss her then;
She said, Maids must kiss no men
Till they did for good and all;
Then she made the shepherd call
All the heavens to witness truth
Never loved a truer youth.
Thus with many a pretty oath,
Yea and nay, and faith and troth,
Such as silly shepherds use
When they will not Love abuse,

Love, which had been long deluded,
Was with kisses sweet concluded;
And Phillida, with garlands gay,
Was made the Lady of the May.

Nicholas Breton [1545?–1626?]

"CRABBÈD AGE AND YOUTH"

From "The Passionate Pilgrim"

Crabbèd Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee;
Youth, I do adore thee;
O, my Love, my Love is young!
Age, I do defy thee:
O, sweet shepherd, hie thee!
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

"IT WAS A LOVER AND HIS LASS"

From "As You Like It"

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that life was but a flower
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And, therefore, take the present time
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crownèd with the prime
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

"I LOVED A LASS"

I LOVED a lass, a fair one,
As fair as e'er was seen;
She was indeed a rare one,
Another Sheba Queen:
But, fool as then I was,
I thought she loved me too:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Her hair like gold did glister,
Each eye was like a star,
She did surpass her sister,
Which passèd all others far;

She would me honey call,
She'd—O she'd kiss me too!
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Many a merry meeting
My love and I have had;
She was my only sweeting,
She made my heart full glad;
The tears stood in her eyes
Like to the morning dew:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Her cheeks were like the cherry,
Her skin was white as snow;
When she was blithe and merry
She angel-like did show;
Her waist exceeding small,
The fives did fit her shoe:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

In summer time or winter
She had her heart's desire;
I still did scorn to stint her
From sugar, sack, or fire;
The world went round about,
No cares we ever knew:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

To maidens' vows and swearing
Henceforth no credit give;
You may give them the hearing,
But never them believe;
They are as false as fair,
Unconstant, frail, untrue:
For mine, alas! hath left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

George Wither [1588–1667]

TO CHLORIS

Ah, Chloris! that I now could sit
As unconcerned as when
Your infant beauty could beget
No pleasure, nor no pain!
When I the dawn used to admire,
And praised the coming day,
I little thought the growing fire
Must take my rest away.

Your charms in harmless childhood lay
Like metals in the mine;
Age from no face took more away
Than youth concealed in thine.
But as your charms insensibly
To their perfection pressed,
Fond love as unperceived did fly,
And in my bosom rest.

My passion with your beauty grew,
And Cupid at my heart,
Still as his mother favored you,
Threw a new flaming dart:
Each gloried in their wanton part;
To make a lover, he
Employed the utmost of his art—
To make a beauty, she.

Charles Sedley [1639?–1701]

SONG

The merchant, to secure his treasure,
Conveys it in a borrowed name:
Euphelia serves to grace my measure;
But Chloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre,
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay;
When Chloe noted her desire
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise;
But with my numbers mix my sighs:
And while I sing Euphelia's praise,
I fix my soul on Chloe's eyes.

Fair Chloe blushed: Euphelia frowned:
I sung, and gazed: I played, and trembled:
And Venus to the Loves around
Remarked, how ill we all dissembled.

Matthew Prior]1664–1721]

PIOUS SELINDA

Pious Selinda goes to prayers,
If I but ask her favor;
And yet the silly fool's in tears
If she believes I'll leave her;
Would I were free from this restraint,
Or else had hopes to win her:
Would she could make of me a saint,
Or I of her a sinner.

William Congreve [1670–1729]

FAIR HEBE

Fair Hebe I left, with a cautious design
To escape from her charms, and to drown them in wine,
I tried it; but found, when I came to depart,
The wine in my head, and still love in my heart.

I repaired to my Reason, entreated her aid;
Who paused on my case and each circumstance weighed,
Then gravely pronounced, in return to my prayer,
That "Hebe was fairest of all that was fair!"

"That's a truth," replied I, "I've no need to be taught;
I came for your counsel to find out a fault."
"If that's all," quoth Reason, "return as you came;
To find fault with Hebe, would forfeit my name."

What hopes then, alas! of relief from my pain,
While, like lightning, she darts through each throbbing vein?
My Senses surprised, in her favor took arms;
And Reason confirms me a slave to her charms.

John West [1693–1766]

A MAIDEN'S IDEAL OF A HUSBAND

From "The Contrivances"

GENTEEL in personage,
Conduct, and equipage,
Noble by heritage,
Generous and free:
Brave, not romantic;
Learned, not pedantic;
Frolic, not frantic;
This must he be.

Honor maintaining,
Meanness disdaining,
Still entertaining,
Engaging and new.
Neat, but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical,
But ever true.

Henry Carey [? –1743]

"PHILLADA FLOUTS ME"

O WHAT a plague is love!
How shall I bear it?
She will inconstant prove,
I greatly fear it.
She so torments my mind
That my strength faileth,
And wavers with the wind
As a ship saileth.

Please her the best I may,
She loves still to gainsay;
Alack and well-a-day!
Phillada flouts me.

At the fair yesterday
She did pass by me;
She looked another way
And would not spy me:
I wooed her for to dine,
But could not get her;
Will had her to the wine—
He might entreat her.
With Daniel she did dance,
On me she looked askance:
O thrice unhappy chance!
Phillada flouts me.

Fair maid, be not so coy,
Do not disdain me!
I am my mother's joy:
Sweet, entertain me!
She'll give me, when she dies,
All that is fitting:
Her poultry and her bees,
And her goose sitting,
A pair of mattress beds,
And a bag full of shreds;
And yet, for all this guedes,
Phillada flouts me!

She hath a clout of mine
Wrought with blue coventry,
Which she keeps for a sign
Of my fidelity:
But i' faith, if she flinch
She shall not wear it;
To Tib, my t'other wench,
I mean to bear it.

And yet it grieves my heart
So soon from her to part:
Death strike me with his dart!
  Phillada flouts me.

Thou shalt eat crudded cream
  All the year lasting,
And drink the crystal stream
  Pleasant in tasting;
Whig and whey whilst thou lust,
  And bramble-berries,
Pie-lid and pastry-crust,
  Pears, plums, and cherries.
Thy raiment shall be thin,
Made of a weevil's skin—
Yet all's not worth a pin!
  Phillada flouts me.

In the last month of May
  I made her posies;
I heard her often say
  That she loved roses.
Cowslips and gillyflowers
  And the white lily
I brought to deck the bowers
  For my sweet Philly.
But she did all disdain,
And threw them back again;
Therefore 'tis flat and plain
  Phillada flouts me.

Fair maiden, have a care,
  And in time take me;
I can have those as fair
  If you forsake me:
For Doll the dairy-maid
  Laughed at me lately,
And wanton Winifred
  Favors me greatly.

One throws milk on my clothes,
T'other plays with my nose;
What wanting signs are those?
Phillada flouts me.

I cannot work nor sleep
At all in season:
Love wounds my heart so deep
Without all reason
I 'gin to pine away
In my love's shadow,
Like as a fat beast may,
Penned in a meadow,
I shall be dead, I fear,
Within this thousand year:
And all for that my dear
Phillada flouts me.

Unknown

"WHEN MOLLY SMILES"

When Molly smiles beneath her cow,
I feel my heart—I can't tell how;
When Molly is on Sunday dressed,
On Sundays I can take no rest.

What can I do? On worky days
I leave my work on her to gaze.
What shall I say? At sermons, I
Forget the text when Molly's by.

Good master curate, teach me how
To mind your preaching and my plow:
And if for this you'll raise a spell,
A good fat goose shall thank you well.

Unknown

CONTENTIONS

It was a lordling's daughter, the fairest one of three,
That likèd of her master as well as well might be;
Till looking on an Englishman, the fair'st that eye could see
Her fancy fell a-turning.

Long was the combat doubtful that love with love did fight,
To leave the master loveless, or kill the gallant knight:
To put in practice either, alas! it was a spite
Unto the silly damsel.

But one must be refusèd: more mickle was the pain,
That nothing could be usèd to turn them both to gain;
For of the two the trusty knight was wounded with disdain:
Alas! she could not help it.

Thus art with arms contending was victor of the day,
Which by a gift of learning did bear the maid away;
Then lullaby, the learned man hath got the lady gay;
For now my song is ended.

Unknown

"I ASKED MY FAIR, ONE HAPPY DAY"

AFTER LESSING

I ASKED my fair, one happy day,
What I should call her in my lay;
By what sweet name from Rome or Greece;
Lalage, Neæra, Chloris,
Sappho, Lesbia, or Doris,
Arethusa or Lucrece.

"Ah!" replied my gentle fair,
"Belovèd, what are names but air?
Choose thou whatever suits the line;
Call me Sappho, call me Chloris,
Call me Lalage or Doris,
Only—only call me thine."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

THE EXCHANGE

WE pledged our hearts, my love and I,—
I in my arms the maiden clasping:
I could not tell the reason why,
But oh! I trembled like an aspen.

Her father's love she bade me gain;
I went, and shook like any reed!
I strove to act the man—in vain!
We had exchanged our hearts indeed.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

"COMIN' THROUGH THE RYE"

Comin' through the rye, poor body,
Comin' through the rye,
She draiglet a' her petticoatie,
Comin' through the rye.

Oh Jenny's a' wat poor body,
Jenny's seldom dry;
She draiglet a' her petticoatie,
Comin' through the rye.

Gin a body meet a body,
Comin' through the rye,
Gin a body kiss a body,
Need a body cry?

Gin a body meet a body
Comin' through the glen,
Gin a body kiss a body,
Need the warld ken?

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"GREEN GROW THE RASHES, O!"

There's naught but care on every han',
In every hour that passes, O!
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses, O?

Green grow the rashes, O!
Green grow the rashes, O!
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent amang the lasses, O!

The warl'ly race may riches chase,
An' riches still may fly them, O!
An' though at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O!

Gie me a canny hour at e'en;
My arms about my dearie, O!
An' warl'ly cares, an' warl'ly men,
May a' gae tapsalteerie, O!

For you sae douce, ye sneer at this;
Ye'er naught but senseless asses, O!
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw
He dearly loved the lasses, O!

Auld Nature swears the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O!
Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

DEFIANCE

CATCH her and hold her if you can—
See, she defies you with her fan,
Shuts, opens, and then holds it spread
In threatening guise above your head.
Ah! why did you not start before
She reached the porch and closed the door?
Simpleton! will you never learn
That girls and time will not return;
Of each you should have made the most;
Once gone, they are forever lost.
In vain your knuckles knock your brow,
In vain will you remember how
Like a slim brook the gamesome maid
Sparkled, and ran into the shade.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

OF CLEMENTINA

In Clementina's artless mien
  Lucilla asks me what I see,
And are the roses of sixteen
    Enough for me?

Lucilla asks, if that be all,
  Have I not culled as sweet before:
Ah yes, Lucilla! and their fall
    I still deplore.

I now behold another scene,
  Where Pleasure beams with Heaven's own light,
More pure, more constant, more serene,
    And not less bright.

Faith, on whose breast the Loves repose,
  Whose chain of flowers no force can sever,
And Modesty who, when she goes,
    Is gone for ever.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

"THE TIME I'VE LOST IN WOOING"

The time I've lost in wooing,
In watching and pursuing
    The light that lies
    In woman's eyes,
Has been my heart's undoing.
Though Wisdom oft has sought me,
I scorned the lore she brought me,—
    My only books
    Were women's looks,
And folly's all they taught me.

Her smile when Beauty granted,
I hung with gaze enchanted,

Like him the sprite
Whom maids by night
Oft meet in glen that's haunted.
Like him, too, Beauty won me;
But when the spell was on me,
If once their ray
Was turned away,
O! winds could not outrun me.

And are those follies going?
And is my proud heart growing
Too cold or wise
For brilliant eyes
Again to set it glowing?
No—vain, alas! th' endeavor
From bonds so sweet to sever;—
Poor Wisdom's chance
Against a glance
Is now as weak as ever.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

DEAR FANNY

"She has beauty, but you must keep your heart cool;
She has wit, but you mustn't be caught so":
Thus Reason advises, but Reason's a fool,
And 'tis not the first time I have thought so,
Dear Fanny,
'Tis not the first time I have thought so.

"She is lovely; then love her, nor let the bliss fly;
'Tis the charm of youth's vanishing season";
Thus Love has advised me, and who will deny
That Love reasons better than Reason,
Dear Fanny
Love reasons much better than Reason.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

A CERTAIN YOUNG LADY

THERE'S a certain young lady,
Who's just in her hey-day,
And full of all mischief, I ween;
So teasing! so pleasing!
Capricious! delicious!
And you know very well whom I mean.

With an eye dark as night,
Yet than noonday more bright,
Was ever a black eye so keen?
It can thrill with a glance,
With a beam can entrance,
And you know very well whom I mean.

With a stately step—such as
You'd expect in a duchess—
And a brow might distinguish a queen,
With a mighty proud air,
That says "touch me who dare,"
And you know very well whom I mean.

With a toss of the head
That strikes one quite dead,
But a smile to revive one again;
That toss so appalling!
That smile so enthralling!
And you know very well whom I mean.

Confound her! de'il take her!—
A cruel heart-breaker—
But hold! see that smile so serene.
God love her! God bless her!
May nothing distress her!
You know very well whom I mean.

Heaven help the adorer
Who happens to bore her,

The lover who wakens her spleen;
But too blest for a sinner
Is he who shall win her,
And you know very well whom I mean.

Washington Irving [1783–1859]

"WHERE BE YOU GOING, YOU DEVON MAID"

WHERE be you going, you Devon maid?
And what have ye there in the basket?
Ye tight little fairy, just fresh from the dairy,
Will ye give me some cream if I ask it?

I love your hills and I love your dales,
And I love your flocks a-bleating;
But oh, on the heather to lie together,
With both our hearts a-beating!

I'll put your basket all safe in a nook;
Your shawl I'll hang on a willow;
And we will sigh in the daisy's eye,
And kiss on a grass-green pillow.

John Keats [1795–1821]

LOVE IN A COTTAGE

THEY may talk of love in a cottage,
And bowers of trellised vine,—
Of nature bewitchingly simple,
And milkmaids half divine;
They may talk of the pleasure of sleeping
In the shade of a spreading tree,
And a walk in the fields at morning,
By the side of a footstep free!

But give me a sly flirtation
By the light of a chandelier,—
With music to play in the pauses,
And nobody very near;

Or a seat on a silken sofa,
With a glass of pure old wine,
And mamma too blind to discover
The small white hand in mine.

Your love in a cottage is hungry,
Your vine is a nest for flies,—
Your milkmaid shocks the Graces,
And simplicity talks of pies!
You lie down to your shady slumber
And wake with a bug in your ear,
And your damsel that walks in the morning
Is shod like a mountaineer.

True love is at home on a carpet,
And mightily likes his ease;—
And true love has an eye for a dinner,
And starves beneath shady trees.
His wing is the fan of a lady,
His foot's an invisible thing,
And his arrow is tipped with a jewel,
And shot from a silver string.

Nathaniel Parker Willis [1806–1867]

SONG OF THE MILKMAID

From "Queen Mary"

SHAME upon you, Robin,
Shame upon you now!
Kiss me would you? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Daisies grow again,
Kingcups blow again,
And you came and kissed me milking the cow.

Robin came behind me,
Kissed me well, I vow;
Cuff him could I? with my hands

Milking the cow?
Swallows fly again,
Cuckoos cry again,
And you came and kissed me milking the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,
Come and kiss me now;
Help it can I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Ringdoves coo again,
All things woo again,
Come behind and kiss me milking the cow!

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

"WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW"

I KNOW a girl with teeth of pearl,
And shoulders white as snow;
She lives,—ah well,
I must not tell,—
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her sunny hair is wondrous fair,
And wavy in its flow;
Who made it less
One little tress,—
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her eyes are blue (celestial hue!)
And dazzling in their glow;
On whom they beam
With melting gleam,—
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her lips are red and finely wed,
Like roses ere they blow;
What lover sips
Those dewy lips,—
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her fingers are like lilies fair
When lilies fairest grow;
Whose hand they press
With fond caress,—
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her foot is small, and has a fall
Like snowflakes on the snow;
And where it goes
Beneath the rose,—
Wouldn't you like to know?

She has a name, the sweetest name
That language can bestow.
'Twould break the spell
If I should tell,—
Wouldn't you like to know?

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

"SING HEIGH-HO!"

THERE sits a bird on every tree;
Sing heigh-ho!
There sits a bird on every tree,
And courts his love as I do thee;
Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

There grows a flower on every bough;
Sing heigh-ho!
There grows a flower on every bough,
Its petals kiss—I'll show you how:
Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

From sea to stream the salmon roam;
Sing heigh-ho!
From sea to stream the salmon roam;
Each finds a mate and leads her home;
Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

The sun's a bridegroom, earth a bride;
Sing heigh-ho!
They court from morn till eventide:
The earth shall pass, but love abide.
Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

THE GOLDEN FISH

Love is a little golden fish,
Wondrous shy . . . ah, wondrous shy . . .
You may catch him if you wish;
He might make a dainty dish . . .
But I . . .
Ah, I've other fish to fry!

For when I try to snare this prize,
Earnestly and patiently,
All my skill the rogue defies,
Lurking safe in Aimée's eyes . . .
So, you see,
I am caught and Love goes free!

George Arnold [1834–1865]

THE COURTIN'

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side,
With half a cord o' wood in—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
  Towards the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle flames danced all about
  The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
  An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
  Fetched back f'om Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
  Seemed warm f'om floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
  Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
  On sech a blessèd cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
  Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
  Clear grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton,
  Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
  He'd squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
  All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
  All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
  Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
  Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hundred ring,
  She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
She seemed to've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pitty-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
"Wal . . . no . . . I come dasignin'"—
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals acts so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call ag'in";
  Says she, "Think likely, Mister";
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
  An' . . . Wal, he up an' kissed her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
  Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
  An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
  Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
  Snow-hid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
  Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood
  And gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
  Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
  In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

L'EAU DORMANTE

Curled up and sitting on her feet,
  Within the window's deep embrasure,
Is Lydia; and across the street,
  A lad, with eyes of roguish azure,
Watches her buried in her book.
In vain he tries to win a look,
And from the trellis over there
Blows sundry kisses through the air,
Which miss the mark, and fall unseen,
Uncared for. Lydia is thirteen.

My lad, if you, without abuse,
  Will take advice from one who's wiser,
And put his wisdom to more use
  Than ever yet did your adviser;
If you will let, as none will do,
Another's heartbreak serve for two,
You'll have a care, some four years hence,
How you lounge there by yonder fence
And blow those kisses through that screen—
For Lydia will be seventeen.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

A PRIMROSE DAME

She has a primrose at her breast,
  I almost wish I were a Tory.
I like the Radicals the best;
She has a primrose at her breast;
Now is it chance she so is dressed,
  Or must I tell a story?
She has a primrose at her breast,
  I almost wish I *were* a Tory.

Gleason White [1851–1898]

IF

Oh, if the world were mine, Love,
    I'd give the world for thee!
Alas! there is no sign, Love,
    Of that contingency.

Were I a king,—which isn't
    To be considered now,—
A diadem had glistened
    Upon that lovely brow.

Had fame with laurels crowned me,—
    She hasn't, up to date,—
Nor time nor change had found me
    To love and thee ingrate.

If Death threw down his gage, Love,
Though life is dear to me,
I'd die, e'en of old age, Love,
To win a smile from thee.

But being poor, we part, dear,
And love, sweet love, must die;
Thou wilt not break thy heart, dear,
No more, I think, shall I!

James Jeffrey Roche [1847–1908]

DON'T

Your eyes were made for laughter;
Sorrow befits them not;
Would you be blithe hereafter,
Avoid the lover's lot.

The rose and lily blended
Possess your cheeks so fair;
Care never was intended
To leave his furrows there.

Your heart was not created
To fret itself away,
By being unduly mated
To common human clay.

But hearts were made for loving—
Confound philosophy!
Forget what I've been proving,
Sweet Phyllis, and love me!

James Jeffrey Roche [1847–1908]

AN IRISH LOVE-SONG

In the years about twenty
(When kisses are plenty)
The love of an Irish lass fell to my fate—
So winsome and sightly,
So saucy and sprightly,
The priest was a prophet that christened her Kate.

Soft gray of the dawning,
Bright blue of the morning,
The sweet of her eye there was nothing to mate;
A nose like a fairy's,
A cheek like a cherry's,
And a smile—well, her smile was like—nothing but Kate.

To see her was passion,
To love her, the fashion;
What wonder my heart was unwilling to wait!
And, daring to love her,
I soon did discover
A Katherine masking in mischievous Kate.

No Katy unruly
But Katherine, truly—
Fond, serious, patient, and even sedate;
With a glow in her gladness
That banishes sadness—
Yet stay! Should I credit the sunshine to *Kate?*

Love cannot outlive it,
Wealth cannot o'ergive it—
The saucy surrender she made at the gate.
O Time, be but human,
Spare the girl in the woman!
You gave me my Katherine—leave me my Kate!

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853–

GROWING OLD

Sweet sixteen is shy and cold,
Calls me "sir," and thinks me old;
Hears in an embarrassed way
All the compliments I pay;

Finds my homage quite a bore,
Will not smile on me, and more
To her taste she finds the noise
And the chat of callow boys.

Not the lines around my eye,
Deepening as the years go by;
Not white hairs that strew my head,
Nor my less elastic tread;

Cares I find, nor joys I miss,
Make me feel my years like this:—
Sweet sixteen is shy and cold,
Calls me "sir," and thinks me old.

Walter Learned [1847–1915]

TIME'S REVENGE

When I was ten and she fifteen—
Ah, me! how fair I thought her.
She treated with disdainful mien
The homage that I brought her,
And, in a patronizing way,
Would of my shy advances say:
"It's really quite absurd, you see;
He's very much too young for me."

I'm twenty now, she twenty-five—
Well, well! how old she's growing.
I fancy that my suit might thrive
If pressed again; but, owing
To great discrepancy in age,
Her marked attentions don't engage
My young affections, for, you see,
She's really quite too old for me.

Walter Learned [1847–1915]

IN EXPLANATION

Her lips were so near
That—what else could I do?
You'll be angry, I fear.
But her lips were so near—
Well, I can't make it clear,
Or explain it to you.
But—her lips were so near
That—what else could I do?

Walter Learned [1847–1915]

OMNIA VINCIT

Long from the lists of love I stood aloof
My heart was steeled and I was beauty-proof;
Yet I, unscathed in many a peril past,
Lo! here am I defeated at the last.

My practice was, in easy-chair reclined,
Superior-wise to speak of womankind,
Waving away the worn-out creed of love
To join the smoke that wreathed itself above.

Love, I said in my wisdom, Love is dead,
For all his fabled triumphs—and instead
We find a calm affectionate respect,
Doled forth by Intellect to Intellect.

Yet when Love, taking vengeance, smote me sore,
My Siren called me from no classic shore;
It was no Girton trumpet that laid low
The walls of this Platonic Jericho.

For when my peace of mind at length was stole,
I thought no whit of Intellect or Soul,
Nay! I was cast in pitiful distress
By brown eyes wide with truth and tenderness.

Alfred Cochrane [1865-

A PASTORAL

Along the lane beside the mead
Where cowslip-gold is in the grass
I matched the milkmaid's easy speed,
A tall and springing country lass:
But though she had a merry plan
To shield her from my soft replies,
Love played at Catch-me-if-you-Can
In Mary's eyes.

A mile or twain from Varley bridge
I plucked a dock-leaf for a fan,
And drove away the constant midge,
And cooled her forehead's strip of tan.
But though the maiden would not spare
My hand her pretty finger-tips,
Love played at Kiss-me-if-you-Dare
On Mary's lips.

Since time was short and blood was bold,
I drew me closer to her side,
And watched her freckles change from gold
To pink beneath a blushing tide.
But though she turned her face away,
How much her panting heart confessed!
Love played at Find-me-for-you-May
In Mary's breast.

Norman Gale [1862-

A ROSE

'Twas a Jacqueminot rose
That she gave me at parting;
Sweetest flower that blows,
'Twas a Jacqueminot rose.
In the love garden close,
With the swift blushes starting,
'Twas a Jacqueminot rose
That she gave me at parting.

If she kissed it, who knows—
Since I will not discover,
And love is that close,
If she kissed it, who knows?
Or if not the red rose
Perhaps then the lover!
If she kissed it, who knows,
Since I will not discover.

Yet at least with the rose
Went a kiss that I'm wearing!
More I will not disclose,
Yet at least with the rose
Went whose kiss no one knows,—
Since I'm only declaring,
"Yet at least with the rose
Went a kiss that I'm wearing."

Arlo Bates [1850–

"WOOED AND MARRIED AND A'"

THE bride cam' out o' the byre,
And oh, as she dighted her cheeks:
"Sirs, I'm to be married the night,
And ha'e neither blankets nor sheets;
Ha'e neither blankets nor sheets,
Nor scarce a coverlet too;
The bride that has a' thing to borrow,
Has e'en right muckle ado!"
Wooed and married, and a',
Married and wooed and a'!
And was she nae very weel aff,
That was wooed and married and a'?

Out spake the bride's father,
As he cam' in frae the pleugh:
"Oh, haud your tongue, my dochter,
And ye'se get gear eneugh;
The stirk stands i' the tether,
And our braw bawsint yaud,
Will carry ye hame your corn—
What wad ye be at, ye jaud?"

Out spake the bride's mither:
"What deil needs a' this pride?
I had nae a plack in my pouch
That night I was a bride;

My gown was linsey woolsey,
And ne'er a sark ava;
And ye ha'e ribbons and buskins,
Mair than ane or twa."

Out spake the bride's brither,
As he cam' in wi' the kye:
"Poor Willie wad ne'er ha'e ta'en ye,
Had he kent ye as weel as I;
For ye're baith proud and saucy
And no for a puir man's wife;
Gin I canna get a better,
I'se ne'er tak' ane i' my life."

Out spake the bride's sister,
As she cam' in frae the byre:
"O gin I were but married,
It's a' that I desire;
But we puir folk maun live single,
And do the best we can;
I dinna ken what I should want,
If I could get but a man!"

Alexander Ross [1699–1784]

"OWRE THE MUIR AMANG THE HEATHER"

Comin' through the craigs o' Kyle,
Amang the bonnie bloomin' heather,
There I met a bonnie lassie,
Keepin' a' her ewes thegither.

Owre the muir amang the heather,
Owre the muir amang the heather;
There I met a bonnie lassie,
Keepin' a' her ewes thegither.

Says I, My dear, where is thy hame,—
In muir or dale, pray tell me whether?
She says, I tent the fleecy flocks
That feed amang the bloomin' heather.

We laid us down upon a bank,
Sae warm and sunny was the weather:
She left her flocks at large to rove
Amang the bonnie bloomin' heather.

While thus we lay, she sung a sang,
Till echo rang a mile and farther;
And aye the burden of the sang
Was, Owre the muir amang the heather.

She charmed my heart, and aye sinsyne
I couldna think on ony ither;
By sea and sky! she shall be mine,
The bonnie lass amang the heather.

Jean Glover [1758–1801]

MARRIAGE AND THE CARE O'T

Quoth Rab to Kate, My sonsy dear,
I've wooed ye mair than ha' a year,
An' if ye'd wed me ne'er cou'd speer,
Wi' blateness, an' the care o't.
Now to the point: sincere I'm wi't:
Will ye be my ha'f-marrow, sweet?
Shake han's, and say a bargain be't
An' ne'er think on the care o't.

Na, na, quo' Kate, I winna wed,
O' sic a snare I'll aye be rede;
How mony, thochtless, are misled
By marriage, an' the care o't!
A single life's a life o' glee,
A wife ne'er think to mak' o' me,
Frae toil an' sorrow I'll keep free,
An' a' the dool an' care o't.

Weel, weel, said Robin, in reply,
Ye ne'er again shall me deny,
Ye may a toothless maiden die

For me, I'll tak' nae care o't.
Fareweel for ever!—aff I hie;—
Sae took his leave without a sigh;
Oh! stop, quo' Kate, I'm yours, I'll try
The married life, an' care o't.

Rab wheel't about, to Kate cam' back,
An' ga'e her mou' a hearty smack,
Syne lengthened out a lovin' crack
'Bout marriage an' the care o't.
Though as she thocht she didna speak,
An' lookit unco mim an' meek,
Yet blithe was she wi' Rab to cleek,
In marriage, wi' the care o't.

Robert Lochore [1762–1852]

THE WOMEN FOLK

O SAIRLY may I rue the day
I fancied first the womenkind;
For aye sinsyne I ne'er can ha'e
Ae quiet thought or peace o' mind!
They ha'e plagued my heart, an' pleased my e'e,
An' teased an' flattered me at will,
But aye, for a' their witchery,
The pawky things! I lo'e them still.
O, the women folk! O, the women folk,
But they ha'e been the wreck o' me;
O, weary fa' the women folk,
For they winna let a body be!

I ha'e thought an' thought, but darena tell,
I've studied them wi' a' my skill,
I've lo'ed them better than mysel',
I've tried again to like them ill.
Wha sairest strives, will sairest rue,
To comprehend what nae man can;
When he has done what man can do,
He'll end at last where he began.

That they ha'e gentle forms an' meet,
A man wi' half a look may see;
An' gracefu' airs, an' faces sweet,
An' waving curls aboon the bree!
An' smiles as saft as the young rose-bud,
An' e'en sae pawky, bright, an' rare,
Wad lure the laverock frae the clud—
But, laddie, seek to ken nae mair!

James Hogg [1770–1835]

"LOVE IS LIKE A DIZZINESS"

I LATELY lived in quiet ease,
An' never wished to marry, O!
But when I saw my Peggy's face,
I felt a sad quandary, O!
Though wild as ony Athol deer,
She has trepanned me fairly, O!
Her cherry cheeks an' een sae clear
Torment me late an' early, O!
O, love, love, love!
Love is like a dizziness;
It winna let a poor body
Gang about his biziness!

To tell my feats this single week
Wad mak a daft-like diary, O!
I drave my cart out owre a dike,
My horses in a miry, O!
I wear my stockings white an' blue,
My love's sae fierce an' fiery, O!
I drill the land that I should pleugh,
An' pleugh the drills entirely, O!

Ae morning, by the dawn o' day,
I rase to theek the stable, O!
I cuist my coat, an' plied away
As fast as I was able, O!

I wrought that morning out an' out,
As I'd been redding fire, O!
When I had done an' looked about,
Gudefaith, it was the byre, O!

Her wily glance I'll ne'er forget,
The dear, the lovely blinkin' o't
Has pierced me through an' through the heart,
An' plagues me wi' the prinkling o't.
I tried to sing, I tried to pray,
I tried to drown 't wi' drinkin' o't,
I tried wi' sport to drive 't away,
But ne'er can sleep for thinkin' o't.

Nae man can tell what pains I prove,
Or how severe my pliskie, O!
I swear I'm sairer drunk wi' love
Than ever I was wi' whiskey, O!
For love has raked me fore an' aft,
I scarce can lift a leggie, O!
I first grew dizzy, then gaed daft,
An' soon I'll dee for Peggy, O!

James Hogg [1770–1835]

"BEHAVE YOURSEL' BEFORE FOLK"

Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk,
And dinna be sae rude to me,
As kiss me sae before folk.

It wadna gi'e me meikle pain,
Gin we were seen and heard by nane,
To tak' a kiss, or grant you ane;
But guidsake! no before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk;
Whate'er ye do, when out o' view,
Be cautious aye before folk.

Consider, lad, how folk will crack,
And what a great affair they'll mak'
O' naething but a simple smack,
That's gi'en or ta'en before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
Nor gi'e the tongue o' auld or young
Occasion to come o'er folk.

It's no through hatred o' a kiss,
That I sae plainly tell you this;
But, losh! I tak' it sair amiss
To be sae teased before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
When we're our lane ye may tak' ane,
But fient a ane before folk.

I'm sure wi' you I've been as free
As ony modest lass should be;
But yet it doesna do to see
Sic freedom used before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
I'll ne'er submit again to it—
So mind you that—before folk.

Ye tell me that my face is fair;
It may be sae—I dinna care—
But ne'er again gar't blush sae sair
As ye ha'e done before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
Nor heat my cheeks wi' your mad freaks,
But aye be douce before folk.

Ye tell me that my lips are sweet,
Sic tales, I doubt, are a' deceit;
At ony rate, it's hardly meet

To pree their sweets before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
Gin that's the case, there's time, and place,
But surely no before folk.

But, gin you really do insist
That I should suffer to be kissed,
Gae, get a license frae the priest,
And mak' me yours before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
And when we're ane, baith flesh and bane,
Ye may tak' ten—before folk.

Alexander Rodger [1784–1846]

RORY O'MORE; OR, GOOD OMENS

YOUNG Rory O'More courted Kathleen bawn,
He was bold as a hawk,—she as soft as the dawn;
He wished in his heart pretty Kathleen to please,
And he thought the best way to do that was to tease.
"Now, Rory, be aisy," sweet Kathleen would cry
(Reproof on her lip, but a smile in her eye),
"With your tricks I don't know, in troth, what I'm about,
Faith, you've teased till I've put on my cloak inside out."
"Och! jewel," says Rory, "that same is the way
You've thrated my heart for this many a day;
And 'tis plazed that I am, and why not, to be sure?
For 'tis all for good luck," says bold Rory O'More.

"Indeed, then," says Kathleen, "don't think of the like,
For I half gave a promise to soothering Mike;
The ground that I walk on he loves, I'll be bound."
"Faith," says Rory, "I'd rather love you than the ground."
"Now, Rory, I'll cry if you don't let me go;
Sure I drame ev'ry night that I'm hating you so!"
"Oh," says Rory, "that same I'm delighted to hear,
For drames always go by conthrairies, my dear;

So, jewel, keep draming that same till you die,
And bright mornin' will give dirty night the black lie!
And 'tis plazed that I am, and why not, to be sure?
Since 'tis all for good luck," says bold Rory O'More.

"Arrah, Kathleen, my darlint, you've teased me enough,
Sure I've thrashed for your sake Dinny Grimes and Jim Duff;
And I've made myself, drinkin' your health, quite a baste,
So I think, after that, I may talk to the praste."
Then Rory, the rogue, stole his arm round her neck,
So soft and so white, without freckle or speck,
And he looked in her eyes that were beaming with light,
And he kissed her sweet lips;—don't you think he was right?
"Now, Rory, leave off, sir; you'll hug me no more;
That's eight times to-day that you've kissed me before."
"Then here goes another," says he, "to make sure,
For there's luck in odd numbers," says Rory O'More.

Samuel Lover [1797–1868]

ASK AND HAVE

"Oh, 'tis time I should talk to your mother,
Sweet Mary," says I;
"Oh, don't talk to my mother," says Mary,
Beginning to cry:
"For my mother says men are deceivers,
And never, I know, will consent;
She says girls in a hurry to marry,
At leisure repent."

"Then, suppose I would talk to your father,
Sweet Mary," says I;
"Oh, don't talk to my father," says Mary,
Beginning to cry:
"For my father he loves me so dearly,
He'll never consent I should go—
If you talk to my father," says Mary,
"He'll surely say, 'No.'"

"Then how shall I get you, my jewel?
Sweet Mary," says I;
"If your father and mother's so cruel,
Most surely I'll die!"
"Oh, never say die, dear," says Mary;
"A way now to save you I see;
Since my parents are both so contrary—
You'd better ask me!"

Samuel Lover [1797–1868]

KITTY OF COLERAINE

As beautiful Kitty one morning was tripping,
With a pitcher of milk, from the fair of Coleraine,
When she saw me she stumbled, the pitcher down tumbled,
And all the sweet buttermilk watered the plain.

"Oh! what shall I do now—'twas looking at you, now;
Sure, sure, such a pitcher I'll ne'er meet again!
'Twas the pride of my dairy! Oh! Barney MacCleary,
You're sent as a plague to the girls of Coleraine."

I sat down beside her, and gently did chide her,
That such a misfortune should give her such pain;
A kiss then I gave her, and, ere I did leave her,
She vowed for such pleasure she'd break it again.

'Twas hay-making season—I can't tell the reason—
Misfortunes will never come single, 'tis plain;
For very soon after poor Kitty's disaster
The devil a pitcher was whole in Coleraine.

Charles Dawson Shanly [1811–1875]

THE PLAIDIE

Upon ane stormy Sunday,
Coming adoon the lane,
Were a score of bonnie lassies—
And the sweetest I maintain,
Was Caddie,
That I took un'neath my plaidie,
To shield her from the rain.

She said the daisies blushed
For the kiss that I had ta'en;
I wadna hae thought the lassie
Wad sae of a kiss complain;
"Now, laddie!
I winna stay under your plaidie,
If I gang hame in the rain!"

But, on an after Sunday,
When cloud there was not ane,
This self-same winsome lassie
(We chanced to meet in the lane)
Said, "Laddie,
Why dinna ye wear your plaidie?
Wha kens but it may rain?"

Charles Sibley [?]

KITTY NEIL

"Ah, sweet Kitty Neil, rise up from that wheel,
Your neat little foot will be weary from spinning;
Come trip down with me to the sycamore-tree,
Half the parish is there, and the dance is beginning.
The sun is gone down, but the full harvest-moon
Shines sweetly and cool on the dew-whitened valley,
While all the air rings with the soft, loving things
Each little bird sings in the green shaded alley."

With a blush and a smile, Kitty rose up the while,
Her eye in the glass, as she bound her hair, glancing;
'Tis hard to refuse when a young lover sues,
So she couldn't but choose to go off to the dancing.
And now on the green the glad groups are seen,
Each gay-hearted lad with the lass of his choosing;
And Pat, without fail, leads out sweet Kitty Neil,—
Somehow, when he asked, she ne'er thought of refusing.

Now, Felix Magee puts his pipes to his knee,
And with flourish so free sets each couple in motion;
With a cheer and a bound, the lads patter the ground,
The maids move around just like swans on the ocean:

Cheeks bright as the rose—feet light as the doe's,
Now coyly retiring, now boldly advancing—
Search the world all around, from the sky to the ground,
No such sight can be found as an Irish lass dancing!

Sweet Kate! who could view your bright eyes of deep blue,
Beaming humidly through their dark lashes so mildly,
Your fair-turnèd arm, heaving breast, rounded form,
Nor feel his heart warm, and his pulses throb wildly?
Young Pat feels his heart, as he gazes, depart,
Subdued by the smart of such painful yet sweet love;
The sight leaves his eye, as he cries with a sigh,
"*Dance light, for my heart it lies under your feet, love!*"

John Francis Waller [1810–1894]

"THE DULE'S I' THIS BONNET O' MINE"

The dule's i' this bonnet o' mine;
My ribbins'll never be reet;
Here, Mally, aw'm like to be fine,
For Jamie'll be comin' to-neet;
He met me i' th' lone t'other day,—
Aw're gooin' for wayter to th' well,—
An' he begged that aw'd wed him i' May;—
Bi th' mass, iv he'll let me, aw will!

When he took my two honds into his,
Good Lord, heaw they trembled between;
An' aw durstn't look up in his face,
Becose on him seein' my e'en;
My cheek went as red as a rose;—
There's never a mortal can tell
Heaw happy aw felt; for, thea knows,
One couldn't ha' axed him theirsel'.

But th' tale wur at th' end o' my tung,—
To let it eawt wouldn't be reet,—
For aw thought to seem forrud wur wrung,
So aw towd him aw'd tell him to-neet;
But Mally, thae knows very weel,—

Though it isn't a thing one should own,—
Iv aw'd th' pikein' o' th' world to mysel',
Aw'd oather ha' Jamie or noan.

Neaw, Mally, aw've towd tho my mind;
What would to do iv't wur thee?
"Aw'd tak him just while he're inclined,
An' a farrantly bargain he'd be;
For Jamie's as gradely a lad
As ever stepped eawt into th' sun;—
Go, jump at thy chance, an' get wed,
An' mak th' best o' th' job when it's done!"

Eh, dear, but it's time to be gwon,—
Aw shouldn't like Jamie to wait;
Aw connut for shame be too soon,
An' aw wouldn't for th' world be too late;
Aw'm a' ov a tremble to th' heel,—
Dost think 'at my bonnet'll do?—
"Be off, lass,—thae looks very weel;
He wants noan o' th' bonnet, thae foo!"

Edwin Waugh [1817–1890]

THE OULD PLAID SHAWL

Not far from old Kinvara, in the merry month of May,
When birds were singing cheerily, there came across my way,
As if from out the sky above an angel chanced to fall,
A little Irish cailin in an ould plaid shawl.

She tripped along right joyously, a basket on her arm;
And oh! her face; and oh! her grace, the soul of saint would charm:
Her brown hair rippled o'er her brow, but greatest charm of all
Was her modest blue eyes beaming 'neath her ould plaid shawl.

I courteously saluted her—"God save you, miss," says I;
"God save you kindly, sir," said she, and shyly passed me by;

Off went my heart along with her, a captive in her thrall,
Imprisoned in the corner of her ould plaid shawl.

Enchanted with her beauty rare, I gazed in pure delight,
Till round an angle of the road she vanished from my sight;
But ever since I sighing say, as I that scene recall,
"The grace of God about you and your ould plaid shawl."

I've heard of highway robbers that with pistols and with knives,
Make trembling travelers yield them up their money or their lives,
But think of me that handed out my heart and head and all
To a simple little cailin in an ould plaid shawl.

Oh! graceful the mantillas that the signorinas wear,
And tasteful are the bonnets of Parisian ladies fair,
But never cloak, or hood, or robe, in palace, bower, or hall,
Clad half such witching beauty as that ould plaid shawl.

Oh! some men sigh for riches, and some men live for fame,
And some on history's pages hope to win a glorious name:
My aims are not ambitious, and my wishes are but small—
You might wrap them all together in an ould plaid shawl.

I'll seek her all through Galway, and I'll seek her all through Clare,
I'll search for tale or tidings of my traveler everywhere,
For peace of mind I'll never find until my own I call
That little Irish cailin in her ould plaid shawl.

Francis A. Fahy [1854–

LITTLE MARY CASSIDY

Oh, 'tis little Mary Cassidy's the cause of all my misery,
And the raison that I am not now the boy I used to be;
Oh, she bates the beauties all that we read about in history,
And sure half the country-side is as hot for her as me.

Travel Ireland up and down, hill, village, vale and town—
Fairer than the Cailin Donn, you're looking for in vain;
Oh, I'd rather live in poverty with little Mary Cassidy
Than emperor, without her, be of Germany or Spain.

'Twas at the dance at Darmody's that first I caught a sight of her,
And heard her sing the "Droighnean Donn," till tears came in my eyes,
And ever since that blessed hour I'm dreaming day and night of her;
The devil a wink of sleep at all I get from bed to rise.
Cheeks like the rose in June, song like the lark in tune,
Working, resting, night or noon, she never leaves my mind;
Oh, till singing by my cabin fire sits little Mary Cassidy,
'Tis little aise or happiness I'm sure I'll ever find.

What is wealth, what is fame, what is all that people fight about
To a kind word from her lips or a love-glance from her eye?
Oh, though troubles throng my breast, sure they'd soon go to the right-about
If I thought the curly head of her would rest there by and by.
Take all I own to-day, kith, kin, and care away,
Ship them all across the say, or to the frozen zone:
Lave me an orphan bare—but lave me Mary Cassidy,
I never would feel lonesome with the two of us alone.

Francis A. Fahy [1854–

THE ROAD

"Now where are ye goin'," ses I, "wid the shawl
An' cotton umbrella an' basket an' all?
Would ye not wait for McMullen's machine,
Wid that iligant instep befittin' a queen?
Oh, you wid the wind-soft gray eye wid a wile in it,
You wid the lip wid the troublesome smile in it,
Sure, the road's wet, ivery rain-muddied mile in it—"
"*Ah, the Saints'll be kapin' me petticoats clean!*"

"But," ses I, "would ye like it to meet Clancy's bull,
Or the tinks poachin' rabbits above Slieve-na-coul?
An' the ford at Kilmaddy is big wid the snows,
An' the whisht Little People that wear the green close,
They'd run from the bog to be makin' a catch o' ye,
The king o' them's wishful o' weddin' the match o' ye,
'Twould be long, if they did, ere ye lifted the latch o' ye—"
"*What fairy's to touch her that sings as she goes!*"

"Ah, where are ye goin'," ses I, "wid the shawl,
An' the gray eyes a-dreamin' beneath it an' all?
The road by the mountain's a long one, depend
Ye'll be done for, alannah, ere reachin' the end;
Ye'll be bate wid the wind on each back-breakin' bit on it,
Wet wid the puddles and lamed wid the grit on it,—
Since lonesome ye're layin' yer delicut fit on it—"
"*Sure whin's a road lonesome that's stepped wid a friend?*"

That's stepped wid a friend?
Who did Bridgy intend?
Still 'twas me that went wid her right on to the end!

Patrick R. Chalmers [18

TWICKENHAM FERRY

"Ahoy! and O-ho! and it's who's for the ferry?"
(The briar's in bud and the sun going down)
"And I'll row ye so quick and I'll row ye so steady,
And 'tis but a penny to Twickenham Town."
The ferryman's slim and the ferryman's young,
With just a soft tang in the turn of his tongue;
And he's fresh as a pippin and brown as a berry,
And 'tis but a penny to Twickenham Town.

"Ahoy! and O-ho! and it's I'm for the ferry,"
(The briar's in bud and the sun going down)
"And it's late as it is and I haven't a penny—
Oh! how can I get me to Twickenham Town?"
She'd a rose in her bonnet, and oh! she looked sweet
As the little pink flower that grows in the wheat,

With her cheeks like a rose and her lips like a cherry—
It's sure but you're welcome to Twickenham Town.

"Ahoy! and O-ho!"—You're too late for the ferry,
(The briar's in bud and the sun has gone down)
And he's not rowing quick and he's not rowing steady;
It seems quite a journey to Twickenham Town.
"Ahoy! and O-ho!" you may call as you will;
The young moon is rising o'er Petersham Hill;
And, with Love like a rose in the stern of the wherry,
There's danger in crossing to Twickenham Town.

Théophile Marzials [1850–

THE HUMOR OF LOVE

SONG

I PRITHEE send me back my heart,
  Since I cannot have thine:
For if from yours you will not part,
  Why then shouldst thou have mine?

Yet now I think on't, let it lie,
  To find it were in vain,
For thou hast a thief in either eye
  Would steal it back again.

Why should two hearts in one breast lie,
  And yet not lodge together?
O love, where is thy sympathy,
  If thus our breasts thou sever?

But love is such a mystery,
  I cannot find it out:
For when I think I'm best resolved,
  I then am most in doubt.

Then farewell care, and farewell woe!
  I will no longer pine;
For I'll believe I have her heart,
  As much as she hath mine.

John Suckling [1609–1642]

A BALLAD UPON A WEDDING

I TELL thee, Dick, where I have been,
Where I the rarest things have seen;
  Oh, things without compare!
Such sights again cannot be found
In any place on English ground,
  Be it at wake or fair.

At Charing Cross, hard by the way
Where we (thou know'st) do sell our hay,
There is a house with stairs;
And there did I see coming down
Such folk as are not in our town,
Forty at least, in pairs.

Amongst the rest, one pest'lent fine
(His beard no bigger, though, than mine)
Walked on before the rest;
Our landlord looks like nothing to him;
The king (God bless him!) 'twould undo him
Should he go still so drest.

At Course-a-park, without all doubt,
He should have first been taken out
By all the maids i' th' town:
Though lusty Roger there had been,
Or little George upon the green,
Or Vincent of the Crown.

But wot you what? The youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing;
The parson for him staid:
Yet by his leave (for all his haste),
He did not so much wish all past,
(Perchance) as did the maid.

The maid (and thereby hangs a tale)
For such a maid no Whitsun-ale
Could ever yet produce:
No grape that's kindly ripe, could be
So round, so plump, so soft, as she,
Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on which they did bring;
It was too wide a peck:
And to say truth (for out it must)
It looked like the great collar (just)
About our young colt's neck.

Her feet beneath her petticoat
Like little mice stole in and out,
As if they feared the light:
But oh, she dances such a way!
No sun upon an Easter-day
Is half so fine a sight.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No daisy makes comparison;
Who sees them is undone;
For streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Cath'rine pear,
The side that's next the sun.

Her lips were red; and one was thin
Compared to that was next her chin
(Some bee had stung it newly);
But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,
I durst no more upon them gaze,
Than on the sun in July.

Her mouth so small, when she does speak,
Thou'dst swear her teeth her words did break,
That they might passage get;
But she so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours, or better,
And are not spent a whit.

Passion o' me! how I run on!
There's that that would be thought upon,
I trow, besides the bride:
The business of the kitchen's great,
For it is fit that men should eat;
Nor was it there denied.

Just in the nick the cook knocked thrice,
And all the waiters in a trice
His summons did obey;
Each serving-man, with dish in hand,
Marched boldly up, like our trained-band,
Presented, and away.

When all the meat was on the table,
What man of knife, or teeth, was able
To stay to be intreated?
And this the very reason was,
Before the parson could say grace,
The company was seated.

Now hats fly off, and youths carouse;
Healths first go round, and then the house,
The bride's come thick and thick;
And when 'twas named another's health,
Perhaps he made it hers by stealth,
(And who could help it, Dick?)

O' th' sudden up they rise and dance;
Then sit again, and sigh, and glance;
Then dance again, and kiss.
Thus sev'ral ways the time did pass,
Till ev'ry woman wished her place,
And ev'ry man wished his.

By this time all were stol'n aside
To counsel and undress the bride;
But that he must not know:
But yet 'twas thought he guessed her mind,
And did not mean to stay behind
Above an hour or so.

John Suckling [1609–1642]

TO CHLOE JEALOUS

Dear Chloe, how blubbered is that pretty face!
Thy cheek all on fire, and thy hair all uncurled:
Prithee quit this caprice; and (as old Falstaff says),
Let us e'en talk a little like folks of this world.

How canst thou presume, thou hast leave to destroy
The beauties, which Venus but lent to thy keeping?
Those looks were designed to inspire love and joy:
More ordinary eyes may serve people for weeping.

To be vexed at a trifle or two that I writ,
Your judgment at once, and my passion you wrong:
You take that for fact, which will scarce be found wit:
Od's life! must one swear to the truth of a song?

What I speak, my fair Chloe, and what I write, shows
The difference there is betwixt nature and art:
I court others in verse; but I love thee in prose:
And they have my whimsies; but thou hast my heart.

The god of us verse-men (you know, Child) the sun,
How after his journeys he sets up his rest;
If at morning o'er earth 'tis his fancy to run;
At night he reclines on his Thetis's breast.

So when I am wearied with wandering all day;
To thee, my delight, in the evening I come:
No matter what beauties I saw in my way:
They were but my visits, but thou art my home.

Then finish, dear Chloe, this pastoral war;
And let us, like Horace and Lydia, agree:
For thou art a girl as much brighter than her,
As he was a poet sublimer than me.

Matthew Prior [1664–1721]

JACK AND JOAN

Jack and Joan they think no ill,
But loving live, and merry still;
Do their week-days' work, and pray
Devoutly on the holy day:
Skip and trip it on the green,
And help to choose the Summer Queen;

Lash out, at a country feast,
Their silver penny with the best.

Well can they judge of nappy ale,
And tell at large a winter tale;
Climb up to the apple loft,
And turn the crabs till they be soft.
Tib is all the father's joy,
And little Tom the mother's boy.
All their pleasure is content;
And care, to pay their yearly rent.

Joan can call by name her cows,
And deck her windows with green boughs;
She can wreaths and tuttyes make,
And trim with plums a bridal cake.
Jack knows what brings gain or loss;
And his long flail can stoutly toss:
Makes the hedge which others break;
And ever thinks what he doth speak.

Now, you courtly dames and knights,
That study only strange delights;
Though you scorn the home-spun gray,
And revel in your rich array:
Though your tongues dissemble deep,
And can your heads from danger keep;
Yet, for all your pomp and train,
Securer lives the silly swain.

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

PHILLIS AND CORYDON

Phillis kept sheep along the western plains,
And Corydon did feed his flocks hard by:
This shepherd was the flower of all the swains
That traced the downs of fruitful Thessaly;
And Phillis, that did far her flocks surpass
In silver hue, was thought a bonny lass.

A bonny lass, quaint in her country 'tire,
  Was lovely Phillis,—Corydon swore so;
Her locks, her looks, did set the swain on fire,
  He left his lambs, and he began to woo;
He looked, he sighed, he courted with a kiss,
No better could the silly swad than this.

He little knew to paint a tale of love,
  Shepherds can fancy, but they cannot say:
Phillis 'gan smile, and wily thought to prove
  What uncouth grief poor Corydon did pay;
She asked him how his flocks or he did fare,
Yet pensive thus his sighs did tell his care.

The shepherd blushed when Phillis questioned so,
  And swore by Pan it was not for his flocks:
" 'Tis love, fair Phillis, breedeth all this woe,
  My thoughts are trapped within thy lovely locks;
Thine eye hath pierced, thy face hath set on fire;
Fair Phillis kindleth Corydon's desire."

"Can shepherds love?" said Phillis to the swain.
  "Such saints as Phillis," Corydon replied.
"Men when they lust can many fancies feign,"
  Said Phillis. This not Corydon denied,
That lust had lies; "But love," quoth he, "says truth:
Thy shepherd loves, then, Phillis, what ensu'th?"

Phillis was won, she blushed and hung her head;
  The swain stepped to, and cheered her with a kiss:
With faith, with troth, they struck the matter dead;
  So usèd they when men thought not amiss:
Thus love begun and ended both in one;
Phillis was loved, and she liked Corydon.

Robert Greene [1560?–1592]

SALLY IN OUR ALLEY

Of all the girls that are so smart
  There's none like pretty Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

There is no lady in the land
  Is half so sweet as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage-nets,
  And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
  To such as please to buy 'em;
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
  So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work,
  I love her so sincerely;
My master comes like any Turk,
  And bangs me most severely:
But let him bang his bellyful,
  I'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week
  I dearly love but one day—
And that's the day that comes betwixt
  A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm dressed all in my best
  To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
  And often am I blamèd
Because I leave him in the lurch
  As soon as text is namèd;
I leave the church in sermon-time
  And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
  And she lives in our alley.

When Christmas comes about again,
O, then I shall have money;
I'll hoard it up, and box it all,
I'll give it to my honey:
I would it were ten thousand pound,
I'd give it all to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master and the neighbors all
Make game of me and Sally,
And, but for her, I'd better be
A slave and row a galley;
But when my seven long years are out,
O, then I'll marry Sally;
O, then we'll wed, and then we'll bed—
But not in our alley!

Henry Carey [? –1743]

THE COUNTRY WEDDING

Well met, pretty nymph, says a jolly young swain
To a lovely young shepherdess crossing the plain;
Why so much in haste?—now the month it was May—
May I venture to ask you, fair maiden, which way?
Then straight to this question the nymph did reply,
With a blush on her cheek, and a smile in her eye,
I came from the village, and homeward I go,
And now, gentle shepherd, pray why would you know?

I hope, pretty maid, you won't take it amiss,
If I tell you my reason for asking you this;
I would see you safe home—(now the swain was in love!)
Of such a companion if you would approve.
Your offer, kind shepherd, is civil, I own;
But I see no great danger in going alone;
Nor yet can I hinder, the road being free
For one as another, for you as for me.

No danger in going alone, it is true,
But yet a companion is pleasanter, too;
And if you could like—(now the swain he took heart)—
Such a sweetheart as me, why we never would part.
O that's a long word, said the shepherdess then,
I've often heard say there's no minding you men.
You'll say and unsay, and you'll flatter, 'tis true!
Then to leave a young maiden's the first thing you do.

O judge not so harshly, the shepherd replied,
To prove what I say, I will make you my bride.
To-morrow the parson—(well-said, little swain!)—
Shall join both our hands, and make one of us twain.
Then what the nymph answered to this isn't said,
The very next morn, to be sure, they were wed.
Sing hey-diddle,—ho-diddle,—hey-diddle-down,—
Now when shall we see such a wedding in town?

Unknown

"O MERRY MAY THE MAID BE"

O MERRY may the maid be
That marries wi' the miller,
For, foul day and fair day,
He's aye bringing till her,—
Has aye a penny in his purse
For dinner or for supper;
And, gin she please, a good fat cheese
And lumps of yellow butter.

When Jamie first did woo me,
I speired what was his calling;
"Fair maid," says he, "O come and see,
Ye're welcome to my dwalling."
Though I was shy, yet could I spy
The truth o' what he told me,
And that his house was warm and couth,
And room in it to hold me.

Behind the door a bag o' meal,
And in the kist was plenty
O' guid hard cakes his mither bakes,
And bannocks werena scanty.
A guid fat sow, a sleeky cow
Was standing in the byre,
Whilst lazy puss with mealy mouse
Was playing at the fire.

"Guid signs are these," my mither says,
And bids me tak' the miller;
For, fair day and foul day,
He's aye bringing till her;
For meal and maut she doesna want,
Nor anything that's dainty;
And now and then a kecking hen,
To lay her eggs in plenty.

In winter, when the wind and rain
Blaws o'er the house and byre,
He sits beside a clean hearth-stane,
Before a rousing fire.
With nut-brown ale he tells his tale,
Which rows him o'er fu' nappy:—
Wha'd be a king—a petty thing,
When a miller lives so happy?

John Clerk [1684–1755]

THE LASS O' GOWRIE

'Twas on a simmer's afternoon,
A wee afore the sun gaed doun,
A lassie wi' a braw new goun
Cam' owre the hills to Gowrie.
The rosebud washed in simmer's shower
Bloomed fresh within the sunny bower;
But Kitty was the fairest flower
That e'er was seen in Gowrie.

To see her cousin she cam' there;
And oh! the scene was passing fair,
For what in Scotland can compare
  Wi' the Carse o' Gowrie?
The sun was setting on the Tay,
The blue hills melting into gray,
The mavis and the blackbird's lay
  Were sweetly heard in Gowrie.

O lang the lassie I had wooed,
And truth and constancy had vowed,
But could nae speed wi' her I lo'ed
  Until she saw fair Gowrie.
I pointed to my faither's ha'—
Yon bonnie bield ayont the shaw,
Sae loun that there nae blast could blaw:—
  Wad she no bide in Gowrie?

Her faither was baith glad and wae;
Her mither she wad naething say;
The bairnies thocht they wad get play
  If Kitty gaed to Gowrie.
She whiles did smile, she whiles did greet;
The blush and tear were on her cheek;
She narthing said, and hung her head;—
  But now she's Leddy Gowrie.

Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]

THE CONSTANT SWAIN AND VIRTUOUS MAID

Soon as the day begins to waste,
Straight to the well-known door I haste,
  And rapping there, I'm forced to stay
While Molly hides her work with care,
Adjusts her tucker and her hair,
  And nimble Becky scours away.

Entering, I see in Molly's eyes
A sudden smiling joy arise,

As quickly checked by virgin shame:
She drops a curtsey, steals a glance,
Receives a kiss, one step advance.—
If such I love, am I to blame?

I sit, and talk of twenty things,
Of South Sea stock, or death of kings,
While only "Yes" or "No," says Molly;
As cautious she conceals her thoughts,
As others do their private faults:—
Is this her prudence, or her folly?

Parting, I kiss her lip and cheek,
I hang about her snowy neck,
And cry, "Farewell, my dearest Molly!"
Yet still I hang and still I kiss,
Ye learnèd sages, say, is this
In me the effect of love, or folly?

No—both by sober reason move,—
She prudence shows, and I true love—
No charge of folly can be laid.
Then (till the marriage-rites proclaimed
Shall join our hands) let us be named
The constant swain, the virtuous maid.

Unknown

"WHEN THE KYE COMES HAME"

Come, all ye jolly shepherds
That whistle through the glen,
I'll tell ye of a secret
That courtiers dinna ken:
What is the greatest bliss
That the tongue o' man can name?
'Tis to woo a bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.
When the kye comes hame,
When the kye comes hame,
'Tween the gloamin and the mirk,
When the kye comes hame.

'Tis not beneath the coronet,
Nor canopy of state,
'Tis not on couch of velvet,
Nor arbor of the great—
'Tis beneath the spreading birk,
In the glen without the name,
Wi' a bonnie, bonnie lassie,
When the kye comes hame.

There the blackbird bigs his nest
For the mate he lo'es to see,
And on the topmost bough,
O, a happy bird is he!
Then he pours his melting ditty,
And love is a' the theme,
And he'll woo his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.

When the blewart bears a pearl,
And the daisy turns a pea,
And the bonnie lucken gowan
Has fauldit up her e'e,
Then the laverock frae the blue lift
Draps down, and thinks nae shame
To woo his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.

See yonder pawkie shepherd
That lingers on the hill—
His ewes are in the fauld,
And his lambs are lying still;
Yet he downa gang to bed,
For his heart is in a flame
To meet his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.

When the little wee bit heart
Rises high in the breast,
And the little wee bit starn
Rises red in the east,

O there's a joy sae dear,
That the heart can hardly frame,
Wi' a bonnie, bonnie lassie,
When the kye comes hame.

Then since all nature joins
In this love without alloy,
O, wha wad prove a traitor
To Nature's dearest joy?
Or wha wad choose a crown,
Wi' its perils and its fame,
And miss his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame?
When the kye comes hame,
When the kye comes hame
'Tween the gloamin' and the mirk,
When the kye comes hame!

James Hogg [1770–1835]

THE LOW-BACKED CAR

When first I saw sweet Peggy,
'Twas on a market day,
A low-backed car she drove, and sat
Upon a truss of hay;
But when that hay was blooming grass
And decked with flowers of Spring,
No flower was there that could compare
With the blooming girl I sing.
As she sat in the low-backed car,
The man at the turnpike bar
Never asked for the toll,
But just rubbed his ould poll,
And looked after the low-backed car.

In battle's wild commotion,
The proud and mighty Mars,
With hostile scythes, demands his tithes
Of death—in warlike cars;

While Peggy, peaceful goddess,
  Has darts in her bright eye,
That knock men down in the market town,
  As right and left they fly;—
While she sits in her low-backed car,
Than battle more dangerous far,—
    For the doctor's art
    Cannot cure the heart
That is hit from that low-backed car.

Sweet Peggy round her car, sir,
  Has strings of ducks and geese,
But the scores of hearts she slaughters
  By far outnumber these;
While she among her poultry sits,
  Just like a turtle-dove,
Well worth the cage, I do engage,
  Of the blooming god of Love!
While she sits in her low-backed car,
The lovers come near and far,
    And envy the chicken
    That Peggy is pickin',
As she sits in her low-backed car.

O, I'd rather own that car, sir,
  With Peggy by my side,
Than a coach-and-four, and goold galore,
  And a lady for my bride;
For the lady would sit forninst me,
  On a cushion made with taste,
While Peggy would sit beside me,
  With my arm around her waist,—
While we drove in the low-backed car,
To be married by Father Mahar,
    O, my heart would beat high
    At her glance and her sigh,—
Though it beat in a low-backed car!

Samuel Lover [1797–1868]

THE PRETTY GIRL OF LOCH DAN

THE shades of eve had crossed the glen
That frowns o'er infant Avonmore,
When, nigh Loch Dan, two weary men,
We stopped before a cottage door.

"God save all here!" my comrade cries,
And rattles on the raised latch-pin;
"God save you kindly!" quick replies
A clear sweet voice, and asks us in.

We enter; from the wheel she starts,
A rosy girl with soft black eyes;
Her fluttering curtsey takes our hearts,
Her blushing grace and pleased surprise.

Poor Mary, she was quite alone,
For, all the way to Glenmalure,
Her mother had that morning gone,
And left the house in charge with her.

But neither household cares, nor yet
The shame that startled virgins feel,
Could make the generous girl forget
Her wonted hospitable zeal.

She brought us, in a beechen bowl,
Sweet milk that smacked of mountain thyme,
Oat cake, and such a yellow roll
Of butter,—it gilds all my rhyme!

And, while we ate the grateful food
(With weary limbs on bench reclined),
Considerate and discreet, she stood
Apart, and listened to the wind.

Kind wishes both our souls engaged,
From breast to breast spontaneous ran
The mutual thought,—we stood and pledged
THE MODEST ROSE ABOVE LOCH DAN.

"The milk we drink is not more pure,
Sweet Mary,—bless those budding charms!—
Than your own generous heart, I'm sure,
Nor whiter than the breast it warms!"

She turned and gazed, unused to hear
Such language in that homely glen;
But, Mary, you have naught to fear,
Though smiled on by two stranger-men.

Not for a crown would I alarm
Your virgin pride by word or sign,
Nor need a painful blush disarm
My friend of thoughts as pure as mine.

Her simple heart could not but feel
The words we spoke were free from guile;
She stooped, she blushed, she fixed her wheel,—
'Tis all in vain,—she can't but smile!

Just like sweet April's dawn appears
Her modest face,—I see it yet,—
And though I lived a hundred years
Methinks I never could forget

The pleasure that, despite her heart,
Fills all her downcast eyes with light;
The lips reluctantly apart,
The white teeth struggling into sight,

The dimples eddying o'er her cheek,—
The rosy cheek that won't be still:—
O, who could blame what flatterers speak,
Did smiles like this reward their skill?

For such another smile, I vow,
Though loudly beats the midnight rain,
I'd take the mountain-side e'en now,
And walk to Luggelaw again!

Samuel Ferguson [1810–1886]

MUCKLE-MOUTH MEG

FROWNED the Laird on the Lord: "So, red-handed I catch thee?
Death-doomed by our Law of the Border!
We've a gallows outside and a chiel to dispatch thee:
Who trespasses—hangs: all's in order."

He met frown with smile, did the young English gallant:
Then the Laird's dame: "Nay, Husband, I beg!
He's comely: be merciful! Grace for the callant
—If he marries our Muckle-mouth Meg!"

"No mile-wide-mouthed monster of yours do I marry:
Grant rather the gallows!" laughed he.
"Foul fare kith and kin of you—why do you tarry?"
"To tame your fierce temper!" quoth she.

"Shove him quick in the Hole, shut him fast for a week:
Cold, darkness, and hunger work wonders:
Who lion-like roars, now mouse-fashion will squeak,
And 'it rains' soon succeed to 'it thunders.'"

A week did he bide in the cold and dark
—Not hunger: for duly at morning
In flitted a lass, and a voice like a lark
Chirped, "Muckle-mouth Meg still ye're scorning?

"Go hang, but here's parritch to hearten ye first!"
"Did Meg's muckle-mouth boast within some
Such music as yours, mine should match it or burst:
No frog-jaws! So tell folk, my Winsome!"

Soon week came to end, and, from Hole's door set wide,
Out he marched, and there waited the lassie:
"Yon gallows, or Muckle-mouth Meg for a bride!
Consider! Sky's blue and turf's grassy:

"Life's sweet; shall I say ye wed Muckle-mouth Meg?"
"Not I," quoth the stout heart: "too eerie
The mouth that can swallow a bubblyjock's egg:
Shall I let it munch mine? Never, Dearie!"

"Not Muckle-mouth Meg? Wow, the obstinate man!
Perhaps he would rather wed me!"
"Ay, would he—with just for a dowry your can!"
"I'm Muckle-mouth Meg," chirruped she.

"Then so—so—so—so—" as he kissed her apace—
"Will I widen thee out till thou turnest
From Margaret Minnikin-mou', by God's grace,
To Muckle-mouth Meg in good earnest!"

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

MUCKLE-MOU'D MEG

"Oh, what hae ye brought us hame now, my brave lord,
Strappit flaught owre his braid saddle-bow?
Some bauld Border reiver to feast at our board,
An' harry our pantry, I trow.
He's buirdly an' stalwart in lith an' in limb;
Gin ye were his master in war
The field was a saft eneugh litter for him,
Ye needna hae brought him sae far.
Then saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
An' when ye gae hunt again, strike higher game."

"Hoot, whisht ye, my dame, for he comes o' gude kin,
An' boasts o' a lang pedigree;
This night he maun share o' our gude cheer within,
At morning's gray dawn he maun dee.
He's gallant Wat Scott, heir o' proud Harden Ha',
Wha ettled our lands clear to sweep;
But now he is snug in auld Elibank's paw,
An' shall swing frae our donjon-keep.
Though saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
I'll ne'er when I hunt again strike higher game."

"Is this young Wat Scott? an' wad ye rax his craig,
When our daughter is fey for a man?
Gae, gaur the loun marry our muckle-mou'd Meg,
Or we'll ne'er get the jaud aff our han'!"

"Od! hear our gudewife, she wad fain save your life;
Wat Scott, will ye marry or hang?"
But Meg's muckle mou set young Wat's heart agrue.
Wat swore to the woodie he'd gang.
Ne'er saddle nor munt again, harness nor dunt again,
Wat ne'er shall hunt again, ne'er see his hame.

Syne muckle-mou'd Meg pressed in close to his side,
An' blinkit fu' sleely and kind,
But aye as Wat glowered at his braw proffered bride,
He shook like a leaf in the wind.
"A bride or a gallows, a rope or a wife!"
The morning dawned sunny and clear—
Wat boldly strode forward to part wi' his life,
Till he saw Meggy shedding a tear;
Then saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
Fain wad Wat hunt again, fain wad be hame.

Meg's tear touched his bosom, the gibbet frowned high,
An' slowly Wat strode to his doom;
He gae a glance round wi' a tear in his eye,
Meg shone like a star through the gloom.
She rushed to his arms, they were wed on the spot,
An' lo'ed ither muckle and lang;
Nae bauld border laird had a wife like Wat Scott;
'Twas better to marry than hang.
So saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
Elibank hunt again, Wat's snug at hame.

James Ballantine [1808–1877]

GLENLOGIE

THREESCORE o' nobles rade to the king's ha',
But bonnie Glenlogie's the flower o' them a',
Wi' his milk-white steed and his bonnie black e'e,
"Glenlogie, dear mither, Glenlogie for me!"

"O haud your tongue, dochter, ye'll get better than he";
"O say na sae, mither, for that canna be;
Though Doumlie is richer, and greater than he,
Yet if I maun tak' him, I'll certainly dee.

"Where will I get a bonnie boy, to win hose and shoon,
Will gae to Glenlogie, and come again soon?"
"O here am I, a bonnie boy, to win hose and shoon,
Will gae to Glenlogie and come again soon."

When he gaed to Glenlogie, 'twas "Wash and go dine";
'Twas "Wash ye, my pretty boy, wash and go dine."
"O 'twas ne'er my father's fashion, and it ne'er shall be mine
To gar a lady's errand wait till I dine.

"But there is, Glenlogie, a letter for thee."
The first line that he read, a low smile ga'e he;
The next line that he read, the tear blindit his e'e:
But the last line he read, he gart the table flee.

"Gar saddle the black horse, gar saddle the brown;
Gar saddle the swiftest steed e'er rade frae a town";
But lang ere the horse was brought round to the green,
O bonnie Glenlogie was two mile his lane.

When he cam' to Glenfeldy's door, sma' mirth was there;
Bonnie Jean's mither was tearing her hair;
"Ye're welcome, Glenlogie, ye're welcome," said she,
"Ye're welcome, Glenlogie, your Jeanie to see."

Pale and wan was she, when Glenlogie gaed ben,
But red rosy grew she whene'er he sat down;
She turned awa' her head, but the smile was in her e'e,
"O binna feared, mither, I'll maybe no dee."

Unknown

LOCHINVAR

From "Marmion"

O, YOUNG Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And, save his good broadsword, he weapon had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late;
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all.
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied;—
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide,—
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume.
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered, "'Twere better by far,
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!

"She is won! we are gone! over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair,
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you the foremost o' them a'
Shall ride our forest-queen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazel

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there:
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The ladie was not seen!
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

CANDOR

OCTOBER—A WOOD

"I KNOW what you're going to say," she said,
And she stood up, looking uncommonly tall:
"You are going to speak of the hectic fall,
And say you're sorry the summer's dead,
And no other summer was like it, you know,
And can I imagine what made it so.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said:
"You are going to ask if I forget
That day in June when the woods were wet,
And you carried me"—here she drooped her head—
"Over the creek; you are going to say,
Do I remember that horrid day.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said:
"You are going to say that since that time
You have rather tended to run to rhyme,
And"—her clear glance fell, and her cheek grew red—
"And have I noticed your tone was queer.
Why, everybody has seen it here!
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," I said:
"You're going to say you've been much annoyed;
And I'm short of tact—you will say, devoid—

And I'm clumsy and awkward; and call me Ted;
And I bear abuse like a dear old lamb;
And you'll have me, anyway, just as I am.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Ye-es," she said.

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855–1896]

"DO YOU REMEMBER"

Do you remember when you heard
My lips breathe love's first faltering word?
You do, sweet—don't you?
When, having wandered all the day,
Linked arm in arm, I dared to say,
"You'll love me—won't you?"

And when you blushed and could not speak,
I fondly kissed your glowing cheek,
Did that affront you?
Oh, surely not—your eye expressed
No wrath—but said, perhaps in jest,
"You'll love me—won't you?"

I'm sure my eyes replied, "I will."
And you believe that promise still,
You do, sweet—don't you?
Yes, yes! when age has made our eyes
Unfit for questions or replies,
You'll love me—won't you?

Thomas Haynes Bayly [1797–1839]

BECAUSE

Sweet Nea!—for your lovely sake
I weave these rambling numbers,
Because I've lain an hour awake,
And can't compose my slumbers;
Because your beauty's gentle light
Is round my pillow beaming,
And flings, I know not why, to-night,
Some witchery o'er my dreaming!

Because we've passed some joyous days,
And danced some merry dances;
Because we love old Beaumont's plays,
And old Froissart's romances!
Because whene'er I hear your words
Some pleasant feeling lingers;
Because I think your heart has cords
That vibrate to your fingers.

Because you've got those long, soft curls,
I've sworn should deck my goddess;
Because you're not, like other girls,
All bustle, blush, and bodice!
Because your eyes are deep and blue,
Your fingers long and rosy;
Because a little child and you
Would make one's home so cosy!

Because your little tiny nose
Turns up so pert and funny;
Because I know you choose your beaux
More for their mirth than money;
Because I think you'd rather twirl
A waltz, with me to guide you,
Than talk small nonsense with an earl,
And a coronet beside you!

Because you don't object to walk,
And are not given to fainting;
Because you have not learned to talk
Of flowers, and Poonah-painting;
Because I think you'd scarce refuse
To sew one on a button;
Because I know you sometimes choose
To dine on simple mutton!

Because I think I'm just so weak
As, some of those fine morrows,
To ask you if you'll let me speak
My story—and *my* sorrows;

Because the rest's a simple thing,
A matter quickly over
A church—a priest—a sigh—a ring—
And a chaise-and-four to Dover.

Edward Fitzgerald [1809–1883]

LOVE AND AGE

From "Gryll Grange"

I PLAYED with you 'mid cowslips blowing,
When I was six and you were four;
When garlands weaving, flower-balls throwing,
Were pleasures soon to please no more.
Through groves and meads, o'er grass and heather,
With little playmates, to and fro,
We wandered hand in hand together;
But that was sixty years ago.

You grew a lovely roseate maiden,
And still our early love was strong;
Still with no care our days were laden,
They glided joyously along;
And I did love you very dearly—
How dearly, words want power to show;
I thought your heart was touched as nearly;
But that was fifty years ago.

Then other lovers came around you,
Your beauty grew from year to year,
And many a splendid circle found you
The center of its glittering sphere.
I saw you then, first vows forsaking,
On rank and wealth your hand bestow;
O, then, I thought my heart was breaking,—
But that was forty years ago.

And I lived on, to wed another:
No cause she gave me to repine;
And when I heard you were a mother,
I did not wish the children mine.

My own young flock, in fair progression,
Made up a pleasant Christmas row:
My joy in them was past expression;—
But that was thirty years ago.

You grew a matron plump and comely,
You dwelt in fashion's brightest blaze;
My earthly lot was far more homely;
But I too had my festal days.
No merrier eyes have ever glistened
Around the hearth-stone's wintry glow,
Than when my youngest child was christened:—
But that was twenty years ago.

Time passed. My eldest girl was married,
And I am now a grandsire gray;
One pet of four years old I've carried
Among the wild-flowered meads to play.
In our old fields of childish pleasure,
Where now, as then, the cowslips blow,
She fills her basket's ample measure,—
And that is not ten years ago.

But though first love's impassioned blindness
Has passed away in colder light,
I still have thought of you with kindness,
And shall do, till our last good-night.
The ever-rolling silent hours
Will bring a time we shall not know,
When our young days of gathering flowers
Will be an hundred years ago.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785–1866]

TO HELEN

If wandering in a wizard's car
Through yon blue ether, I were able
To fashion of a little star
A taper for my Helen's table;—

"What then?" she asks me with a laugh—
Why, then, with all heaven's luster glowing,
It would not gild her path with half
The light her love o'er mine is throwing!

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802–1839]

AT THE CHURCH GATE

From "Pendennis"

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
Ofttimes I hover;
And near the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
And noise and humming;
They've hushed the Minster bell:
The organ 'gins to swell;
She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid, and stepping fast
And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast;
She comes—she's here—she's past!
May heaven go with her!

Kneel undisturbed, fair Saint!
Pour out your praise or plaint
Meekly and duly;
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute,

Like outcast spirits, who wait,
And see, through heaven's gate,
Angels within it.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

MABEL, IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

FAIREST of the fairest, rival of the rose,
That is Mabel of the Hills, as everybody knows.

Do you ask me near what stream this sweet floweret grows?
That's an ignorant question, sir, as everybody knows.

Ask you what her age is, reckoned as time goes?
Just the age of beauty, as everybody knows.

Is she tall as Rosalind, standing on her toes?
She is just the perfect height, as everybody knows.

What's the color of her eyes, when they ope or close?
Just the color they should be, as everybody knows.

Is she lovelier dancing, or resting in repose?
Both are radiant pictures, as everybody knows.

Do her ships go sailing on every wind that blows?
She is richer far than that, as everybody knows.

Has she scores of lovers, heaps of bleeding beaux?
That question's quite superfluous, as everybody knows.

I could tell you something, if I only chose!—
But what's the use of telling what everybody knows?

James Thomas Fields [1816–1881]

TOUJOURS AMOUR

PRITHEE tell me, Dimple-Chin,
At what age does Love begin?
Your blue eyes have scarcely seen
Summers three, my fairy queen,

But a miracle of sweets,
Soft approaches, sly retreats,
Show the little archer there,
Hidden in your pretty hair;
When didst learn a heart to win?
Prithee tell me, Dimple-Chin!

"Oh!" the rosy lips reply,
"I can't tell you if I try.
'Tis so long I can't remember:
Ask some younger lass than I!"

Tell, O tell me, Grizzled-Face,
Do your heart and head keep pace?
When does hoary Love expire,
When do frosts put out the fire?
Can its embers burn below
All that chill December snow?
Care you still soft hands to press,
Bonny heads to smooth and bless?
When does Love give up the chase?
Tell, O tell me, Grizzled-Face!

"Ah!" the wise old lips reply,
"Youth may pass and strength may die;
But of Love I can't foretoken:
Ask some older sage than I!"

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

THE DOORSTEP

The conference-meeting through at last,
We boys around the vestry waited
To see the girls come tripping past,
Like snow-birds willing to be mated.

Not braver he that leaps the wall
By level musket-flashes bitten,
Than I, that stepped before them all
Who longed to see me get the mitten.

But no! she blushed and took my arm:
We let the old folks have the highway,
And started toward the Maple Farm
Along a kind of lovers' by-way.

I can't remember what we said,—
'Twas nothing worth a song or story;
Yet that rude path by which we sped
Seemed all transformed and in a glory.

The snow was crisp beneath our feet,
The moon was full, the fields were gleaming;
By hood and tippet sheltered sweet,
Her face with youth and health was beaming.

The little hand outside her muff
(O sculptor! if you could but mold it)
So lightly touched my jacket-cuff,
To keep it warm I had to hold it.

To have her with me there alone,—
'Twas love and fear and triumph blended.
At last we reached the foot-worn stone
Where that delicious journey ended.

The old folks, too, were almost home:
Her dimpled hand the latches fingered,
We heard the voices nearer come,
Yet on the doorstep still we lingered.

She shook her ringlets from her hood,
And with a "Thank you, Ned!" dissembled;
But yet I knew she understood
With what a daring wish I trembled.

A cloud passed kindly overhead,
The moon was slyly peeping through it,
Yet hid its face, as if it said—
"Come, now or never! do it! *do it!*"

My lips till then had only known
The kiss of mother and of sister,—
But somehow, full upon her own
Sweet, rosy, darling mouth,—I kissed her!

Perhaps 'twas boyish love: yet still,
O listless woman! weary lover!
To feel once more that fresh, wild thrill
I'd give—but who can live youth over?

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

THE WHITE FLAG

I SENT my love two roses,—one
As white as driven snow,
And one a blushing royal red,
A flaming Jacqueminot.

I meant to touch and test my fate;
That night I should divine,
The moment I should see my love,
If her true heart were mine.

For if she holds me dear, I said,
She'll wear my blushing rose;
If not, she'll wear my cold Lamarque,
As white as winter's snows.

My heart sank when I met her: sure
I had been overbold,
For on her breast my pale rose lay
In virgin whiteness cold.

Yet with low words she greeted me,
With smiles divinely tender;
Upon her cheek the red rose dawned,—
The white rose meant surrender.

John Hay [1838–1905]

A SONG OF THE FOUR SEASONS

When Spring comes laughing
  By vale and hill,
By wind-flower walking
  And daffodil,—
Sing stars of morning,
  Sing morning skies,
Sing blue of speedwell,—
  And my Love's eyes.

When comes the Summer,
  Full-leaved and strong,
And gay birds gossip
  The orchard long,—
Sing hid, sweet honey
  That no bee sips;
Sing red, red roses,—
  And my Love's lips.

When Autumn scatters
  The leaves again,
And piled sheaves bury
  The broad-wheeled wain,—
Sing flutes of harvest
  Where men rejoice;
Sing rounds of reapers,—
  And my Love's voice.

But when comes Winter
  With hail and storm,
And red fire roaring
  And ingle warm,—
Sing first sad going
  Of friends that part;
Then sing glad meeting,—
  And my Love's heart.

Austin Dobson [1840–

THE LOVE-KNOT

Tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied her raven ringlets in;
But not alone in the silken snare
Did she catch her lovely floating hair,
For, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

They were strolling together up the hill,
Where the wind came blowing merry and chill;
And it blew the curls, a frolicsome race,
All over the happy peach-colored face.
Till, scolding and laughing, she tied them in,
Under her beautiful, dimpled chin.

And it blew a color, bright as the bloom
Of the pinkest fuchsia's tossing plume,
All over the cheeks of the prettiest girl
That ever imprisoned a romping curl,
Or, in tying her bonnet under her chin,
Tied a young man's heart within.

Steeper and steeper grew the hill,
Madder, merrier, chillier still
The western wind blew down, and played
The wildest tricks with the little maid,
As, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

O western wind, do you think it was fair
To play such tricks with her floating hair?
To gladly, gleefully, do your best
To blow her against the young man's breast,
Where he as gladly folded her in,
And kissed her mouth and her dimpled chin?

Ah! Ellery Vane, you little thought,
An hour ago, when you besought

This country lass to walk with you,
After the sun had dried the dew,
What terrible danger you'd be in,
As she tied her bonnet under her chin!

Nora Perry [1832–1896]

RIDING DOWN

Oh, did you see him riding down,
And riding down, while all the town
Came out to see, came out to see,
And all the bells rang mad with glee?

Oh, did you hear those bells ring out,
The bells ring out, the people shout,
And did you hear that cheer on cheer
That over all the bells rang clear?

And did you see the waving flags,
The fluttering flags, the tattered flags,
Red, white, and blue, shot through and through,
Baptized with battle's deadly dew?

And did you hear the drums' gay beat,
The drums' gay beat, the bugles sweet,
The cymbals' clash, the cannons' crash,
That rent the sky with sound and flash?

And did you see me waiting there,
Just waiting there, and watching there,
One little lass, amid the mass
That pressed to see the hero pass?

And did you see him smiling down,
And smiling down, as riding down
With slowest pace, with stately grace,
He caught the vision of a face,—

My face uplifted red and white,
Turned red and white with sheer delight,

To meet the eyes, the smiling eyes,
Outflashing in their swift surprise?

Oh, did you see how swift it came,
How swift it came like sudden flame,
That smile to me, to only me.
The little lass who blushed to see?

And at the windows all along,
Oh, all along, a lovely throng
Of faces fair, beyond compare,
Beamed out upon him riding there!

Each face was like a radiant gem,
A sparkling gem, and yet for them
No swift smile came like sudden flame,
No arrowy glance took certain aim.

He turned away from all their grace,
From all that grace of perfect face,
He turned to me, to only me,
The little lass who blushed to see!

Nora Perry [1832–1896]

"FORGETTIN'"

THE night when last I saw my lad
His eyes were bright an' wet.
He took my two hands in his own,
"'Tis well," says he, "we're met.
Asthore machree! the likes o' me
I bid ye now forget."

Ah, sure the same's a thriflin' thing,
'Tis more I'd do for him!
I mind the night I promised well,
Away on Ballindim.—
An' every little while or so
I thry forgettin' Jim.

It shouldn't take that long to do,
An' him not very tall:

'Tis quare the way I'll hear his voice,
A boy that's out o' call,—
An' whiles I'll see him stand as plain
As e'er a six-fut wall.

Och, never fear, my jewel!
I'd forget ye now this minute,
If I only had a notion
O' the way I should begin it;
But first an' last it isn't known
The heap o' throuble's in it.

Meself began the night ye went
An' hasn't done it yet;
I'm nearly fit to give it up,
For where's the use to fret?—
An' the memory's fairly spoilt on me
Wid mindin' to forget.

Moira O'Neill [18

"ACROSS THE FIELDS TO ANNE"

How often in the summer-tide,
His graver business set aside,
Has stripling Will, the thoughtful-eyed,
As to the pipe of Pan,
Stepped blithesomely with lover's pride
Across the fields to Anne.

It must have been a merry mile,
This summer stroll by hedge and stile,
With sweet foreknowledge all the while
How sure the pathway ran
To dear delights of kiss and smile,
Across the fields to Anne.

The silly sheep that graze to-day,
I wot, they let him go his way,
Nor once looked up, as who would say:
"It is a seemly man."
For many lads went wooing aye
Across the fields to Anne.

The oaks, they have a wiser look;
Mayhap they whispered to the brook:
"The world by him shall yet be shook,
It is in nature's plan;
Though now he fleets like any rook
Across the fields to Anne."

And I am sure, that on some hour
Coquetting soft 'twixt sun and shower,
He stooped and broke a daisy-flower
With heart of tiny span,
And bore it as a lover's dower
Across the fields to Anne.

While from her cottage garden-bed
She plucked a jasmin's goodlihede,
To scent his jerkin's brown instead;
Now since that love began,
What luckier swain than he who sped
Across the fields to Anne?

The winding path whereon I pace,
The hedgerows green, the summer's grace,
Are still before me face to face;
Methinks I almost can
Turn port and join the singing race
Across the fields to Anne.

Richard Burton [1859–

PAMELA IN TOWN

The fair Pamela came to town,
To London town, in early summer;
And up and down and round about
The beaux discussed the bright newcomer,
With "Gadzooks, sir," and "Ma'am, my duty,"
And "Odds my life, but 'tis a Beauty!"

To Ranelagh went Mistress Pam,
Sweet Mistress Pam so fair and merry,
With cheeks of cream and roses blent,
With voice of lark and lip of cherry.

Then all the beaux vowed 'twas their duty
To win and wear this country Beauty.

And first Frank Lovelace tried his wit,
With whispers bold and eyes still bolder;
The warmer grew his saucy flame,
Cold grew the charming fair and colder.
'Twas "icy bosom"—"cruel beauty"—
"To love, sweet Mistress, 'tis a duty."

Then Jack Carew his arts essayed,
With honeyed sighs and feignèd weeping.
Good lack! his billets bound the curls
That pretty Pam she wore a-sleeping.
Next day these curls had richer beauty,
So well Jack's fervor did its duty.

Then Cousin Will came up to view
The way Pamela ruled the fashion;
He watched the gallants crowd about,
And flew into a rustic passion,—
Left "Squire, his mark," on divers faces,
And pinked Carew beneath his laces.

Alack! one night at Ranelagh
The pretty Sly-boots fell a-blushing;
And all the mettled bloods looked round
To see what caused that telltale flushing.
Up stepped a grizzled Poet Fellow
To dance with Pam a saltarello.

Then Jack and Frank and Will resolved,
With hand on sword and cutting glances,
That they would lead that Graybeard forth
To livelier tunes and other dances.
But who that saw Pam's eyes a-shining
With love and joy would see her pining!

And —oons! Their wrath cooled as they looked—
That Poet stared as fierce as any!
He was a mighty proper man,
With blade on hip and inches many;

The beaux all vowed it was their duty
To toast some newer, softer Beauty.

Sweet Pam she bridled, blushed and smiled—
The wild thing loved and could but show it!
Mayhap some day you'll see in town
Pamela and her grizzled Poet.
Forsooth he taught the rogue her duty,
And won her faith, her love, her beauty.

Ellen Mackay Hutchinson Cortissoz [18 –

YES?

Is it true, then, my girl, that you mean it—
The word spoken yesterday night?
Does that hour seem so sweet now between it
And this has come day's sober light?
Have you woke from a moment of rapture
To remember, regret, and repent,
And to hate, perchance, him who has trapped your
Unthinking consent?

Who was he, last evening—this fellow
Whose audacity lent him a charm?
Have you promised to wed Pulchinello?
For life taking Figaro's arm?
Will you have the Court fool of the papers,
The clown in the journalists' ring,
Who earns his scant bread by his capers,
To be your heart's king?

When we met quite by chance at the theatre
And I saw you home under the moon,
I'd no thought, love, that mischief would be at her
Tricks with my tongue quite so soon;
That I should forget fate and fortune
Make a difference 'twixt Sèvres and delf—
That I'd have the calm nerve to importune
You, sweet, for yourself.

It's appalling, by Jove, the audacious
  Effrontery of that request!
But you—you grew suddenly gracious,
  And hid your sweet face on my breast.
Why you did it I cannot conjecture;
  I surprised you, poor child, I dare say,
Or perhaps—does the moonlight affect your
  Head often that way?

. . . . . .

You're released! With some wooer replace me
  More worthy to be your life's light;
From the tablet of memory efface me,
  If you don't mean your Yes of last night.
But—unless you are anxious to see me a
  Wreck of the pipe and the cup
In my birthplace and graveyard, Bohemia—
  Love, don't give me up!

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855–1896]

THE PRIME OF LIFE

Just as I thought I was growing old,
  Ready to sit in my easy chair,
To watch the world with a heart grown cold,
  And smile at a folly I would not share,

Rose came by with a smile for me,
  And I am thinking that forty year
Isn't the age that it seems to be,
  When two pretty brown eyes are near.

Bless me! of life it is just the prime,
  A fact that I hope she will understand;
And forty year is a perfect rhyme
  To dark brown eyes and a pretty hand.

These gray hairs are by chance, you see—
  Boys are sometimes gray, I am told:
[Deer Rose came by with a smile for me,
  Just as I thought I was getting old.

Walter Learned [1847–1915]

THOUGHTS ON THE COMMANDMENTS

"Love your neighbor as yourself,"—
So the parson preaches:
That's one half the Decalogue,—
So the prayer-book teaches.
Half my duty I can do
With but little labor,
For with all my heart and soul
I do love my neighbor.

Mighty little credit, that,
To my self-denial,
Not to love her, though, might be
Something of a trial.
Why, the rosy light, that peeps
Through the glass above her,
Lingers round her lips,—you see
E'en the sunbeams love her.

So to make my merit more,
I'll go beyond the letter:—
Love my neighbor as myself?
Yes, and ten times better.
For she's sweeter than the breath
Of the Spring, that passes
Through the fragrant, budding woods,
O'er the meadow-grasses.

And I've preached the word I know,
For it was my duty
To convert the stubborn heart
Of the little beauty.
Once again success has crowned
Missionary labor,
For her sweet eyes own that she
Also loves her neighbor.

George Augustus Baker [1849–1906]

THE IRONY OF LOVE

"SIGH NO MORE, LADIES"

From "Much Ado About Nothing"

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
  Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore;
  To one thing constant never.
    Then sigh not so,
    But let them go,
  And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
  Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe
  Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
  Since summer first was leavy.
    Then sigh not so,
    But let them go,
  And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
  Into Hey nonny, nonny.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

A RENUNCIATION

If women could be fair, and yet not fond,
Or that their love were firm, not fickle still,
I would not marvel that they make men bond
By service long to purchase their good will;
But when I see how frail those creatures are,
I muse that men forget themselves so far.

To mark the choice they make, and how they change,
How oft from Phœbus they do flee to Pan;
Unsettled still, like haggards wild they range,
These gentle birds that fly from man to man;
Who would not scorn and shake them from the fist,
And let them fly, fair fools, which way they list?

Yet for disport we fawn and flatter both,
To pass the time when nothing else can please,
And train them to our lure with subtle oath,
Till, weary of their wiles, ourselves we ease;
And then we say when we their fancy try,
To play with fools, O what a fool was I!

Edward Vere [1550–1604]

A SONG

Ye happy swains, whose hearts are free
From Love's imperial chain,
Take warning, and be taught by me,
To avoid the enchanting pain;
Fatal the wolves to trembling flocks,
Fierce winds to blossoms prove,
To careless seamen, hidden rocks,
To human quiet, love.

Fly the fair sex, if bliss you prize;
The snake's beneath the flower:
Who ever gazed on beauteous eyes,
That tasted quiet more?
How faithless is the lovers' joy!
How constant is their care
The kind with falsehood to destroy,
The cruel, with despair.

George Etherege [1635?–1691]

TO HIS FORSAKEN MISTRESS

I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,
And I might have gone near to love thee,
Had I not found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak, had power to move thee:

But I can let thee now alone
As worthy to be loved by none.

I do confess thou'rt sweet; yet find
Thee such an unthrift of thy sweets,
Thy favors are but like the wind
That kisseth everything it meets:
And since thou canst with more than one,
Thou'rt worthy to be kissed by none.

The morning rose that untouched stands
Armed with her briers, how sweet her smell!
But plucked and strained through ruder hands,
Her sweets no longer with her dwell:
But scent and beauty both are gone,
And leaves fall from her, one by one.

Such fate ere long will thee betide
When thou hast handled been awhile,
With sere flowers to be thrown aside;
And I shall sigh, while some will smile,
To see thy love for more than one
Hath brought thee to be loved by none.

Robert Ayton [1570–1638]

TO AN INCONSTANT

I LOVED thee once; I'll love no more,—
Thine be the grief as is the blame;
Thou art not what thou wast before,
What reason I should be the same?
He that can love unloved again,
Hath better store of love than brain:
God send me love my debts to pay,
While unthrifts fool their love away!

Nothing could have my love o'erthrown,
If thou hadst still continued mine;
Yea, if thou hadst remained thy own,
I might perchance have yet been thine.

But thou thy freedom didst recall,
That, if thou might, elsewhere enthrall:
And then how could I but disdain
A captive's captive to remain?

When new desires had conquered thee,
And changed the object of thy will,
It had been lethargy in me,
Not constancy, to love thee still.
Yea, it had been a sin to go
And prostitute affection so,
Since we are taught no prayers to say
To such as must to others pray.

Yet do thou glory in thy choice,—
Thy choice of his good fortune boast;
I'll neither grieve nor yet rejoice,
To see him gain what I have lost:
The height of my disdain shall be,
To laugh at him, to blush for thee;
To love thee still, but go no more
A-begging at a beggar's door.

Robert Ayton [1570–1638]

ADVICE TO A GIRL

Never love unless you can
Bear with all the faults of man!
Men sometimes will jealous be,
Though but little cause they see,
And hang the head, as discontent,
And speak what straight they will repent.

Men, that but one Saint adore,
Make a show of love to more;
Beauty must be scorned in none,
Though but truly served in one:
For what is courtship but disguise?
True hearts may have dissembling eyes.

Men, when their affairs require,
Must awhile themselves retire;
Sometimes hunt, and sometimes hawk,
And not ever sit and talk:—
If these and such-like you can bear,
Then like, and love, and never fear!

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

SONG

THAT WOMEN ARE BUT MEN'S SHADOWS

From "The Forest"

Follow a shadow, it still flies you;
Seem to fly it, it will pursue:
So court a mistress, she denies you;
Let her alone, she will court you.
Say, are not women truly, then,
Styled but the shadows of us men?

At morn and even, shades are longest;
At noon they are or short or none:
So men at weakest, they are strongest,
But grant us perfect, they're not known.
Say, are not women truly then,
Styled but the shadows of us men?

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

TRUE BEAUTY

May I find a woman fair
And her mind as clear as air!
If her beauty go alone,
'Tis to me as if 'twere none.

May I find a woman rich,
And not of too high a pitch!
If that pride should cause disdain,
Tell me, Lover, where's thy gain?

May I find a woman wise,
And her falsehood not disguise!
Hath she wit as she hath will,
Double-armed she is to ill.

May I find a woman kind,
And not wavering like the wind!
How should I call that love mine
When 'tis his, and his, and thine?

May I find a woman true!
There is beauty's fairest hue:
There is beauty, love, and wit.
Happy he can compass it!

Francis Beaumont [1584–1616]

THE INDIFFERENT

Never more will I protest
To love a woman but in jest:
For as they cannot be true,
So to give each man his due,
When the wooing fit is past,
Their affection cannot last.

Therefore if I chance to meet
With a mistress fair and sweet,
She my service shall obtain,
Loving her for love again:
Thus much liberty I crave
Not to be a constant slave.

But when we have tried each other,
If she better like another,
Let her quickly change for me;
Then to change am I as free.
He or she that loves too long
Sell their freedom for a song.

Francis Beaumont [1584–1616]

THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flowery meads in May,
If she think not well of me,
What care I how fair she be?

Shall my silly heart be pined
'Cause I see a woman kind?
Or a well disposèd nature
Joinèd with a lovely feature?
Be she meeker, kinder, than
Turtle-dove or pelican,
If she be not so to me,
What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love?
Or her well-deservings known
Make me quite forget my own?
Be she with that goodness blest
Which may merit name of Best,
If she be not such to me,
What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool and die?
She that bears a noble mind,
If not outward helps she find,
Thinks what with them he would do
That without them dares her woo;
And unless that mind I see,
What care I how great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair;

If she love me, this believe,
I will die ere she shall grieve;
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn and let her go;
For if she be not for me,
What care I for whom she be?

George Wither [1588–1667]

HIS FURTHER RESOLUTION

Shall I (like a hermit) dwell
On a rock or in a cell;
Calling home the smallest part
That is missing of my heart,
To bestow it where I may
Meet a rival every day?
If she undervalue me,
What care I how fair she be!

Were her tresses angel-gold;
If a stranger may be bold,
Unrebuked, and unafraid,
To convert them to a braid;
And, with little more ado,
Work them into bracelets, too!
If the mine be grown so free,
What care I how rich it be!

Were her hands as rich a prize
As her hair or precious eyes;
If she lay them out to take
Kisses for good manners' sake!
And let every lover slip
From her hand unto her lip!
If she seem not chaste to me,
What care I how chaste she be!

No! She must be perfect snow
In effect as well as show!
Warming but as snowballs do;

Not like fire by burning, too!
But when she by change hath got
To her heart a second lot;
Then if others share with me,
Farewell her! whate'er she be!

Unknown

SONG

From "Britannia's Pastorals"

Shall I tell you whom I love?
Hearken then awhile to me;
And if such a woman move
As I now shall versify,
Be assured 'tis she or none,
That I love, and love alone.

Nature did her so much right
As she scorns the help of art;
In as many virtues dight
As e'er yet embraced a heart:
So much good so truly tried,
Some for less were deified.

Wit she hath, without desire
To make known how much she hath;
And her anger flames no higher
Than may fitly sweeten wrath.
Full of pity as may be,
Though perhaps not so to me.

Reason masters every sense,
And her virtues grace her birth;
Lovely as all excellence,
Modest in her most of mirth,
Likelihood enough to prove
Only worth could kindle love.

Such she is: and if you know
Such a one as I have sung;
Be she brown, or fair, or so
That she be but somewhat young;

Be assured 'tis she, or none,
That I love, and love alone.

William Browne [1591–1643?]

TO DIANEME

Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes,
Which, star-like, sparkle in their skies;
Nor be you proud that you can see
All hearts your captives, yours yet free;
Be you not proud of that rich hair,
Which wantons with the love-sick air;
Whenas that ruby which you wear,
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone
When all your world of beauty's gone.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

INGRATEFUL BEAUTY THREATENED

Know, Celia, since thou art so proud,
'Twas I that gave thee thy renown.
Thou hadst in the forgotten crowd
Of common beauties lived unknown,
Had not my verse extolled thy name,
And with it imped the wings of Fame.

That killing power is none of thine;
I gave it to thy voice and eyes;
Thy sweets, thy graces, all are mine;
Thou art my star, shin'st in my skies;
Then dart not from thy borrowed sphere
Lightning on him that fixed thee there.

Tempt me with such affrights no more,
Lest what I made I uncreate;
Let fools thy mystic form adore,
I know thee in thy mortal state.
Wise poets, that wrapped Truth in tales,
Knew her themselves through all her veils.

Thomas Carew [1598?–1639?]

DISDAIN RETURNED

He that loves a rosy cheek,
  Or a coral lip admires,
Or from star-like eyes doth seek
  Fuel to maintain his fires:
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and steadfast mind,
  Gentle thoughts, and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
  Kindle never-dying fires:—
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks, or lips, or eyes.

No tears, Celia, now shall win
  My resolved heart to return;
I have searched thy soul within,
  And find naught but pride and scorn;
I have learned thy arts, and now
Can disdain as much as thou.

Some power, in my revenge, convey
That love to her I cast away.

Thomas Carew [1598?–1639?]

"LOVE WHO WILL, FOR I'LL LOVE NONE"

Love who will, for I'll love none,
  There's fools enough beside me:
Yet if each woman have not one,
  Come to me where I hide me,
And if she can the place attain,
For once I'll be her fool again.

It is an easy place to find,
  And women sure should know it;
Yet thither serves not every wind,
  Nor many men can show it:

It is the storehouse, where doth lie
All woman's truth and constancy.

If the journey be so long,
No woman will adventer;
But dreading her weak vessel's wrong,
The voyage will not enter:
Then may she sigh and lie alone,
In love with all, yet loved of none.

Thomas Browne [1605–1682]

VALERIUS ON WOMEN

She that denies me I would have;
Who craves me I despise:
Venus hath power to rule mine heart,
But not to please mine eyes.

Temptations offered I still scorn;
Denied, I cling them still;
I'll neither glut mine appetite,
Nor seek to starve my will.

Diana, double-clothed, offends;
So Venus, naked quite:
The last begets a surfeit, and
The other no delight.

That crafty girl shall please me best,
That no, for yea, can say;
And every wanton willing kiss
Can season with a nay.

Thomas Heywood [? –1650?]

DISPRAISE OF LOVE, AND LOVERS' FOLLIES

If love be life, I long to die,
Live they that list for me;
And he that gains the most thereby,
A fool at least shall be.

But he that feels the sorest fits,
'Scapes with no less than loss of wits.
Unhappy life they gain,
Which love do entertain.

In day by feignèd looks they live,
By lying dreams in night;
Each frown a deadly wound doth give,
Each smile a false delight.
If 't hap their lady pleasant seem,
It is for others' love they deem:
If void she seem of joy,
Disdain doth make her coy.

Such is the peace that lovers find,
Such is the life they lead,
Blown here and there with every wind,
Like flowers in the mead;
Now war, now peace, now war again,
Desire, despair, delight, disdain:
Though dead in midst of life,
In peace, and yet at strife.

Francis Davison [fl. 1602]

THE CONSTANT LOVER

Out upon it, I have loved
Three whole days together!
And am like to love three more,
If it prove fair weather.

Time shall moult away his wings
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
Such a constant lover.

But the spite on't is, no praise
Is due at all to me:
Love with me had made no stays,
Had it any been but she.

Had it any been but she,
And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen in her place.

John Suckling [1609–1642]

SONG

From "Aglaura"

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame, this will not move:
This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

John Suckling [1609–1642]

WISHES TO HIS SUPPOSED MISTRESS

Whoe'er she be,
That not impossible She
That shall command my heart and me:

Where'er she lie,
Locked up from mortal eye
In shady leaves of destiny:

Till that ripe birth
Of studied Fate stand forth,
And teach her fair steps tread our earth:

Till that divine
Idea take a shrine
Of crystal flesh, through which to shine:

Meet you her, my Wishes,
Bespeak her to my blisses,
And be ye called my absent kisses.

I wish her Beauty
That owes not all its duty
To gaudy tire, or glistering shoe-tie:

Something more than
Taffeta or tissue can,
Or rampant feather, or rich fan.

More than the spoil
Of shop, or silkworm's toil,
Or a bought blush, or a set smile.

A Face that's best
By its own beauty dressed,
And can alone commend the rest

A Face, made up
Out of no other shop
Than what Nature's white hand sets ope.

A Cheek, where youth
And blood, with pen of truth,
Write what their reader sweetly ru'th.

A Cheek, where grows
More than a morning rose,
Which to no box its being owes.

Lips, where all day
A lover's kiss may play,
Yet carry nothing thence away.

Looks, that oppress
Their richest tires, but dress
Themselves in simple nakedness.

Eyes, that displace
The neighbor diamond, and outface
That sunshine by their own sweet grace.

Tresses, that wear
Jewels but to declare
How much themselves more precious are:

Whose native ray
Can tame the wanton day
Of gems that in their bright shades play.

Each ruby there,
Or pearl that dare appear,
Be its own blush, be its own tear.

A well-tamed Heart,
For whose more noble smart
Love may be long choosing a dart.

Eyes, that bestow
Full quivers on Love's bow,
Yet pay less arrows than they owe.

Smiles, that can warm
The blood, yet teach a charm,
That chastity shall take no harm.

Blushes, that bin
The burnish of no sin,
Nor flames of aught too hot within.

Joys, that confess
Virtue their mistress,
And have no other head to dress.

Fears, fond and slight
As the coy bride's, when night,
First does the longing lover right.

Days that need borrow
No part of their good-morrow
From a fore-spent night of sorrow.

Days that, in spite
Of darkness, by the light
Of a clear mind, are day all night.

Nights, sweet as they,
Made short by lovers' play,
Yet long by the absence of the day.

Life, that dares send
A challenge to his end,
And when it comes, say, "Welcome, friend!"

Sydneian showers
Of sweet discourse, whose powers
Can crown old Winter's head with flowers.

Soft silken hours,
Open suns, shady bowers;
'Bove all, nothing within that lowers.

Whate'er delight
Can make Day's forehead bright,
Or give down to the wings of Night

In her whole frame
Have Nature all the name;
Art and Ornament, the shame!

Her flattery,
Picture and Poesy:
Her counsel her own virtue be.

I wish her store
Of worth may leave her poor
Of wishes; and I wish—no more.

Now, if Time knows
That Her, whose radiant brows
Weave them a garland of my vows;

Her, whose just bays
My future hopes can raise,
A trophy to her present praise;

Her, that dares be
What these lines wish to see;
I seek no further, it is She.

'Tis She, and here,
Lo! I unclothe and clear
My Wishes' cloudy character.

May She enjoy it
Whose merit dare apply it,
But modesty dares still deny it!

Such worth as this is
Shall fix my flying Wishes,
And determine them to kisses.

Let her full glory,
My fancies, fly before ye;
Be ye my fictions—but her Story!

Richard Crashaw [1613?–1649]

SONG

From "Abdelazer"

Love in fantastic triumph sate
Whilst bleeding hearts around him flowed,
For whom fresh pains he did create
And strange tyrannic power he showed:
From thy bright eyes he took his fires,
Which round about in sport he hurled;
But 'twas from mine he took desires
Enough t' undo the amorous world.

From me he took his sighs and tears,
  From thee his pride and cruelty;
From me his languishments and fears,
  And every killing dart from thee.
Thus thou and I the god have armed
  And set him up a deity;
But my poor heart alone is harmed,
  Whilst thine the victor is, and free!

Aphra Behn [1640–1689]

LES AMOURS

She that I pursue, still flies me;
  Her that follows me, I fly;
She that I still court, denies me;
  Her that courts me, I deny;
Thus in one web we're subtly wove,
And yet we mutiny in love.

She that can save me, must not do it;
  She that cannot, fain would do;
Her love is bound, yet I still woo it;
  Hers by love is bound in woe:
Yet how can I of love complain,
Since I have love for love again?

This is thy work, imperious Child,
  Thine's this labyrinth of love,
That thus hast our desires beguiled,
  Nor seest how thine arrows rove.
Then, prithee, to compose this stir,
Make her love me, or me love her.

But, if irrevocable are
  Those keen shafts that wound us so,
Let me prevail with thee thus far,
  That thou once more take thy bow;
Wound her hard heart, and by my troth,
I'll be content to take them both.

Charles Cotton [1630–1687]

RIVALS

Of all the torments, all the cares,
With which our lives are cursed;
Of all the plagues a lover bears,
Sure rivals are the worst!
By partners in each other kind
Afflictions easier grow;
In love alone we hate to find
Companions of our woe.

Sylvia, for all the pangs you see
Are laboring in my breast,
I beg not you would favor me,
Would you but slight the rest!
How great soe'er your rigors are,
With them alone I'll cope;
I can endure my own despair,
But not another's hope.

William Walsh [1663–1708]

"I LATELY VOWED, BUT 'TWAS IN HASTE"

I lately vowed, but 'twas in haste,
That I no more would court
The joys which seem when they are past
As dull as they are short.

I oft to hate my mistress swear,
But soon my weakness find:
I make my oaths when she's severe,
But break them when she's kind.

John Oldmixon [1673–1742]

THE TOUCH-STONE

A fool and knave with different views
For Julia's hand apply;
The knave to mend his fortune sues,
The fool to please his eye.

Ask you how Julia will behave,
Depend on't for a rule,
If she's a fool she'll wed the knave—
If she's a knave, the fool.

Samuel Bishop [1731–1795]

AIR

From "The Duenna"

I NE'ER could any luster see
In eyes that would not look on me;
I ne'er saw nectar on a lip,
But where my own did hope to sip.
Has the maid who seeks my heart
Cheeks of rose, untouched by art?
I will own the color true
When yielding blushes aid their hue.

Is her hand so soft and pure?
I must press it, to be sure;
Nor can I be certain then,
Till it, grateful, press again.
Must I, with attentive eye,
Watch her heaving bosom sigh?
I will do so, when I see
That heaving bosom sigh for me.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan [1751–1816]

"I TOOK A HANSOM ON TO-DAY"

I TOOK a hansom on to-day,
For a round I used to know—
That I used to take for a woman's sake
In a fever of to-and-fro.

There were the landmarks one and all—
What did they stand to show?
Street and square and river were there—
Where was the ancient woe?

Never a hint of a challenging hope
Nor a hope laid sick and low,
But a longing dead as its kindred sped
A thousand years ago!

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

DA CAPO

SHORT and sweet, and we've come to the end of it—
Our poor little love lying cold.
Shall no sonnet, then, ever be penned of it?
Nor the joys and pains of it told?
How fair was its face in the morning,
How close its caresses at noon,
How its evening grew chill without warning,
Unpleasantly soon!

I can't say just how we began it—
In a blush, or a smile, or a sigh;
Fate took but an instant to plan it;
It needs but a moment to die.
Yet—remember that first conversation,
When the flowers you had dropped at your feet
I restored. The familiar quotation
Was—"Sweets to the sweet."

Oh, their delicate perfume has haunted
My senses a whole season through.
If there *was* one soft charm that you wanted
The violets lent it to you.
I whispered you, life was but lonely:
A cue which you graciously took;
And your eyes learned a look for me only—
A very nice look.

And sometimes your hand would touch *my* hand,
With a sweetly particular touch;
You said many things in a sigh, and
Made a look express wondrously much.
We smiled for the mere sake of smiling,
And laughed for no reason but fun;
Irrational joys; but beguiling—
And all that is done!

We were idle, and played for a moment
  At a game that now neither will press:
I cared not to find out what "No" meant;
  Nor your lips to grow yielding with "Yes."
Love is done with and dead; if there lingers
  A faint and indefinite ghost,
It is laid with this kiss on your fingers—
    A jest at the most.

'Tis a commonplace, stale situation,
  Now the curtain comes down from above
On the end of our little flirtation—
  A travesty romance; for Love,
If he climbed in disguise to your lattice,
  Fell dead of the first kisses' pain:
But one thing is left us now; that is—
    Begin it again.

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855–1896]

SONG AGAINST WOMEN

Why should I sing of women
  And the softness of night,
When the dawn is loud with battle
  And the day's teeth bite,
And there's a sword to lay my hand to
  And a man's fight?

Why should I sing of women?
  There's life in the sun,
And red adventure calling
  Where the roads run,
And cheery brews at the tavern
  When the day's done.

I've sung of a hundred women
  In a hundred lands:
But all their love is nothing
  But drifting sands.
I'm sick of their tears and kisses
  And their pale hands.

I've sung of a hundred women
And their bought lips;
But out on the clean horizon
I can hear the whips
Of the white waves lashing the bulwarks
Of great, strong ships:

And the trails that run to the westward
Are shot with fire,
And the winds hurl from the headland
With ancient ire;
And all my body itches
With an old desire.

So I'll deal no more in women
And the softness of night,
But I'll follow the red adventure
And the wind's flight;
And I'll sing of the sea and of battle
And of men's might.

Willard Huntington Wright [18

SONG OF THYRSIS

The turtle on yon withered bough,
That lately mourned her murdered mate,
Has found another comrade now—
Such changes all await!
Again her drooping plume is drest,
Again she's willing to be blest
And takes her lover to her nest.

If nature has decreed it so
With all above, and all below,
Let us like them forget our woe,
And not be killed with sorrow.
If I should quit your arms to-night
And chance to die before 'twas light,
I would advise you—and you might—
Love again to-morrow.

Philip Freneau [1752–1832]

THE TEST

I HELD her hand, the pledge of bliss,
Her hand that trembled and withdrew;
She bent her head before my kiss . . .
My heart was sure that hers was true.
Now I have told her I must part,
She shakes my hand, she bids adieu,
Nor shuns the kiss. Alas, my heart!
Hers never was the heart for you.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

"THE FAULT IS NOT MINE"

THE fault is not mine if I love you too much,
I loved you too little too long,
Such ever your graces, your tenderness such,
And the music the heart gave the tongue.

A time is now coming when Love must be gone,
Though he never abandoned me yet.
Acknowledge our friendship, our passion disown,
Our follies (ah can you?) forget.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

THE SNAKE

MY love and I, the other day,
Within a myrtle arbor lay,
When near us, from a rosy bed,
A little Snake put forth its head.

"See," said the maid, with laughing eyes—
"Yonder the fatal emblem lies!
Who could expect such hidden harm
Beneath the rose's velvet charm?"

Never did moral thought occur
In more unlucky hour than this;
For oh! I just was leading her
To talk of love and think of bliss.

I rose to kill the snake, but she
In pity prayed it might not be.
"No," said the girl—and many a spark
Flashed from her eyelid as she said it—
"Under the rose, or in the dark,
One might, perhaps, have cause to dread it;
But when its wicked eyes appear,
And when we know for what they wink so,
One must be very simple, dear,
To let it sting one—don't you think so?"

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"WHEN I LOVED YOU"

When I loved you, I can't but allow
I had many an exquisite minute;
But the scorn that I feel for you now
Hath even more luxury in it!

Thus, whether we're on or we're off,
Some witchery seems to await you;
To love you is pleasant enough,
And oh! 'tis delicious to hate you!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

A TEMPLE TO FRIENDSHIP

"A temple to Friendship," said Laura, enchanted,
"I'll build in this garden,—the thought is divine!"
Her temple was built, and she now only wanted
An image of Friendship to place on the shrine.
She flew to a sculptor, who set down before her
A Friendship, the fairest his art could invent;
But so cold and so dull, that the youthful adorer
Saw plainly this was not the idol she meant.

"O never," she cried, "could I think of enshrining
An image whose looks are so joyless and dim:—
But yon little god, upon roses reclining,
We'll make, if you please, sir, a Friendship of him."

So the bargain was struck. With the little god laden
She joyfully flew to her shrine in the grove:
"Farewell," said the sculptor, "you're not the first maiden
Who came but for Friendship and took away Love!"

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

THE GLOVE AND THE LIONS

KING FRANCIS was a hearty king, and loved a royal sport,
And one day, as his lions fought, sat looking on the court.
The nobles filled the benches, and the ladies in their pride,
And 'mongst them sat the Count de Lorge, with one for whom he sighed:
And truly 'twas a gallant thing to see that crowning show,
Valor and love, and a king above, and the royal beasts below.

Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing jaws;
They bit, they glared, gave blows like beams, a wind went with their paws;
With wallowing might and stifled roar they rolled on one another,
Till all the pit with sand and mane was in a thunderous smother;
The bloody foam above the bars came whisking through the air;
Said Francis then, "Faith, gentlemen, we're better here than there."

De Lorge's love o'erheard the King, a beauteous lively dame,
With smiling lips and sharp bright eyes, which always seemed the same;
She thought, "The Count, my lover, is brave as brave can be;
He surely would do wondrous things to show his love of me;
King, ladies, lovers, all look on; the occasion is divine;
I'll drop my glove to prove his love; great glory will be mine."

She dropped her glove, to prove his love, then looked at him and smiled;
He bowed, and in a moment leaped among the lions wild;

The leap was quick, return was quick, he has regained his place,
Then threw the glove, but not with love, right in the lady's face.
"By Heaven," said Francis, "rightly done!" and he rose from where he sat;
"No love," quoth he, "but vanity, sets love a task like that."

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

TO WOMAN

Woman! experience might have told me
That all must love thee who behold thee;
Surely experience might have taught
Thy firmest promises are naught;
But, placed in all thy charms before me,
All I forget, but to adore thee.
Oh, Memory! thou choicest blessing,
When joined with hope, when still possessing;
But how much cursed by every lover,
When hope is fled, and passion's over!
Woman, that fair and fond deceiver,
How prompt are striplings to believe her!
How throbs the pulse when first we view
The eye that rolls in glossy blue,
Or sparkles black, or mildly throws
A beam from under hazel brows!
How quick we credit every oath,
And hear her plight the willing troth!
Fondly we hope 'twill last for aye,
When, lo! she changes in a day.
This record will forever stand,
"Woman, thy vows are traced in sand."

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

LOVE'S SPITE

You take a town you cannot keep;
And, forced in turn to fly,
O'er ruins you have made shall leap
Your deadliest enemy!

Her love is yours—and be it so—
But can you keep it? No, no, no!

Upon her brow we gazed with awe,
And loved, and wished to love, in vain
But when the snow begins to thaw
We shun with scorn the miry plain.
Women with grace may yield: but she
Appeared some Virgin Deity.

Bright was her soul as Dian's crest
Whitening on Vesta's fane its sheen:
Cold looked she as the waveless breast
Of some stone Dian at thirteen.
Men loved: but hope they deemed to be
A sweet Impossibility!

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814–1902]

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Of me you shall not win renown:
You thought to break a country heart
For pastime, ere you went to town.
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled
I saw the snare, and I retired:
The daughter of a hundred earls,
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I came.
Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that dotes on truer charms.
A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some meeker pupil you must find,
For, were you queen of all that is,
I could not stoop to such a mind.

You sought to prove how I could love,
And my disdain is my reply.
The lion on your old stone gates
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
You put strange memories in my head.
Not thrice your branching limes have blown
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.
O, your sweet eyes, your low replies!
A great enchantress you may be;
But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
When thus he met his mother's view,
She had the passions of her kind,
She spake some certain truths of you.
Indeed I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear;
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
There stands a specter in your hall;
The guilt of blood is at your door;
You changed a wholesome heart to gall.
You held your course without remorse,
To make him trust his modest worth,
And, last, you fixed a vacant stare,
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent,
The gardener Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere;
You pine among your halls and towers:
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is wearied of the rolling hours.
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,
If time be heavy on your hands,
Are there no beggars at your gate,
Nor any poor about your lands?
O, teach the orphan-boy to read,
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,
Pray Heaven for a human heart,
And let the foolish yeoman go.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

SHADOWS

They seemed, to those who saw them meet,
The casual friends of every day;
Her smile was undisturbed and sweet,
His courtesy was free and gay.

But yet if one the other's name
In some unguarded moment heard,
The heart you thought so calm and tame
Would struggle like a captured bird:

And letters of mere formal phrase
Were blistered with repeated tears,—
And this was not the work of days,
But had gone on for years and years!

Alas, that love was not too strong
For maiden shame and manly pride!
Alas, that they delayed so long
The goal of mutual bliss beside!

Yet what no chance could then reveal,
And neither would be first to own,
Let fate and courage now conceal,
When truth could bring remorse alone.

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809–1885]

SORROWS OF WERTHER

WERTHER had a love for Charlotte
Such as words could never utter;
Would you know how first he met her?
She was cutting bread and butter.

Charlotte was a married lady,
And a moral man was Werther,
And, for all the wealth of Indies,
Would do nothing for to hurt her.

So he sighed and pined and ogled,
And his passion boiled and bubbled,
Till he blew his silly brains out,
And no more was by it troubled.

Charlotte, having seen his body
Borne before her on a shutter,
Like a well-conducted person,
Went on cutting bread and butter.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

THE AGE OF WISDOM

Ho, pretty page, with the dimpled chin,
That never has known the barber's shear,
All your wish is woman to win,
This is the way that boys begin,—
Wait till you come to Forty Year.

Curly gold locks cover foolish brains,
Billing and cooing is all your cheer;
Sighing, and singing of midnight strains,
Under Bonnybell's window-panes,—
Wait till you come to Forty Year.

Forty times over let Michaelmas pass,
Grizzling hair the brain does clear—
Then you know a boy is an ass,
Then you know the worth of a lass,
Once you have come to Forty Year.

Pledge me round; I bid ye declare,
All good fellows whose beards are gray,
Did not the fairest of the fair
Common grow and wearisome ere
Ever a month was passed away?

The reddest lips that ever have kissed,
The brightest eyes that ever have shone,
May pray and whisper, and we not list,
Or look away and never be missed,
Ere yet ever a month is gone.

Gillian's dead, God rest her bier,
How I loved her twenty years syne!
Marian's married, but I sit here,
Alone and merry at Forty Year,
Dipping my nose in the Gascon wine.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him,—but to-morrow, Love!
I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems

As if—forgive now—should you let me sit
Here by the window, with your hand in mine,
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow how you shall be glad for this!
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.
Don't count the time lost neither; you must serve
For each of the five pictures we require;
It saves a model. So! keep looking so—
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!
—How could you ever prick those perfect ears,
Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet—
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his,
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks—no one's: very dear, no less.
You smile? why, there's my picture ready made,
There's what we painters call our harmony!
A common grayness silvers everything,—
All in a twilight, you and I alike
—You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone you know),—but I, at every point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;
That length of convent wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease,
And autumn grows, autumn in everything.
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's hand.
How strange now looks the life he makes us lead;
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he laid the fetter; let it lie!

This chamber for example—turn your head—
All that's behind us! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art,
But you can hear at least when people speak:
And that cartoon, the second from the door
—It is the thing, Love! so such thing should be—
Behold Madonna!—I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know,
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—
Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,
I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge,
Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:
I do what many dream of all their lives,
—Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,
Who strive—you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat,—
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter)—so much less!
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,
Enter and take their place there sure enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the world.
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men! at a word—
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.
I, painting from myself and to myself,
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks

Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,
Rightly traced and well ordered; what of that?
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray,
Placid and perfect with my art; the worse!
I know both what I want and what might gain;
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
"Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head would have o'erlooked the world!" No doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
The Urbinate who died five years ago.
('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,
Above and through his art—for it gives way;
That arm is wrongly put—and there again—
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
He means right,—that, a child may understand.
Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:
But all the play, the insight and the stretch—
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think—
More than I merit, yes, by many times.
But had you—oh, with the same perfect brow,
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare—
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged,
"God and the glory! never care for gain.
The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"
I might have done it for you. So it seems:

Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
Beside, incentives come from the soul's self;
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat, too, the power—
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth.
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden look,—
One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts,—
And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work,
To crown the issue with a last reward!
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless . . . . but I know—
'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct said;
Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.
How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your heart.

The triumph was,—to reach and stay there; since
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!
"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his wife"—
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Agnolo, his very self
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these years . . .
(When the young man was flaming out his thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it)
"Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,
Who, were he set to plan and execute
As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours!"
To Rafael's! And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here—quick, thus the line should go!
Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?
Do you forget already words like those?)
If really there was such a chance, so lost,—
Is, whether you're—not grateful—but more pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!
This hour has been an hour! Another smile?
If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you comprehend?
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.
See, it is settled dusk now; there's a star;
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall,
The cue-owls speak the name we call them by.
Come from the window, love,—come in, at last,
Inside the melancholy little house

We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,
The walls become illumined, brick from brick
Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,
That gold of his I did cement them with!
Let us but love each other. Must you go?
That Cousin here again? he waits outside?
Must see you—you, and not with me? Those loans?
More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for that?
Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to spend?
While hand and eye and something of a heart
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth?
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
The gray remainder of the evening out,
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly
How I could paint, were I but back in France,
One picture, just one more,—the Virgin's face,
Not yours this time! I want you at my side
To hear them—that is Michel Agnolo—
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.
Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.
I take the subjects for his corridor,
Finish the portrait out of hand—there, there,
And throw him in another thing or two
If he demurs; the whole should prove enough
To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,
What's better and what's all I care about,
Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!
Love, does that please you? Ah, but what does he,
The Cousin! what does he to please you more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
I regret little, I would change still less.
Since there my past life lies, why alter it?
The very wrong to Francis!—it is true
I took his coin, was tempted and complied,
And built this house and sinned, and all is said.
My father and my mother died of want.
Well, had I riches of my own? you see

How one gets rich! Let each one bear his lot.
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor they died:
And I have labored somewhat in my time
And not been paid profusely. Some good son
Paint my two hundred pictures—let him try!
No doubt, there's something strikes a balance. Yes,
You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.
This must suffice me here. What would one have?
In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance—
Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo, and me
To cover,—the three first without a wife,
While I have mine! So—still they overcome
Because there's still Lucrezia,—as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my love.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint

Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat": such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretense
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

ADAM, LILITH, AND EVE

One day, it thundered and lightened.
Two women, fairly frightened,
Sank to their knees, transformed, transfixed,
At the feet of the man who sat betwixt;
And "Mercy!" cried each—"if I tell the truth
Of a passage in my youth!"

Said This: "Do you mind the morning
I met your love with scorning?
As the worst of the venom left my lips,
I thought, 'If, despite this lie, he strips
The mask from my soul with a kiss—I crawl
His slave,—soul, body, and all!'"

Said That: "We stood to be married;
The priest, or some one, tarried;
'If Paradise-door prove locked?' smiled you.
I thought, as I nodded, smiling too,
'Did one, that's away, arrive—nor late
Nor soon should unlock Hell's gate!'"

It ceased to lighten and thunder.
Up started both in wonder,
Looked around and saw that the sky was clear,
Then laughed "Confess you believed us, Dear!"
"I saw through the joke!" the man replied
They re-seated themselves beside.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE LOST MISTRESS

All's over, then: does truth sound bitter
As one at first believes?
Hark, 'tis the sparrows' good-night twitter
About your cottage eaves!

And the leaf-buds on the vine are woolly,
I noticed that, to-day;
One day more bursts them open fully
—You know the red turns gray.

To-morrow we meet the same then, dearest?
  May I take your hand in mine?
Mere friends are we,—well, friends the merest
  Keep much that I resign:

For each glance of the eye so bright and black,
  Though I keep with heart's endeavor,—
Your voice, when you wish the snowdrops back,
  Though it stay in my soul forever!—

Yet I will but say what mere friends say,
  Or only a thought stronger;
I will hold your hand but as long as all may,
  Or so very little longer!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

FRIEND AND LOVER

When Psyche's friend becomes her lover,
  How sweetly these conditions blend!
But, oh, what anguish to discover
  Her lover has become—her friend!

Mary Ainge de Vere [1844–

LOST LOVE

Who wins his Love shall lose her,
  Who loses her shall gain,
For still the spirit wooes her,
  A soul without a stain;
And Memory still pursues her
  With longings not in vain!

He loses her who gains her,
  Who watches day by day
The dust of time that stains her,
  The griefs that leave her gray,
The flesh that yet enchains her
  Whose grace hath passed away!

Oh, happier he who gains not
  The Love some seem to gain:
The joy that custom stains not
  Shall still with him remain,

The loveliness that wanes not,
The Love that ne'er can wane.

In dreams she grows not older
The lands of Dream among,
Though all the world wax colder,
Though all the songs be sung,
In dreams doth he behold her
Still fair and kind and young.

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

VOBISCUM EST IOPE

When thou must home to shades of underground,
And there arrived, a new admirèd guest,
The beauteous spirits do engirt thee round,
White Iope, blithe Helen, and the rest,
To hear the stories of thy finished love
From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move;

Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,
Of masques and revels which sweet youth did make,
Of tourneys and great challenges of knights,
And all these triumphs for thy beauty's sake:
When thou hast told these honors done to thee,
Then tell, O tell, how thou didst murder me!

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

FOUR WINDS

"Four winds blowing through the sky,
You have seen poor maidens die,
Tell me then what I shall do
That my lover may be true."
Said the wind from out the south,
"Lay no kiss upon his mouth,"
And the wind from out the west,
"Wound the heart within his breast,"
And the wind from out the east,
"Send him empty from the feast,"
And the wind from out the north,

"In the tempest thrust him forth;
When thou art more cruel than he,
Then will Love be kind to thee."

Sara Teasdale [1884–

TO MANON

AS TO HIS CHOICE OF HER

If I had chosen thee, thou shouldst have been
A virgin proud, untamed, immaculate,
Chaste as the morning star, a saint, a queen,
Scarred by no wars, no violence of hate.
Thou shouldst have been of soul commensurate
With thy fair body, brave and virtuous
And kind and just; and if of poor estate,
At least an honest woman for my house.
I would have had thee come of honored blood
And honorable nurture. Thou shouldst bear
Sons to my pride and daughters to my heart,
And men should hold thee happy, wise, and good.
Lo, thou art none of this, but only fair,
Yet must I love thee, dear, and as thou art.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt [1840–

CROWNED

You came to me bearing bright roses,
Red like the wine of your heart;
You twisted them into a garland
To set me aside from the mart.
Red roses to crown me your lover,
And I walked aureoled and apart.

Enslaved and encircled, I bore it,
Proud token of my gift to you.
The petals waned paler, and shriveled,
And dropped; and the thorns started through.
Bitter thorns to proclaim me your lover,
A diadem woven with rue.

Amy Lowell [1874–

HEBE

I saw the twinkle of white feet,
I saw the flash of robes descending;
Before her ran an influence fleet,
That bowed my heart like barley bending.

As, in bare fields, the searching bees
Pilot to blooms beyond our finding,
It led me on, by sweet degrees
Joy's simple honey-cells unbinding.

Those Graces were that seemed grim Fates;
With nearer love the sky leaned o'er me;
The long-sought Secret's golden gates
On musical hinges swung before me.

I saw the brimmed bowl in her grasp
Thrilling with godhood; like a lover
I sprang the proffered life to clasp;—
The beaker fell; the luck was over.

The Earth has drunk the vintage up;
What boots it patch the goblet's splinters?
Can Summer fill the icy cup
Whose treacherous crystal is but Winter's?

O spendthrift haste! await the Gods;
Their nectar crowns the lips of Patience;
Haste scatters on unthankful sods
The immortal gift in vain libations.

Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,
And shuns the hands would seize upon her;
Follow thy life, and she will sue
To pour for thee the cup of honor.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

"JUSTINE, YOU LOVE ME NOT!"

"Helas! vous ne m'aimez pas."—PIRON

I KNOW, Justine, you speak me fair
As often as we meet;
And 'tis a luxury, I swear,
To hear a voice so sweet;
And yet it does not please me quite,
The civil way you've got;
For me you're something too polite—
Justine, you love me not!

I know Justine, you never scold
At aught that I may do:
If I am passionate or cold,
'Tis all the same to you.
"A charming temper," say the men,
"To smooth a husband's lot":
I wish 'twere ruffled now and then—
Justine you love me not!

I know, Justine, you wear a smile
As beaming as the sun;
But who supposes all the while
It shines for only one?
Though azure skies are fair to see,
A transient cloudy spot
In yours would promise more to me—
Justine, you love me not!

I know, Justine, you make my name
Your eulogistic theme,
And say—if any chance to blame—
You hold me in esteem.
Such words, for all their kindly scope,
Delight me not a jot;
Just as you would have praised the Pope—
Justine, you love me not!

I know, Justine—for I have heard
What friendly voices tell—
You do not blush to say the word,
"You like me passing well";
And thus the fatal sound I hear
That seals my lonely lot:
There's nothing now to hope or fear—
Justine, you love me not!

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

SNOWDROP

When, full of warm and eager love,
I clasp you in my fond embrace,
You gently push me back and say,
"Take care, my dear, you'll spoil my lace."

You kiss me just as you would kiss
Some woman friend you chanced to see;
You call me "dearest."—All love's forms
Are yours, not its reality.

Oh, Annie! cry, and storm, and rave!
Do anything with passion in it!
Hate me an hour, and then turn round
And love me truly, just one minute.

William Wetmore Story [1819–1895]

WHEN THE SULTAN GOES TO ISPAHAN

When the Sultan Shah-Zaman
Goes to the city Ispahan,
Even before he gets so far
As the place where the clustered palm-trees are,
At the last of the thirty palace-gates,
The flower of the harem, Rose-in-Bloom,
Orders a feast in his favorite room—
Glittering squares of colored ice,

Sweetened with syrop, tinctured with spice,
Creams, and cordials, and sugared dates,
Syrian apples, Othmanee quinces,
Limes, and citrons, and apricots,
And wines that are known to Eastern princes;
And Nubian slaves, with smoking pots
Of spiced meats and costliest fish
And all that the curious palate could wish,
Pass in and out of the cedarn doors;
Scattered over mosaic floors
Are anemones, myrtles, and violets,
And a musical fountain throws its jets
Of a hundred colors into the air.
The dusk Sultana loosens her hair,
And stains with the henna-plant the tips
Of her pointed nails, and bites her lips
Till they bloom again; but, alas, *that* rose
Not for the Sultan buds and blows,
Not for the Sultan Shah-Zaman
When he goes to the city Ispahan.

Then at a wave of her sunny hand
The dancing-girls of Samarcand
Glide in like shapes from fairy-land,
Making a sudden mist in air
Of fleecy veils and floating hair
And white arms lifted. Orient blood
Runs in their veins, shines in their eyes.
And there, in this Eastern Paradise,
Filled with the breath of sandal-wood,
And Khoten musk, and aloes and myrrh,
Sits Rose-in-Bloom on a silk divan,
Sipping the wines of Astrakhan;
And her Arab lover sits with her.
That's when the Sultan Shah-Zaman
Goes to the city Ispahan.

Now, when I see an extra light,
Flaming, flickering on the night
From my neighbor's casement opposite,

I know as well as I know to pray,
I know as well as a tongue can say,
That the innocent Sultan Shah-Zaman
Has gone to the city Ispahan.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

THE SHADOW DANCE

She sees her image in the glass,—
How fair a thing to gaze upon!
She lingers while the moments run,
With happy thoughts that come and pass,

Like winds across the meadow grass
When the young June is just begun:
She sees her image in the glass,—
How fair a thing to gaze upon!

What wealth of gold the skies amass!
How glad are all things 'neath the sun!
How true the love her love has won!
She recks not that this hour will pass,—
She sees her image in the glass.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835–1908]

"ALONG THE FIELD AS WE CAME BY"

Along the field as we came by
A year ago, my love and I,
The aspen over stile and stone
Was talking to itself alone.
"Oh, who are these that kiss and pass?
A country lover and his lass;
Two lovers looking to be wed;
And time shall put them both to bed,
But she shall lie with earth above,
And he beside another love."

And sure enough beneath the tree
There walks another love with me,
And overhead the aspen heaves
Its rainy-sounding silver leaves;
And I spell nothing in their stir,
But now perhaps they speak to her,
And plain for her to understand
They talk about a time at hand
When I shall sleep with clover clad,
And she beside another lad.

Alfred Edward Housman [1859–

"WHEN I WAS ONE-AND-TWENTY"

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard a wise man say,
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
But keep your fancy free."
But I was one-and-twenty,
No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard him say again,
"The heart out of the bosom
Was never given in vain;
'Tis paid with sighs a plenty
And sold for endless rue."
And I am two-and-twenty,
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

Alfred Edward Housman [1859–

"GRIEVE NOT, LADIES"

Oh, grieve not, Ladies, if at night
Ye wake to feel your beauty going;
It was a web of frail delight,
Inconstant as an April snowing.

In other eyes, in other lands,
  In deep fair pools new beauty lingers;
But like spent water in your hands
  It runs from your reluctant fingers.

You shall not keep the singing lark
  That owes to earlier skies its duty.
Weep not to hear along the dark
  The sound of your departing beauty.

The fine and anguished ear of night
  Is tuned to hear the smallest sorrow:
Oh, wait until the morning light!
  It may not seem so gone to-morrow.

But honey-pale and rosy-red!
  Brief lights that make a little shining!
Beautiful looks about us shed—
  They leave us to the old repining.

Think not the watchful, dim despair
  Has come to you the first, sweet-hearted!
For oh, the gold in Helen's hair!
  And how she cried when that departed!

Perhaps that one that took the most,
  The swiftest borrower, wildest spender,
May count, as we would not, the cost—
  And grow more true to us and tender.

Happy are we if in his eyes
  We see no shadow of forgetting.
Nay—if our star sinks in those skies
  We shall not wholly see its setting.

Then let us laugh as do the brooks,
  That such immortal youth is ours,
If memory keeps for them our looks
  As fresh as are the springtime flowers.

So grieve not, Ladies, if at night
  Ye wake to feel the cold December!
Rather recall the early light,
  And in your loved one's arms, remember.
Anna Hempstead Branch [18

SUBURB

Dull and hard the low wind creaks
Among the rustling pampas plumes.
Drearily the year consumes
Its fifty-two insipid weeks.

Most of the gray-green meadow land
Was sold in parsimonious lots;
The dingy houses stand
Pressed by some stout contractor's hand
Tightly together in their plots.

Through builded banks the sullen river
Gropes, where its houses crouch and shiver.
Over the bridge the tyrant train
Shrieks, and emerges on the plain.

In all the better gardens you may pass,
(Product of many careful Saturdays),
Large red geraniums and tall pampas grass
Adorn the plots and mark the gravelled ways.

Sometimes in the background may be seen
A private summer-house in white or green.
Here on warm nights the daughter brings
Her vacillating clerk,
To talk of small exciting things
And touch his fingers through the dark.

He, in the uncomfortable breach
Between her trilling laughters,
Promises, in halting speech,
Hopeless immense Hereafters.

She trembles like the pampas plumes.
Her strained lips haggle. He assumes
The serious quest. . . .

Now as the train is whistling past
He takes her in his arms at last.

It's done. She blushes at his side
Across the lawn—a bride, a bride.

. . . . . .

The stout contractor will design,
The lazy laborers will prepare,
Another villa on the line;
In the little garden-square
Pampas grass will rustle there.

Harold Monro [1879–

THE BETROTHED

"You must choose between me and your cigar"

Open the old cigar-box, get me a Cuba stout,
For things are running crossways, and Maggie and I are out.

We quarreled about Havanas—we fought o'er a good cheroot—
And I know she is exacting, and she says I am a brute.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider a space,
In the soft blue veil of the vapor, musing on Maggie's face.

Maggie is pretty to look at—Maggie's a loving lass,
But the prettiest cheeks must wrinkle, the truest of loves must pass.

There's peace in a Laranaga, there's calm in a Henry Clay,
But the best cigar in an hour is finished and thrown away—

Thrown away for another as perfect and ripe and brown—
But I never could throw away Maggie for fear o' the talk o' the town!

Maggie, my wife at fifty—gray and dour and old—
With never another Maggie to purchase for love or gold.

And the light of Days that have Been, the dark of the Days that Are,
And Love's torch stinking and stale, like the butt of a dead cigar—

The butt of a dead cigar you are bound to keep in your pocket—
With never a new one to light, though it's charred and black to the socket.

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider awhile;
Here is a mild Manilla—there is a wifely smile.

Which is the better portion—bondage bought with a ring,
Or a harem of dusky beauties, fifty tied in a string?

Counselors cunning and silent—comforters true and tried,
And never a one of the fifty to sneer at a rival bride.

Thought in the early morning, solace in time of woes,
Peace in the hush of the twilight, balm ere my eyelids close.

This will the fifty give me, asking naught in return,
With only a Suttee's passion—to do their duty and burn.

This will the fifty give me. When they are spent and dead,
Five times other fifties shall be my servants instead.

The furrows of far-off Java, the isles of the Spanish Main,
When they hear that my harem is empty, will send me my brides again.

I will take no heed to their raiment, nor food for their mouths withal,
So long as the gulls are nesting, so long as the showers fall.

I will scent 'em with best vanilla, with tea will I temper their hides,
And the Moor and the Mormon shall envy who read of the tale of my brides.

For Maggie has written a letter to give me my choice between
The wee little whimpering Love and the great god Nick o' Teen.

And I have been servant of Love for barely a twelvemonth clear,
But I have been Priest of Partagas a matter of seven year;

And the gloom of my bachelor days is flecked with the cheery light
Of stumps that I burned to Friendship, and Pleasure, and Work, and Fight.

And I turn my eyes to the future that Maggie and I must prove,
But the only light on the marshes is the Will-o'-the-Wisp of Love.

Will it see me safe through my journey, or leave me bogged in the mire?
Since a puff of tobacco can cloud it, shall I follow the fitful fire?

Open the old cigar-box—let me consider anew—
Old friends, and who is Maggie, that I should abandon *you?*

A million surplus Maggies are willing to bear the yoke;
And a woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a Smoke.

Light me another Cuba—I hold to my first-sworn vows,
If Maggie will have no rival, I'll have no Maggie for spouse!

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

LOVE'S SADNESS

"THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES"

THE night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

Francis William Bourdillon [1852–

"I SAW MY LADY WEEP"

I SAW my Lady weep,
And Sorrow proud to be advancèd so
In those fair eyes where all perfections keep.
Her face was full of Woe,
But such a Woe (believe me) as wins more hearts
Than Mirth can do with her enticing parts.

Sorrow was there made fair,
And Passion, wise; Tears, a delightful thing;
Silence, beyond all speech, a wisdom rare:
She made her sighs to sing,
And all things with so sweet a sadness move
As made my heart at once both grieve and love.

O fairer than aught else
The world can show, leave off in time to grieve!
Enough, enough: your joyful look excels:
Tears kill the heart, believe.
O strive not to be excellent in Woe,
Which only breeds your beauty's overthrow.

Unknown

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM

Oh! the days are gone, when Beauty bright
My heart's chain wove;
When my dream of life, from morn till night,
Was love, still love.
New hope may bloom,
And days may come,
Of milder, calmer beam,
But there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream;
No, there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream.

Though the bard to purer fame may soar,
When wild youth's past;
Though he win the wise, who frowned before,
To smile at last;
He'll never meet
A joy so sweet,
In all his noon of fame,
As when first he sung to woman's ear
His soul-felt flame,
And, at every close, she blushed to hear
The one loved name.

No,—that hallowed form is ne'er forgot
Which first love traced;
Still it lingering haunts the greenest spot
On memory's waste.
'Twas odor fled
As soon as shed;
'Twas morning's wingèd dream;
'Twas a light that ne'er can shine again
On life's dull stream;
Oh! 'twas light that ne'er can shine again
On life's dull stream.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"NOT OURS THE VOWS"

Not ours the vows of such as plight
  Their troth in sunny weather,
While leaves are green, and skies are bright,
  To walk on flowers together.

But we have loved as those who tread
  The thorny path of sorrow,
With clouds above, and cause to dread
  Yet deeper gloom to-morrow.

That thorny path, those stormy skies,
  Have drawn our spirits nearer;
And rendered us, by sorrow's ties,
  Each to the other dearer.

Love, born in hours of joy and mirth,
  With mirth and joy may perish;
That to which darker hours gave birth
  Still more and more we cherish.

It looks beyond the clouds of time,
  And through death's shadowy portal;
Made by adversity sublime,
  By faith and hope immortal.

Bernard Barton [1784–1849]

THE GRAVE OF LOVE

I dug, beneath the cypress shade,
  What well might seem an elfin's grave;
And every pledge in earth I laid,
  That erst thy false affection gave.

I pressed them down the sod beneath;
  I placed one mossy stone above;
And twined the rose's fading wreath
  Around the sepulcher of love.

Frail as thy love, the flowers were dead
Ere yet the evening sun was set:
But years shall see the cypress spread,
Immutable as my regret.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785–1866]

"WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING"

So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And Love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

SONG

Sing the old song, amid the sounds dispersing
That burden treasured in your hearts too long;
Sing it, with voice low-breathed, but never name her:
She will not hear you, in her turrets nursing
High thoughts, too high to mate with mortal song—
Bend o'er her, gentle Heaven, but do not claim her!

In twilight caves, and secret lonelinesses,
She shades the bloom of her unearthly days;
And the soft winds alone have power to woo her:
Far off we catch the dark gleam of her tresses;
And wild birds haunt the wood-walks where she strays,
Intelligible music warbling to her.

That Spirit charged to follow and defend her,—
He also, doubtless, suffers this love-pain;
And she, perhaps, is sad, hearing his sighing:
And yet that face is not so sad as tender;
Like some sweet singer's, when her sweetest strain
From the heaved heart is gradually dying!

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814–1902]

THE QUESTION

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the way,
Bare Winter suddenly was changed to Spring;
And gentle odors led my steps astray,
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets;
Daisies, those pearled Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender bluebells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets—
Like a child, half in tenderness and mirth—
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cowbind and the moonlight-colored may,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves wandering astray;
And flowers, azure, black, and streaked with gold,
Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple pranked with white,
And starry river-buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,

Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues which in their natural bowers
Were mingled or opposed, the like array
Kept these imprisoned children of the Hours
Within my hand;—and then, elate and gay,
I hastened to the spot whence I had come,
That I might there present it—O! to whom?

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

THE WANDERER

Love comes back to his vacant dwelling,—
The old, old Love that we knew of yore!
We see him stand by the open door,
With his great eyes sad, and his bosom swelling.

He makes as though in our arms repelling,
He fain would lie as he lay before;—
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling,—
The old, old Love that we knew of yore!

Ah, who shall keep us from over-spelling
That sweet forgotten, forbidden lore!
E'en as we doubt in our hearts once more,
With a rush of tears to our eyelids welling,
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling.

Austin Dobson [1840–

EGYPTIAN SERENADE

Sing again the song you sung
When we were together young—
When there were but you and I
Underneath the summer sky.

Sing the song, and o'er and o'er
Though I know that nevermore
Will it seem the song you sung
When we were together young.

George William Curtis [1824–1892]

THE WATER LADY

Alas, the moon should ever beam
To show what man should never see!
I saw a maiden on a stream,
And fair was she!

I stayed awhile, to see her throw
Her tresses back, that all beset
The fair horizon of her brow
With clouds of jet.

I stayed a little while to view
Her cheek, that wore, in place of red,
The bloom of water, tender blue,
Daintily spread.

I stayed to watch, a little space,
Her parted lips if she would sing;
The waters closed above her face
With many a ring.

And still I stayed a little more:
Alas, she never comes again!
I throw my flowers from the shore,
And watch in vain.

I know my life will fade away,
I know that I must vainly pine,
For I am made of mortal clay,
But she's divine!

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

"TRIPPING DOWN THE FIELD-PATH"

Tripping down the field-path,
Early in the morn,
There I met my own love
'Midst the golden corn;
Autumn winds were blowing,
As in frolic chase,
All her silken ringlets
Backward from her face;
Little time for speaking
Had she, for the wind,
Bonnet, scarf, or ribbon,
Ever swept behind.

Still some sweet improvement
In her beauty shone;
Every graceful movement
Won me,—one by one!
As the breath of Venus
Seemed the breeze of morn,
Blowing thus between us,
'Midst the golden corn.
Little time for wooing
Had we, for the wind
Still kept on undoing
What we sought to bind.

Oh! that autumn morning
In my heart it beams,
Love's last look adorning
With its dream of dreams:
Still, like waters flowing
In the ocean shell,
Sounds of breezes blowing
In my spirit dwell;
Still I see the field-path;—
Would that I could see
Her whose graceful beauty
Lost is now to me!

Charles Swain [1801–1874]

LOVE NOT

Love not, love not, ye hapless sons of clay!
Hope's gayest wreaths are made of earthly flowers—
Things that are made to fade and fall away,
When they have blossomed but a few short hours.
Love not, love not!

Love not, love not! The thing you love may die—
May perish from the gay and gladsome earth;
The silent stars, the blue and smiling sky,
Beam on its grave as once upon its birth.
Love not, love not!

Love not, love not! The thing you love may change,
The rosy lip may cease to smile on you;
The kindly beaming eye grow cold and strange;
The heart still warmly beat, yet not be true.
Love not, love not!

Love not, love not! O warning vainly said
In present years, as in the years gone by!
Love flings a halo round the dear one's head,
Faultless, immortal—till they change or die!
Love not, love not!

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808–1877]

"A PLACE IN THY MEMORY"

A place in thy memory, Dearest!
Is all that I claim:
To pause and look back when thou hearest
The sound of my name.
Another may woo thee, nearer;
Another may win and wear:
I care not though he be dearer,
If I am remembered there.

Remember me, not as a lover
Whose hope was crossed,
Whose bosom can never recover
The light it hath lost!

As the young bride remembers the mother
She loves, though she never may see,
As a sister remembers a brother,
O Dearest, remember me!

Could I be thy true lover, Dearest!
Couldst thou smile on me,
I would be the fondest and nearest
That ever loved thee:
But a cloud on my pathway is glooming
That never must burst upon thine;
And heaven, that made thee all blooming,
Ne'er made thee to wither on mine.

Remember me then! O remember
My calm light love!
Though bleak as the blasts of November
My life may prove.
That life will, though lonely, be sweet
If its brightest enjoyment should be
A smile and kind word when we meet,
And a place in thy memory.

Gerald Griffin [1803–1840]

INCLUSIONS

Oh, wilt thou have my hand, Dear, to lie along in thine?
As a little stone in a running stream, it seems to lie and pine.
Now drop the poor pale hand, Dear, unfit to plight with thine.

Oh, wilt thou have my cheek, Dear, drawn closer to thine own?
My cheek is white, my cheek is worn, by many a tear run down.
Now leave a little space, Dear, lest it should wet thine own.

Oh, must thou have my soul, Dear, commingled with thy soul?—

Red grows the cheek, and warm the hand; the part is in the whole;
Nor hands nor cheeks keep separate, when soul is joined to soul.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

MARIANA

Mariana in the moated grange.—MEASURE FOR MEASURE

With blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all:
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds looked sad and strange:
Unlifted was the clinking latch;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

Her tears fell with the dews at even;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow:
The cock sung out an hour ere light:
From the dark fen the oxen's low

Came to her: without hope of change,
In sleep she seemed to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "The day is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blackened waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The clustered marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarlèd bark:
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

And ever when the moon was low,
And the shrill winds were up and away,
In the white curtain, to and fro,
She saw the gusty shadow sway.
But when the moon was very low,
And wild winds bound within their cell,
The shadow of the poplar fell
Upon her bed, across her brow.
She only said, "The night is dreary
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creaked;
The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse
Behind the moldering wainscot shrieked,

Or from the crevice peered about.
Old faces glimmered through the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense; but most she loathed the hour
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bower.
Then, said she, "I am very dreary,
He will not come," she said;
She wept, "I am aweary, aweary,
O God, that I were dead!"

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

"ASK ME NO MORE"

From "The Princess"

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are sealed;
I strove against the stream and all in vain;
Let the great river take me to the main.
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

A WOMAN'S LAST WORD

Let's contend no more, Love,
Strive nor weep:
All be as before, Love,
—Only sleep!

What so wild as words are?
I and thou
In debate, as birds are,
Hawk on bough!

See the creature stalking
While we speak!
Hush and hide the talking,
Cheek on cheek!

What so false as truth is,
False to thee?
Where the serpent's tooth is
Shun the tree—

Where the apple reddens
Never pry—
Lest we lose our Edens,
Eve and I!

Be a god and hold me
With a charm!
Be a man and fold me
With thine arm!

Teach me, only teach, Love!
As I ought
I will speak thy speech, Love,
Think thy thought—

Meet, if thou require it,
Both demands,
Laying flesh and spirit
In thy hands.

That shall be to-morrow
Not to-night:
I must bury sorrow
Out of sight:

—Must a little weep, Love.
(Foolish me!)
And so fall asleep, Love
Loved by thee.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I SAID—Then, dearest, since 'tis so,
Since now at length my fate I know,
Since nothing all my love avails,
Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,
Since this was written and needs must be—
My whole heart rises up to bless
Your name in pride and thankfulness!
Take back the hope you gave,—I claim
Only a memory of the same,
—And this beside, if you will not blame;
Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs
When pity would be softening through,
Fixed me a breathing-while or two

With life or death in the balance: right!
The blood replenished me again;
My last thought was at least not vain:
I and my mistress, side by side
Shall be together, breathe and ride,
So, one day more am I deified.
Who knows but the world may end to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
By many benedictions—sun's
And moon's and evening-star's at once—
And so, you, looking and loving best,
Conscious grew, your passion drew
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,
Down on you, near and yet more near,
Till flesh must fade for heaven was here!—
Thus leant she and lingered—joy and fear!
Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
Past hopes already lay behind.
What need to strive with a life awry?
Had I said that, had I done this,
So might I gain, so might I miss.
Might she have loved me? just as well
She might have hated, who can tell!
Where had I been now if the worst befell?
And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?
We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
Saw other regions, cities new,
As the world rushed by on either side.
I thought,—All labor, yet no less
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.

Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!
I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?
What act proved all its thought had been?
What will but felt the fleshly screen?
We ride and I see her bosom heave.
There's many a crown for who can reach.
Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,
A soldier's doing! what atones?
They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.
My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell
What we felt only; you expressed
You hold things beautiful the best,
And place them in rhyme so, side by side.
'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,
Have you yourself what's best for men?
Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—
Nearer one whit your own sublime
Than we who never have turned a rhyme?
Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor—so, you gave
A score of years to Art, her slave,
And that's your Venus, whence we turn
To yonder girl that fords the burn!
You acquiesce, and shall I repine?
What, man of music, you grown gray
With notes and nothing else to say,
Is this your sole praise from a friend,
"Greatly his opera's strains intend,
But in music we know how fashions end!"
I gave my youth: but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate
Proposed bliss here should sublimate
My being—had I signed the bond—
Still one must lead some life beyond,
  Have a bliss to die with, dim-descried.
This foot once planted on the goal,
This glory-garland round my soul,
Could I descry such? Try and test!
I sink back shuddering from the quest.
Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?
  Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet—she has not spoke so long!
What if heaven be that, fair and strong
At life's best, with our eyes upturned
Whither life's flower is first discerned,
  We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
What if we still ride on, we two,
With life forever old yet new,
Changed not in kind but in degree,
The instant made eternity,—
And heaven just prove that I and she
  Ride, ride together, forever ride?

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

YOUTH AND ART

It once might have been, once only:
  We lodged in a street together,
You, a sparrow on the housetop lonely,
  I, a lone she-bird of his feather.

Your trade was with sticks and clay,
  You thumbed, thrust, patted, and polished,
Then laughed, "They will see some day
  Smith made, and Gibson demolished."

My business was song, song, song;
  I chirped, cheeped, trilled, and twittered,
"Kate Brown's on the boards ere long,
  And Grisi's existence embittered!"

I earned no more by a warble
  Than you by a sketch in plaster;
You wanted a piece of marble,
  I needed a music-master.

We studied hard in our styles,
  Chipped each at a crust like Hindoos,
For air, looked out on the tiles,
  For fun, watched each other's windows.

You lounged, like a boy of the South,
  Cap and blouse—nay, a bit of beard too;
Or you got it, rubbing your mouth
  With fingers the clay adhered to.

And I—soon managed to find
  Weak points in the flower-fence facing,
Was forced to put up a blind,
  And be safe in my corset-lacing.

No harm! It was not my fault
  If you never turned your eye's tail up,
As I shook upon E *in alt.*,
  Or ran the chromatic scale up:

For spring bade the sparrows pair,
  And the boys and girls gave guesses,
And stalls in our street looked rare
  With bulrush and water-cresses.

Why did not you pinch a flower
  In a pellet of clay and fling it?
Why did not I put a power
  Of thanks in a look, or sing it?

I did look, sharp as a lynx
  (And yet the memory rankles),
When models arrived, some minx
  Tripped up-stairs, she and her ankles.

But I think I gave you as good!
"That foreign fellow,—who can know
How she pays, in a playful mood,
For his tuning her that piano?"

Could you say so, and never say,
"Suppose we join hands and fortunes,
And I fetch her from over the way,
Her, piano, and long tunes and short tunes"?

No, no: you would not be rash,
Nor I rasher and something over:
You've to settle yet Gibson's hash,
And Grisi yet lives in clover.

But you meet the Prince at the Board,
I'm queen myself at *bals-paré*,
I've married a rich old lord,
And you're dubbed knight and an R. A.

Each life unfulfilled, you see;
It hangs still, patchy and scrappy:
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,
Starved, feasted, despaired,—been happy.

And nobody calls you a dunce,
And people suppose me clever:
This could but have happened once,
And we missed it, lost it forever.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

TWO IN THE CAMPAGNA

I WONDER do you feel to-day
As I have felt since, hand in hand,
We sat down on the grass, to stray
In spirit better through the land,
This morn of Rome and May?

For me, I touched a thought, I know,
Has tantalized me many times,
(Like turns of thread the spiders throw
Mocking across our path) for rhymes
To catch at and let go.

Help me to hold it! First it left
The yellowing fennel, run to seed
There, branching from the brickwork's cleft,
Some old tomb's ruin: yonder weed
Took up the floating weft,

Where one small orange cup amassed
Five beetles,—blind and green they grope
Among the honey-meal: and last,
Everywhere on the grassy slope
I traced it. Hold it fast!

The champaign with its endless fleece
Of feathery grasses everywhere!
Silence and passion, joy and peace,
And everlasting wash of air—
Rome's ghost since her decease.

Such life here, through such lengths of hours,
Such miracles performed in play,
Such primal naked forms of flowers,
Such letting Nature have her way
While Heaven looks from its towers!

How say you? Let us, O my dove,
Let us be unashamed of soul,
As earth lies bare to heaven above!
How is it under our control
To love or not to love?

I would that you were all to me,
You that are just so much, no more.
Nor yours, nor mine,—nor slave nor free!
Where does the fault lie? What the core
Of the wound, since wound must be?

I would I could adopt your will,
See with your eyes, and set my heart
Beating by yours, and drink my fill
At your soul's springs,—your part, my part
In life, for good and ill.

No. I yearn upward, touch you close,
Then stand away. I kiss your cheek,
Catch your soul's warmth,—I pluck the rose
And love it more than tongue can speak—
Then the good minute goes.

Already how am I so far
Out of that minute? Must I go
Still like the thistle-ball, no bar,
Onward, whenever light winds blow,
Fixed by no friendly star?

Just when I seemed about to learn!
Where is the thread now? Off again!
The old trick! Only I discern—
Infinite passion, and the pain
Of finite hearts that yearn.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

ONE WAY OF LOVE

All June I bound the rose in sheaves.
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
And strew them where Pauline may pass.
She will not turn aside? Alas!
Let them lie. Suppose they die?
The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit
These stubborn fingers to the lute!
To-day I venture all I know.
She will not hear my music? So!
Break the string; fold music's wing:
Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.
This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion—heaven or hell?
She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
Lose who may—I still can say,
Those who win heaven, blest are they!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

"NEVER THE TIME AND THE PLACE"

Never the time and the place
And the loved one all together!
This path—how soft to pace!
This May—what magic weather!
Where is the loved one's face?
In a dream that loved one's face meets mine,
But the house is narrow, the place is bleak
Where, outside, rain and wind combine
With a furtive ear, if I strive to speak,
With a hostile eye at my flushing cheek,
With a malice that marks each word, each sign!
O enemy sly and serpentine,
Uncoil thee from the waking man!
Do I hold the Past
Thus firm and fast
Yet doubt if the Future hold I can?
This path so soft to pace shall lead
Through the magic of May to herself indeed!
Or narrow if needs the house must be,
Outside are the storms and strangers: we—
Oh, close, safe, warm sleep I and she,
—I and she!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

SONG

From "The Saint's Tragedy"

Oh! that we two were Maying
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze;
Like children with violets playing
In the shade of the whispering trees.

Oh! that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimmed down,
Watching the white mist steaming
Over river and mead and town.

Oh! that we two lay sleeping
In our nest in the churchyard sod,
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God!

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS

Ah! marvel not if when I come to die
And follow Death the way my fancies went
Year after fading year, the last mad sky
Finds me impenitent;
For though my heart went doubting through the night,
With many a backward glance at heaven's face,
Yet found I many treasures of delight
Within this pleasant place.

I shall not grieve because the girls were fair
And kinder than the world, nor shall I weep
Because with crying lips and clinging hair
They stole away my sleep.
For lacking this I might not yet have known
How high the heart could climb, or waking seen
The mountains bare their silver breasts of stone
From their chaste robes of green.

Though it were all a sin, within the mirth
And pain of life I found a song above
Our songs, in her who scattered on the earth
Her glad largesse of love;
And though she held some dream that was not ours
In some far place that was not for our feet,
Where blew across the gladder, madder flowers
A wind more bitter-sweet.

Ah! who shall hearten when the music stops,
For joy of silence? While they dreamed above

She showed me love upon the mountain tops
And in the valleys, love.
And while the wise found heaven with their charts
And lore of souls, she made an earth for me
More sweet than all, and from our beating hearts
She called the pulsing sea.

So marvel not if in the days when death
Shall make my body mine, I do not cry
For hours and treasure lost, but with my breath
Praise my mortality.
For lo! this place is fair, and losing all
That I have won and dreamed beneath her kiss,
I would not see the light of morning fall
On any world but this.

Richard Middleton [1882–1911]

WINDLE-STRAWS

She kissed me on the forehead,
She spoke not any word,
The silence flowed between us,
And I nor spoke nor stirred.

So hopeless for my sake it was,
So full of ruth, so sweet,
My whole heart rose and blessed her,
—Then died before her feet.

Edward Dowden [1843–1913]

JESSIE

When Jessie comes with her soft breast,
And yields the golden keys,
Then is it as if God caressed
Twin babes upon His knees—
Twin babes that, each to other pressed,
Just feel the Father's arms, wherewith they both are blessed.

But when I think if we must part,
And all this personal dream be fled—
O then my heart! O then my useless heart!
Would God that thou wert dead—

A clod insensible to joys and ills—
A stone remote in some bleak gully of the hills!

Thomas Edward Brown [1830–1897]

THE CHESS-BOARD

My little love, do you remember,
Ere we were grown so sadly wise,
Those evenings in the bleak December,
Curtained warm from the snowy weather,
When you and I played chess together,
Checkmated by each other's eyes?

Ah! still I see your soft white hand
Hovering warm o'er Queen and Knight;
Brave Pawns in valiant battle stand;
The double Castles guard the wings;
The Bishop, bent on distant things,
Moves, sliding, through the fight.

Our fingers touch; our glances meet,
And falter; falls your golden hair
Against my cheek; your bosom sweet
Is heaving. Down the field, your Queen
Rides slow, her soldiery all between,
And checks me unaware.

Ah me! the little battle's done:
Dispersed is all its chivalry.
Full many a move, since then, have we
'Mid Life's perplexing chequers made,
And many a game with Fortune played;—
What is it we have won?
This, this at least,—if this alone:

That never, never, never more,
As in those old still nights of yore
(Ere we were grown so sadly wise),
Can you and I shut out the skies,

Shut out the world and wintry weather,
And, eyes exchanging warmth with eyes,
Play chess, as then we played together!

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831–1891]

AUX ITALIENS

At Paris it was, at the Opera there;—
And she looked like a queen in a book that night,
With the wreath of pearl in her raven hair,
And the brooch on her breast, so bright.

Of all the operas that Verdi wrote,
The best, to my taste, is the Trovatore;
And Mario can soothe with a tenor note
The souls in Purgatory.

The moon on the tower slept soft as snow:
And who was not thrilled in the strangest way,
As we heard him sing, while the gas burned low,
"*Non ti scordar di me*"?

The Emperor there, in his box of state,
Looked grave, as if he had just then seen
The red flag wave from the city-gate
Where his eagles in bronze had been.

The Empress, too, had a tear in her eye.
You'd have said that her fancy had gone back again,
For one moment, under the old blue sky,
To the old glad life in Spain.

Well! there in our front-row box we sat,
Together, my bride-betrothed and I;
My gaze was fixed on my opera-hat,
And hers on the stage hard by.

And both were silent, and both were sad.
Like a queen she leaned on her full white arm,
With that regal, indolent air she had;
So confident of her charm!

I have not a doubt she was thinking then
Of her former lord, good soul that he was!
Who died the richest and roundest of men,
The Marquis of Carabas.

I hope that, to get to the kingdom of heaven,
Through a needle's eye he had not to pass.
I wish him well, for the jointure given
To my lady of Carabas.

Meanwhile, I was thinking of my first love,
As I had not been thinking of aught for years,
Till over my eyes there began to move
Something that felt like tears.

I thought of the dress that she wore last time,
When we stood, 'neath the cypress-trees, together,
In that lost land, in that soft clime,
In the crimson evening weather;

Of that muslin dress (for the eve was hot),
And her warm white neck in its golden chain,
And her full, soft hair, just tied in a knot,
And falling loose again;

And the jasmine-flower in her fair young breast,
(O the faint, sweet smell of that jasmine-flower!)
And the one bird singing alone to his nest,
And the one star over the tower.

I thought of our little quarrels and strife,
And the letter that brought me back my ring.
And it all seemed then, in the waste of life,
Such a very little thing!

For I thought of her grave below the hill,
Which the sentinel cypress-tree stands over;
And I thought . . . . "were she only living still,
How I could forgive her, and love her!"

And I swear, as I thought of her thus, in that hour,
And of how, after all, old things were best,
That I smelt the smell of that jasmine-flower
Which she used to wear in her breast.

It smelt so faint, and it smelt so sweet,
It made me creep, and it made me cold!
Like the scent that steals from the crumbling sheet
Where a mummy is half unrolled.

And I turned, and looked. She was sitting there
In a dim box, over the stage; and dressed
In that muslin dress with that full soft hair,
And that jasmine in her breast!

I was here; and she was there;
And the glittering horseshoe curved between:—
From my bride-betrothed, with her raven hair,
And her sumptuous scornful mien,

To my early love, with her eyes downcast,
And over her primrose face the shade
(In short from the Future back to the Past).
There was but a step to be made.

To my early love from my future bride
One moment I looked. Then I stole to the door,
I traversed the passage; and down at her side
I was sitting, a moment more.

My thinking of her, or the music's strain,
Or something which never will be expressed,
Had brought her back from the grave again,
With the jasmine in her breast.

She is not dead, and she is not wed!
But she loves me now, and she loved me then!
And the very first word that her sweet lips said,
My heart grew youthful again.

The Marchioness there, of Carabas,
She is wealthy, and young, and handsome still,
And but for her . . . well, we'll let that pass,
She may marry whomever she will.

But I will marry my own first love,
With her primrose face: for old things are best,
And the flower in her bosom, I prize it above
The brooch in my lady's breast.

The world is filled with folly and sin,
And Love must cling where it can, I say:
For Beauty is easy enough to win;
But one isn't loved every day.

And I think, in the lives of most women and men,
There's a moment when all would go smooth and even,
If only the dead could find out when
To come back, and be forgiven.

But O the smell of that jasmine-flower!
And O that music! and O the way
That voice rang out from the donjon tower,
Non ti scordar di me,
Non ti scordar di me!

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831–1891]

SONG

I saw the day's white rapture
Die in the sunset's flame,
But all her shining beauty
Lives like a deathless name.

Our lamps of joy are wasted,
Gone is Love's hallowed light;
But you and I remember
Through every starlit night.

Charles Hanson Towne [1877–

THE LONELY ROAD

I THINK thou waitest, Love, beyond the Gate—
  Eager, with wind-stirred ripples in thy hair;
I have not found thee, and the hour is late,
  And harsh the weight I bear.

Far have I sought, and flung my wealth of years
  Like a young traveler, gay at careless inns—
See how the wine-stain whitens 'neath the tears
  My burden wins!

And wilt thou know me, Love, with bended back,
  Or wilt thou scorn me, in so drear a guise?
I have a wealth of sorrows in my pack,
  One lonely prize—

Thy dream—and dross of sin. . . . O, dim the fields—
  I may not find thee in so dark a land—
Yet I await what hope the turning yields
  And beg with empty hand.

Kenneth Rand [1891–

EVENSONG

BEAUTY calls and gives no warning,
Shadows rise and wander on the day.
In the twilight, in the quiet evening,
We shall rise and smile and go away.
Over the flaming leaves
Freezes the sky.
It is the season grieves,
Not you, not I.
All our spring-times, all our summers,
We have kept the longing warm within.
Now we leave the after-comers
To attain the dreams we did not win.
Oh, we have wakened, Sweet, and had our birth,
And that's the end of earth;
And we have toiled and smiled and kept the light,
And that's the end of night.

Ridgely Torrence [1875–

THE NYMPH'S SONG TO HYLAS

From "The Life and Death of Jason"

I KNOW a little garden-close
Set thick with lily and red rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy dawn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.

And though within it no birds sing,
And though no pillared house is there,
And though the apple boughs are bare
Of fruit and blossom, would to God,
Her feet upon the green grass trod,
And I beheld them as before!

There comes a murmur from the shore,
And in the close two fair streams are,
Drawn from the purple hills afar,
Drawn down unto the restless sea;
Dark hills whose heath-bloom feeds no bee,
Dark shore no ship has ever seen,
Tormented by the billows green,
Whose murmur comes unceasingly
Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,
For which I let slip all delight,
Whereby I grow both deaf and blind,
Careless to win, unskilled to find,
And quick to lose what all men seek.

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,
Still have I left a little breath
To seek within the jaws of death
An entrance to that happy place;
To seek the unforgotten face
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from me
Anigh the murmuring of the sea.

William Morris [1834–1896]

NO AND YES

If I could choose my paradise,
And please myself with choice of bliss,
Then I would have your soft blue eyes
And rosy little mouth to kiss!
Your lips, as smooth and tender, child,
As rose-leaves in a coppice wild.

If fate bade choose some sweet unrest,
To weave my troubled life a snare,
Then I would say "her maiden breast
And golden ripple of her hair";
And weep amid those tresses, child,
Contented to be thus beguiled.

Thomas Ashe [1836–1889]

LOVE IN DREAMS

Love hath his poppy-wreath,
Not Night alone.
I laid my head beneath
Love's lilied throne:
Then to my sleep he brought
This anodyne—
The flower of many a thought
And fancy fine:
A form, a face, no more;
Fairer than truth;
A dream from death's pale shore;
The soul of youth:
A dream so dear, so deep,
All dreams above,
That still I pray to sleep—
Bring Love back, Love!

John Addington Symonds [1840–1893]

"A LITTLE WHILE I FAIN WOULD LINGER YET"

A little while (my life is almost set!)
I fain would pause along the downward way,
Musing an hour in this sad sunset-ray,

While, Sweet! our eyes with tender tears are wet:
A little hour I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger yet,
All for love's sake, for love that cannot tire;
Though fervid youth be dead, with youth's desire,
And hope has faded to a vague regret,
A little while I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger here:
Behold! who knows what strange, mysterious bars
'Twixt souls that love may rise in other stars?
Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:
A little while I still would linger here.

A little while I yearn to hold thee fast,
Hand locked in hand, and loyal heart to heart;
(O pitying Christ! those woeful words, "We part!")
So, ere the darkness fall, the light be past,
A little while I fain would hold thee fast.

A little while, when light and twilight meet,—
Behind, our broken years; before, the deep
Weird wonder of the last unfathomed sleep,—
A little while I still would clasp thee, Sweet,
A little while, when night and twilight meet.

A little while I fain would linger here;
Behold! who knows what soul-dividing bars
Earth's faithful loves may part in other stars?
Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:
A little while I still would linger here.

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830–1886]

SONG

I MADE another garden, yea,
For my new Love:
I left the dead rose where it lay
And set the new above.

Why did my Summer not begin?
  Why did my heart not haste?
My old Love came and walked therein,
  And laid the garden waste.

She entered with her weary smile,
  Just as of old;
She looked around a little while
  And shivered with the cold:
Her passing touch was death to all,
  Her passing look a blight;
She made the white rose-petals fall,
  And turned the red rose white.

Her pale robe clinging to the grass
  Seemed like a snake
That bit the grass and ground, alas!
  And a sad trail did make.
She went up slowly to the gate,
  And then, just as of yore,
She turned back at the last to wait
  And say farewell once more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844–1881]

SONG

Has summer come without the rose,
  Or left the bird behind?
Is the blue changed above thee,
  O world! or am I blind?
Will you change every flower that grows,
  Or only change this spot,
Where she who said, I love thee,
  Now says, I love thee not?

The skies seemed true above thee,
  The rose true on the tree;
The bird seemed true the summer through,
  But all proved false to me.

World! is there one good thing in you,
Life, love, or death—or what?
Since lips that sang, I love thee,
Have said, I love thee not?

I think the sun's kiss will scarce fall
Into one flower's gold cup;
I think the bird will miss me,
And give the summer up.
O sweet place! desolate in tall
Wild grass, have you forgot
How her lips loved to kiss me,
Now that they kiss me not?

Be false or fair above me,
Come back with any face,
Summer!—do I care what you do?
You cannot change one place—
The grass, the leaves, the earth, the dew,
The grave I make the spot—
Here, where she used to love me,
Here, where she loves me not.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844–1881]

AFTER

A LITTLE time for laughter,
A little time to sing,
A little time to kiss and cling,
And no more kissing after.

A little while for scheming
Love's unperfected schemes;
A little time for golden dreams,
Then no more any dreaming.

A little while 'twas given
To me to have thy love;
Now, like a ghost, alone I move
About a ruined heaven.

A little time for speaking
  Things sweet to say and hear;
  A time to seek, and find thee near,
Then no more any seeking.

A little time for saying
  Words the heart breaks to say;
  A short sharp time wherein to pray,
Then no more need of praying;

But long, long years to weep in,
  And comprehend the whole
  Great grief that desolates the soul,
And eternity to sleep in.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850–1887]

AFTER SUMMER

We'll not weep for summer over,—
  No, not we:
Strew above his head the clover,—
  Let him be!

Other eyes may weep his dying,
  Shed their tears
There upon him, where he's lying
  With his peers.

Unto some of them he proffered
  Gifts most sweet;
For our hearts a grave he offered,—
  Was this meet?

All our fond hopes, praying, perished
  In his wrath,—
All the lovely dreams we cherished
  Strewed his path.

Shall we in our tombs, I wonder,
  Far apart,
Sundered wide as seas can sunder
  Heart from heart,

Dream at all of all the sorrows
That were ours,—
Bitter nights, more bitter morrows;
Poison-flowers

Summer gathered, as in madness,
Saying, "See,
These are yours, in place of gladness,—
Gifts from me"?

Nay, the rest that will be ours
Is supreme,—
And below the poppy flowers
Steals no dream.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850–1887]

ROCOCO

Take hand and part with laughter;
Touch lips and part with tears;
Once more and no more after,
Whatever comes with years.
We twain shall not remeasure
The ways that left us twain;
Nor crush the lees of pleasure
From sanguine grapes of pain.

We twain once well in sunder,
What will the mad gods do
For hate with me, I wonder,
Or what for love with you?
Forget them till November,
And dream there's April yet,
Forget that I remember,
And dream that I forget.

Time found our tired love sleeping,
And kissed away his breath;
But what should we do weeping,
Though light love sleep to death?

We have drained his lips at leisure,
  Till there's not left to drain
A single sob of pleasure,
  A single pulse of pain.

Dream that the lips once breathless
  Might quicken if they would;
Say that the soul is deathless;
  Dream that the gods are good;
Say March may wed September,
  And time divorce regret;
But not that you remember,
  And not that I forget.

We have heard from hidden places
  What love scarce lives and hears:
We have seen on fervent faces
  The pallor of strange tears:
We have trod the wine-vat's treasure,
  Whence, ripe to steam and stain,
Foams round the feet of pleasure
  The blood-red must of pain.

Remembrance may recover
  And time bring back to time
The name of your first lover,
  The ring of my first rhyme:
But rose-leaves of December
  The frosts of June shall fret,
The day that you remember,
  The day that I forget.

The snake that hides and hisses
  In heaven we twain have known;
The grief of cruel kisses,
  The joy whose mouth makes moan;
The pulses' pause and measure,
  Where in one furtive vein
Throbs through the heart of pleasure
  The purpler blood of pain.

We have done with tears and treasons
And love for treason's sake;
Room for the swift new seasons,
The years that burn and break,
Dismantle and dismember
Men's days and dreams, Juliette;
For love may not remember,
But time will not forget.

Life treads down love in flying,
Time withers him at root;
Bring all dead things and dying,
Reaped sheaf and ruined fruit,
Where, crushed by three days' pressure
Our three days' love lies slain;
And earlier leaf of pleasure,
And latter flower of pain.

Breathe close upon the ashes,
It may be flame will leap;
Unclose the soft close lashes,
Lift up the lids and weep.
Light love's extinguished ember,
Let one tear leave it wet
For one that you remember
And ten that you forget.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

RONDEL

THESE many years since we began to be,
What have the Gods done with us? what with me,
What with my love? They have shown me fates and fears,
Harsh springs, and fountains bitterer than the sea,
Grief a fixed star, and joy a vane that veers,
These many years.

With her, my Love,—with her have they done well?
But who shall answer for her? who shall tell
Sweet things or sad, such things as no man hears?
May no tears fall, if no tears ever fell,

From eyes more dear to me than starriest spheres,
These many years!

But if tears ever touched, for any grief,
Those eyelids folded like a white-rose leaf,
Deep double shells where through the eye-flower peers,
Let them weep once more only, sweet and brief,
Brief tears and bright, for one who gave her tears
These many years!

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

THE OBLATION

Ask nothing more of me, sweet;
All I can give you I give.
Heart of my heart, were it more,
More would be laid at your feet:
Love that should help you to live,
Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give
Once to have sense of you more,
Touch you and taste of you, sweet,
Think you and breathe you and live,
Swept of your wings as they soar,
Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more
Give you but love of you, sweet:
He that hath more, let him give;
He that hath wings, let him soar;
Mine is the heart at your feet
Here, that must love you to live.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

THE SONG OF THE BOWER

From "The House of Life"

Say, is it day, is it dusk in thy bower,
Thou whom I long for, who longest for me?
Oh! be it light, be it night, 'tis Love's hour,
Love's that is fettered as Love's that is free.

Free Love has leaped to that innermost chamber,
Oh! the last time, and the hundred before:
Fettered Love, motionless, can but remember,
Yet something that sighs from him passes the door.

Nay, but my heart when it flies to thy bower,
What does it find there that knows it again?
There it must droop like a shower-beaten flower,
Red at the rent core and dark with the rain.
Ah! yet what shelter is still shed above it,—
What waters still image its leaves torn apart?
Thy soul is the shade that clings round it to love it,
And tears are its mirror deep down in thy heart.

What were my prize, could I enter thy bower,
This day, to-morrow, at eve or at morn?
Large lovely arms and a neck like a tower,
Bosom then heaving that now lies forlorn.
Kindled with love-breath, (the sun's kiss is colder!)
Thy sweetness all near me, so distant to-day;
My hand round thy neck and thy hand on my shoulder,
My mouth to thy mouth as the world melts away.

What is it keeps me afar from thy bower,—
My spirit, my body, so fain to be there?
Waters engulfing or fires that devour?—
Earth heaped against me or death in the air?
Nay, but in day-dreams, for terror, for pity,
The trees wave their heads with an omen to tell;
Nay, but in night-dreams, throughout the dark city,
The hours, clashed together, lose count in the bell.

Shall I not one day remember thy bower,
One day when all days are one day to me?—
Thinking, "I stirred not, and yet had the power,"
Yearning, "Ah God, if again it might be!"
Peace, peace! such a small lamp illumes, on this highway,
So dimly so few steps in front of my feet,—
Yet shows me that her way is parted from my way. . . .
Out of sight, beyond light, at what goal may we meet?

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

SONG

We break the glass, whose sacred wine
To some beloved health we drain,
Lest future pledges, less divine,
Should e'er the hallowed toy profane;
And thus I broke a heart that poured
Its tide of feelings out for thee,
In draughts, by after-times deplored,
Yet dear to memory.

But still the old, impassioned ways
And habits of my mind remain,
And still unhappy light displays
Thine image chambered in my brain,
And still it looks as when the hours
Went by like flights of singing birds,
Or that soft chain of spoken flowers
And airy gems,—thy words.

Edward Coate Pinkney [1802–1828]

MAUD MULLER

Maud Muller on a summer's day
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast,—

A wish that she hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that flowed
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
My brother should sail a painted boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay;

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain,
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day,
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein;

And, gazing down with timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

LA GRISETTE

Ah, Clemence! when I saw thee last
Trip down the Rue de Seine,
And turning, when thy form had passed,
I said, "We meet again,"—
I dreamed not in that idle glance
Thy latest image came,
And only left to memory's trance
A shadow and a name.

The few strange words my lips had taught
Thy timid voice to speak,
Their gentler signs, which often brought
Fresh roses to thy cheek,
The trailing of thy long loose hair
Bent o'er my couch of pain,
All, all returned, more sweet, more fair;
Oh, had we met again!

I walked where saint and virgin keep
The vigil lights of Heaven,
I knew that thou hadst woes to weep,
And sins to be forgiven;
I watched where Genevieve was laid,
I knelt by Mary's shrine,
Beside me low, soft voices prayed;
Alas! but where was thine?

And when the morning sun was bright,
When wind and wave were calm,
And flamed, in thousand-tinted light,
The rose of Notre Dame,
I wandered through the haunts of men,
From Boulevard to Quai,
Till, frowning o'er Saint Etienne,
The Pantheon's shadow lay.

In vain, in vain; we meet no more,
Nor dream what fates befall;
And long upon the stranger's shore
My voice on thee may call,
When years have clothed the line in moss
That tells thy name and days,
And withered, on thy simple cross,
The wreaths of Père-la-Chaise!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE DARK MAN

Rose o' the World, she came to my bed
And changed the dreams of my heart and head;
For joy of mine she left grief of hers,
And garlanded me with a crown of furze.

Rose o' the World, they go out and in,
And watch me dream amd my mother spin;
And they pity the tears on my sleeping face
While my soul's away in a fairy place.

Rose o' the World, they have words galore,
And wide's the swing of my mother's door:
And soft they speak of my darkened eyes—
But what do they know, who are all so wise?

Rose o' the World, the pain you give
Is worth all days that a man may live—
Worth all shy prayers that the colleens say
On the night that darkens the wedding-day.

Rose o' the World, what man would wed
When he might dream of your face instead?
Might go to the grave with the blessèd pain
Of hungering after your face again?

Rose o' the World, they may talk their fill,
For dreams are good, and my life stands still
While their lives' red ashes the gossips stir;
But my fiddle knows—and I talk to her.

Nora Hopper [1871–

EURYDICE

He came to call me back from death
To the bright world above.
I hear him yet with trembling breath
Low calling, "O sweet love!
Come back! The earth is just as fair;
The flowers, the open skies are there;
Come back to life and love!"

Oh! all my heart went out to him,
And the sweet air above.
With happy tears my eyes were dim;
I called him, "O sweet love!
I come, for thou art all to me.
Go forth, and I will follow thee,
Right back to life and love!"

I followed through the cavern black;
I saw the blue above.
Some terror turned me to look back:
I heard him wail, "O love!
What hast thou done! What hast thou done!"
And then I saw no more the sun,
And lost were life and love.

Francis William Bourdillon [1852–

A WOMAN'S THOUGHT

I AM a woman—therefore I may not
Call to him, cry to him,
Fly to him,
Bid him delay not!

Then when he comes to me, I must sit quiet:
Still as a stone—
All silent and cold.
If my heart riot—
Crush and defy it!
Should I grow bold,
Say one dear thing to him,
All my life fling to him,
Cling to him—
What to atone
Is enough for my sinning!
This were the cost to me,
This were my winning—
That he were lost to me.

Not as a lover
At last if he part from me,
Tearing my heart from me,
Hurt beyond cure,—
Calm and demure
Then must I hold me,
In myself fold me,
Lest he discover;

Showing no sign to him
By look of mine to him
What he has been to me—
How my heart turns to him,
Follows him, yearns to him,
Prays him to love me.

Pity me, lean to me,
Thou God above me!

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

LAUS VENERIS

A PICTURE BY BURNE-JONES

PALLID with too much longing,
White with passion and prayer,
Goddess of love and beauty,
She sits in the picture there,—

Sits with her dark eyes seeking
Something more subtle still
Than the old delights of loving
Her measureless days to fill.

She has loved and been loved so often
In her long, immortal years,
That she tires of the worn-out rapture,
Sickens of hopes and fears.

No joys or sorrows move her,
Done with her ancient pride;
For her head she found too heavy
The crown she has cast aside.

Clothed in her scarlet splendor,
Bright with her glory of hair,
Sad that she is not mortal,—
Eternally sad and fair,

Longing for joys she knows not,
Athirst with a vain desire,
There she sits in the picture,
Daughter of foam and fire.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835–1908]

ADONAIS

SHALL we meet no more, my love, at the binding of the sheaves,
In the happy harvest-fields, as the sun sinks low,
When the orchard paths are dim with the drift of fallen leaves,
And the reapers sing together, in the mellow, misty eves:
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!

Love met us in the orchard, ere the corn had gathered plume,—
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Sweet as summer days that die when the months are in the bloom,
And the peaks are ripe with sunset, like the tassels of the broom,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Sweet as summer days that die, leafing sweeter each to each,—
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
All the heart was full of feeling: love had ripened into speech,
Like the sap that turns to nectar in the velvet of the peach,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Sweet as summer days that die at the ripening of the corn,—
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Sweet as lovers' fickle oaths, sworn to faithless maids forsworn,
When the musty orchard breathes like a mellow drinking-horn,
Over happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Love left us at the dying of the mellow autumn eves,—
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
When the skies are ripe and fading, like the colors of the leaves,
And the reapers kiss and part, at the binding of the sheaves,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Then the reapers gather home, from the gray and misty meres;—
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Then the reapers gather home, and they bear upon their spears,
One whose face is like the moon, fallen gray among the spheres,
With the daylight's curse upon it, as the sun sinks low.

Faint as far-off bugles blowing, soft and low the reapers sung;—
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Sweet as summer in the blood, when the heart is ripe and young,
Love is sweetest in the dying, like the sheaves he lies among,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

William Wallace Harney [1831–

FACE TO FACE

If my face could only promise that its color would remain;
If my heart were only certain it would hide the moment's pain;
I would meet you and would greet you in the old familiar tone,
And naught should ever show you the wrong that you have done.

If my trembling hand were steady, if my smiles had not all fled;
If my eyes spoke not so plainly of the tears they often shed;
I would meet you and would greet you at the old trysting place,
And perchance you'd deem me happy if you met me face to face.

If the melody of Springtime awoke no wild refrain,
If the Autumn's gold burthen awoke no living pain,
I would meet you and would greet you, as years ago we met,
Before our hearts were shipwrecked on the ocean of regret.

If my woman's soul were stronger, if my heart were not so true,
I should long have ceased remembering the love I had for you;
But I dare not meet or greet you, in the old familiar way,
Until we meet in Heaven, where all tears have passed away.

Frances Cochrane [18 –

ASHORE

Out I came from the dancing-place,
The night-wind met me face to face,—

A wind off the harbor, cold and keen,
"I know," it whistled, "where thou hast been."

A faint voice fell from the stars above—
"Thou? whom we lighted to shrines of Love!"

I found when I reached my lonely room
A faint sweet scent in the unlit gloom.

And this was the worst of all to bear,
For some one had left white lilac there.

The flower you loved, in times that were.

Laurence Hope [1865–1904]

KHRISTNA AND HIS FLUTE

Be still, my heart, and listen,
For sweet and yet acute
I hear the wistful music
Of Khristna and his flute.
Across the cool, blue evenings,
Throughout the burning days,
Persuasive and beguiling,
He plays and plays and plays.

Ah, none may hear such music
  Resistant to its charms,
The household work grows weary,
  And cold the husband's arms.
I must arise and follow,
  To seek, in vain pursuit,
The blueness and the distance,
  The sweetness of that flute!

In linked and liquid sequence,
  The plaintive notes dissolve
Divinely tender secrets
  That none but he can solve.
O Khristna, I am coming,
  I can no more delay.
"My heart has flown to join thee,"
  How shall my footsteps stay?

Beloved, such thoughts have peril;
  The wish is in my mind
That I had fired the jungle,
  And left no leaf behind,—
Burnt all bamboos to ashes,
  And made their music mute,—
To save thee from the magic
  Of Khristna and his flute.

Laurence Hope [1865–1904]

IMPENITENTIA ULTIMA

Before my light goes out forever, if God should give me
  choice of graces,
I would not reck of length of days, nor crave for
  things to be;
But cry: "One day of the great lost days, one face of all the
  faces,
Grant me to see and touch once more and nothing more
  to see!

"For, Lord, I was free of all Thy flowers, but I chose the world's sad roses,
And that is why my feet are torn and mine eyes are blind with sweat,
But at Thy terrible judgment seat, when this my tired life closes,
I am ready to reap whereof I sowed, and pay my righteous debt.

"But once, before the sand is run and the silver thread is broken,
Give me a grace and cast aside the veil of dolorous years,
Grant me one hour of all mine hours, and let me see for a token
Her pure and pitiful eyes shine out, and bathe her feet with tears."

Her pitiful hands should calm and her hair stream down and blind me,
Out of the sight of night, and out of the reach of fear,
And her eyes should be my light whilst the sun went out behind me,
And the viols in her voice be the last sound in mine ear.

Before the ruining waters fall and my life be carried under,
And Thine anger cleave me through, as a child cuts down a flower,
I will praise Thee, Lord, in hell, while my limbs are racked asunder,
For the last sad sight of her face and the little grace of an hour.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

NON SUM QUALIS ERAM BONAE SUB REGNO CYNARAE

Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head.
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay;
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were sweet;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
But when the feast is finished and the lamps expire,
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

QUID NON SPEREMUS, AMANTES?

Why is there in the least touch of her hands
More grace than other women's lips bestow,
If love is but a slave to fleshly bands
Of flesh to flesh, wherever love may go?

Why choose vain grief and heavy-hearted hours
For her lost voice, and dear remembered hair,
If love may cull his honey from all flowers,
And girls grow thick as violets, everywhere?

Nay! She is gone, and all things fall apart;
Or she is cold, and vainly have we prayed;
And broken is the summer's splendid heart,
And hope within a deep, dark grave is laid.

As man aspires and falls, yet a soul springs
Out of his agony of flesh at last,
So love that flesh enthralls, shall rise on wings
Soul-centered, when the rule of flesh is past.

Then, most High Love, or wreathed with myrtle sprays,
Or crownless and forlorn, nor less a star,
Thee may I serve and follow all my days,
Whose thorns are sweet as never roses are!

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

"SO SWEET LOVE SEEMED"

So sweet love seemed that April morn,
When first we kissed beside the thorn,
So strangely sweet, it was not strange
We thought that love could never change.

But I can tell—let truth be told—
That love will change in growing old;
Though day by day is naught to see,
So delicate his motions be.

And in the end 'twill come to pass
Quite to forget what once he was,
Nor even in fancy to recall
The pleasure that was all in all.

His little spring, that sweet we found,
So deep in summer floods is drowned,
I wonder, bathed in joy complete,
How love so young could be so sweet.

Robert Bridges [1844–

AN OLD TUNE *

AFTER GÉRARD DE NERVAL

There is an air for which I would disown
Mozart's, Rossini's, Weber's melodies,—
A sweet sad air that languishes and sighs,
And keeps its secret charm for me alone.

* For the original of this poem see page 3842

Whene'er I hear that music vague and old,
Two hundred years are mist that rolls away;
The thirteenth Louis reigns, and I behold
A green land golden in the dying day.

An old red castle, strong with stony towers,
And windows gay with many-colored glass;
Wide plains, and rivers flowing among flowers,
That bathe the castle basement as they pass.

In antique weed, with dark eyes and gold hair,
A lady looks forth from her window high;
It may be that I knew and found her fair,
In some forgotten life, long time gone by.

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

REFUGE

Set your face to the sea, fond lover,—
Cold in darkness the sea-winds blow!
Waves and clouds and the night will cover
All your passion and all your woe:
Sobbing waves, and the death within them,
Sweet as the lips that once you pressed—
Pray that your hopeless heart may win them!
Pray that your weary life may rest!

Set your face to the stars, fond lover,—
Calm, and silent, and bright, and true!—
They will pity you, they will hover
Softly over the deep for you.
Winds of heaven will sigh your dirges,
Tears of heaven for you be spent,
And sweet for you will the murmuring surges
Pour the wail of their low lament.

Set your face to the lonely spaces,
Vast and gaunt, of the midnight sky!
There, with the drifting cloud, your place is,
There with the griefs that cannot die.

Love is a mocking fiend's derision,
Peace a phantom, and faith a snare!
Make the hope of your heart a vision—
Look to heaven, and find it there!

William Winter [1836-

MIDSUMMER

After the May time and after the June time
Rare with blossoms and perfume sweet,
Cometh the round world's royal noon time,
The red midsummer of blazing heat,
When the sun, like an eye that never closes,
Bends on the earth its fervid gaze,
And the winds are still, and the crimson roses
Droop and wither and die in its rays.

Unto my heart has come this season,
O, my lady, my worshiped one,
When, over the stars of Pride and Reason,
Sails Love's cloudless, noonday sun.
Like a great red ball in my bosom burning
With fires that nothing can quench or tame,
It glows till my heart itself seems turning
Into a liquid lake of flame.

The hopes half shy and the sighs all tender,
The dreams and fears of an earlier day,
Under the noontide's royal splendor,
Droop like roses, and wither away.
From the hills of Doubt no winds are blowing,
From the isles of Pain no breeze is sent,—
Only the sun in a white heat glowing
Over an ocean of great content.

Sink, O my soul, in this golden glory!
Die, O my heart, in thy rapture-swoon!
For the Autumn must come with its mournful story,
And Love's midsummer will fade too soon.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox [1855-

ASHES OF ROSES

Soft on the sunset sky
Bright daylight closes,
Leaving when light doth die,
Pale hues that mingling lie—
Ashes of roses.

When love's warm sun is set,
Love's brightness closes;
Eyes with hot tears are wet,
In hearts there linger yet
Ashes of roses.

Elaine Goodale Eastman [1863-

SYMPATHY

The color gladdens all your heart;
You call it Heaven, dear, but I—
Now Hope and I are far apart—
Call it the sky.

I know that Nature's tears have wet
The world with sympathy; but you,
Who know not any sorrow yet,
Call it the dew.

Althea Gyles [?]

THE LOOK

Strephon kissed me in the spring,
Robin in the fall,
But Colin only looked at me
And never kissed at all.

Strephon's kiss was lost in jest,
Robin's lost in play,
But the kiss in Colin's eyes
Haunts me night and day.

Sara Teasdale [188A-

"WHEN MY BELOVED SLEEPING LIES"

When my beloved sleeping lies
I cannot look at him for tears,
Such mournful peace is on his eyes.

A look of lonely death he wears,
And graven very calm and deep
Lie all the sorrows of old years.

He is so passionless in sleep,
With all his strength relaxed to rest;
I cannot see him and not weep.

For weakness life has not confessed
And shadowed scars of old mistakes,
I take his head upon my breast,
And hold my dearest till he wakes.

Irene Rutherford McLeod [18

LOVE AND LIFE

"Give me a fillet, Love," quoth I,
"To bind my Sweeting's heart to me,
So ne'er a chance of earth or sky
Shall part us ruthlessly:
A fillet, Love, but not to chafe
My Sweeting's soul, to cause her pain;
But just to bind her close and safe
Through snow and blossom and sun and rain:
A fillet, boy!"
Love said, "Here's joy."

"Give me a fetter, Life," quoth I,
"To bind to mine my Sweeting's heart,
So Death himself must fail to pry
With Time the two apart:
A fetter, Life, that each shall wear,
Whose precious bondage each shall know.
I prithee, Life, no more forbear—
Why dost thou wait and falter so?

Haste, Life—be brief!"
Said Life:—"Here's grief."
Julie Mathilde Lippman [1864–

LOVE'S PRISONER

Sweet love has twined his fingers in my hair,
And laid his hand across my wondering eyes.
I cannot move save in the narrow space
Of his strong arms' embrace,
Nor see but only in my own heart where
His image lies.
How can I tell,
Emprisonèd so well,
If in the outer world be sunset or sunrise?
Sweet Love has laid his hand across my eyes.

Sweet Love has loosed his fingers from my hair,
His lifted hand has left my eyelids wet.
I cannot move save to pursue his fleet
And unreturning feet,
Nor see but in my ruined heart, and there
His face lies yet.
How should I know,
Distraught and blinded so,
If in the outer world be sunrise or sunset?
Sweet Love has freed my eyes, but they are wet.
Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer [18 -

ROSIES

There's a rosie-show in Derry,
An' a rosie-show in Down;
An' 'tis like there's wan, I'm thinkin',
'll be held in Randalstown;
But if I had the choosin'
Av a rosie-prize the day,
'Twould be a pink wee rosie
Like he plucked whin rakin' hay:

Yon pink wee rosie in my hair—
He fixed it troth—an' kissed it there!
White gulls wor wheelin' roun' the sky
Down by—down by.

Ay, there's rosies sure in Derry,
An' there's famous wans in Down;
Och there's rosies all a-hawkin'
Through the heart av London town!
But if I had the liftin'
Or the buyin' av a few,
I'd choose jist pink wee rosies
That's all drenchin' wid the dew—
Yon pink wee rosies wid the tears!
Och wet, wet tears!—ay, troth, 'tis years
Since we kep' rakin' in the hay
Thon day—thon day!

Agnes I. Hanrahan [18 -

AT THE COMEDY

LAST night, in snowy gown and glove,
I saw you watch the play
Where each mock hero won his love
In the old unlifelike way.

(*And, oh, were life their little scene*
Where love so smoothly ran,
How different, Dear, this world had been
Since this old world began!)

For you, who saw them gayly win
Both hand and heart away,
Knew well where dwelt the mockery in
That foolish little play.

("*If love were all—if love were all,*"
The viols sobbed and cried,
"*Then love were best whate'er befall!*"
Low, low, the flutes replied.)

And you, last night, did you forget,
So far from me, so near?
For watching there your eyes were wet
With just an idle tear!

(*And down the great dark curtain fell*
Upon their foolish play:
But you and I knew—Oh, too well!—
Life went another way!)

Arthur Stringer [1874-

"SOMETIME IT MAY BE"

SOMETIME it may be you and I
In that deserted yard shall lie
Where memories fade away;
Caring no more for our old dreams,
Busy with new and alien themes,
The saints and sages say.

But let our graves be side by side,
So passers-by at even-tide
May pause a moment's space:
"Ah, they were lovers who lie here!
Else why these low graves laid so near,
In this forgotten place?"

Arthur Colton [1868-

"I HEARD A SOLDIER"

I HEARD a soldier sing some trifle
Out in the sun-dried veldt alone:
He lay and cleaned his grimy rifle
Idly, behind a stone.

"If after death, love, comes a waking,
And in their camp so dark and still
The men of dust hear bugles, breaking
Their halt upon the hill.

"To me the slow and silver pealing
That then the last high trumpet pours
Shall softer than the dawn come stealing,
For, with its call, comes yours!"

What grief of love had he to stifle,
Basking so idly by his stone,
That grimy soldier with his rifle
Out in the veldt, alone?

Herbert Trench [1865-

THE LAST MEMORY

When I am old, and think of the old days,
And warm my hands before a little blaze,
Having forgotten love, hope, fear, desire,
I shall see, smiling out of the pale fire,
One face, mysterious and exquisite;
And I shall gaze, and ponder over it,
Wondering, was it Leonardo wrought
That stealthy ardency, where passionate thought
Burns inward, a revealing flame, and glows
To the last ecstasy, which is repose?
Was it Bronzino, those Borghese eyes?
And, musing thus among my memories,
O unforgotten! you will come to seem,
As pictures do, remembered, some old dream.
And I shall think of you as something strange,
And beautiful, and full of helpless change,
Which I beheld and carried in my heart;
But you, I loved, will have become a part
Of the eternal mystery, and love
Like a dim pain; and I shall bend above
My little fire, and shiver, being cold,
When you are no more young, and I am old.

Arthur Symons [1865-

"DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS"

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

William Butler Yeats [1865–

ASHES OF LIFE

Love has gone and left me, and the days are all alike.
Eat I must, and sleep I will—and would that night were here!
But ah, to lie awake and hear the slow hours strike!
Would that it were day again, with twilight near!

Love has gone and left me, and I don't know what to do;
This or that or what you will is all the same to me;
But all the things that I begin I leave before I'm through—
There's little use in anything as far as I can see.

Love has gone and left me, and the neighbors knock and borrow,
And life goes on forever like the gnawing of a mouse.
And to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow
There's this little street and this little house.

Edna St. Vincent Millay [1892–

A FAREWELL

Thou wilt not look on me?
Ah, well! the world is wide;
The rivers still are rolling free,
Song and the sword abide;
And who sets forth to sail the sea
Shall follow with the tide.

Thrall of my darkling day,
I vassalage fulfil:
Seeking the myrtle and the bay,
(They thrive when hearts are chill!)
The straitness of the narrowing way,
The house where all is still.

Alice Brown [1857–

THE PARTED LOVERS

SONG

From "Twelfth Night"

O MISTRESS mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear; your true Love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty Sweeting;
Journey's end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty:
Then come kiss me, Sweet-and-twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

"GO, LOVELY ROSE"

Go, lovely Rose—
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die—that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee;
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

Edmund Waller [1606–1687]

TO THE ROSE: A SONG

Go, happy Rose, and, interwove
With other flowers, bind my love.
Tell her, too, she must not be
Longer flowing, longer free,
That so oft has fettered me.

Say, if she's fretful, I have bands
Of pearl and gold to bind her hands;
Tell her, if she struggle still,
I have myrtle rods at will
For to tame, though not to kill.

Take thou my blessing thus, and go
And tell her this,—but do not so!—
Lest a handsome anger fly
Like a lightning from her eye,
And burn thee up, as well as I!

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

MEMORY

From "Britannia's Pastorals"

MARINA'S gone, and now sit I,
As Philomela (on a thorn,
Turned out of nature's livery),
Mirthless, alone, and all forlorn:
Only she sings not, while my sorrows can
Breathe forth such notes as fit a dying swan.

So shuts the marigold her leaves
At the departure of the sun;
So from the honeysuckle sheaves
The bee goes when the day is done;

So sits the turtle when she is but one,
And so all woe, as I since she is gone.

To some few birds, kind Nature hath
  Made all the summer as one day:
Which once enjoyed, cold winter's wrath
  As night, they sleeping pass away.
Those happy creatures are, that know not yet
The pain to be deprived or to forget.

I oft have heard men say there be
  Some that with confidence profess
The helpful Art of Memory:
  But could they teach Forgetfulness,
I'd learn; and try what further art could do
To make me love her and forget her too.

Sad melancholy, that persuades
  Men from themselves, to think they be
Headless, or other bodies' shades,
  Hath long and bootless dwelt with me;
For could I think she some idea were,
I still might love, forget, and have her here.

But such she is not: nor would I,
  For twice as many torments more,
As her bereavèd company
  Hath brought to those I felt before,
For then no future time might hap to know
That she deserved, or I did love her so.

Ye hours, then, but as minutes be!
  (Though so I shall be sooner old)
Till I those lovely graces see,
  Which, but in her, can none behold;
Then be an age! that we may never try
More grief in parting, but grow old and die.

William Browne [1591–1643?]

TO LUCASTA, GOING TO THE WARS

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As thou too shalt adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honor more.

Richard Lovelace [1618–1658]

TO LUCASTA, GOING BEYOND THE SEAS

If to be absent were to be
Away from thee;
Or that when I am gone
You or I were alone;
Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
Pity from blustering wind or swallowing wave.

But I'll not sigh one blast or gale
To swell my sail,
Or pay a tear to 'suage
The foaming blue god's rage;
For whether he will let me pass
Or no, I'm still as happy as I was.

Though seas and land betwixt us both,
Our faith and troth,
Like separated souls,
All time and space controls:
Above the highest sphere we meet
Unseen, unknown; and greet as Angels greet.

So then we do anticipate
Our after-fate,
And are alive in the skies,
If thus our lips and eyes
Can speak like spirits unconfined
In Heaven, their earthy bodies left behind.

Richard Lovelace [1618–1658]

SONG TO A FAIR YOUNG LADY, GOING OUT OF THE TOWN IN THE SPRING

Ask not the cause why sullen Spring
So long delays her flowers to bear;
Why warbling birds forget to sing,
And winter storms invert the year:
Chloris is gone; and fate provides
To make it Spring where she resides.

Chloris is gone, the cruel fair;
She cast not back a pitying eye:
But left her lover in despair
To sigh, to languish, and to die:
Ah! how can those fair eyes endure
To give the wounds they will not cure?

Great God of Love, why hast thou made
A face that can all hearts command,
That all religions can invade,
And change the laws of every land?
Where thou hadst placed such power before,
Thou shouldst have made her mercy more.

When Chloris to the temple comes,
Adoring crowds before her fall;
She can restore the dead from tombs
And every life but mine recall,
I only am by Love designed
To be the victim for mankind.

John Dryden [1631–1700]

SONG

WRITTEN AT SEA, IN THE FIRST DUTCH WAR (1665), THE NIGHT BEFORE AN ENGAGEMENT

To all you ladies now at land
  We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
  How hard it is to write:
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you—
    With a fa, la, la, la, la.

For though the Muses should prove kind,
  And fill our empty brain,
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind
  To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,
Roll up and down our ships at sea—
    With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Then if we write not by each post,
  Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost
  By Dutchmen or by wind:
Our tears we'll send a speedier way,
The tide shall bring them twice a day—
    With a fa, la, la, la, la.

The King with wonder and surprise
  Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
  Than e'er they did of old:
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs—
    With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Should foggy Opdam chance to know
  Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
  And quit their fort at Goree:

For what resistance can they find
From men who've left their hearts behind?—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind;
Let Dutchmen vapor, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find:
'Tis then no matter how things go,
Or who's our friend, or who's our foe—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

To pass our tedious hours away
We throw a merry main,
Or else at serious ombre play:
But why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue?
We were undone when we left you—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

But now our fears tempestuous grow
And cast our hopes away;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play:
Perhaps permit some happier man
To kiss your hand, or flirt your fan—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

When any mournful tune you hear,
That dies in every note
As if it sighed with each man's care
For being so remote,
Think then how often love we've made
To you, when all those tunes were played—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

In justice you cannot refuse
To think of our distress,
When we for hopes of honor lose
Our certain happiness:

All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

And now we've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears,
In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity for our tears:
Let's hear of no inconstancy—
We have too much of that at sea—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Charles Sackville [1638–1706]

SONG

In vain you tell your parting lover,
You wish fair winds may waft him over.
Alas! what winds can happy prove
That bear me far from what I love?
Alas! what dangers on the main
Can equal those that I sustain
From slighted vows, and cold disdain?

Be gentle, and in pity choose
To wish the wildest tempests loose:
That, thrown again upon the coast,
Where first my shipwrecked heart was lost,
I may once more repeat my pain;
Once more in dying notes complain
Of slighted vows and cold disdain.

Matthew Prior [1664–1721]

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

All in the Downs the fleet was moored,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard;
"O! where shall I my true-love find?
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true
If my sweet William sails among the crew."

William, who high upon the yard
Rocked with the billow to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard
He sighed, and cast his eyes below:
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And, quick as lightning, on the deck he stands.

So the sweet lark, high poised in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast
If chance his mate's shrill call he hear,
And drops at once into her nest:—
The noblest captain in the British fleet
Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

"O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain;
Let me kiss off that falling tear;
We only part to meet again.
Change as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

"Believe not what the landmen say
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:
They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,
In every port a mistress find:
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For Thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

"If to far India's coast we sail,
Thy eyes are seen in diamonds bright,
Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory so white.
Thus every beauteous object that I view
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

"Though battle call me from thy arms
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet, safe from harms,
William shall to his Dear return.
Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye."

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
The sails their swelling bosom spread,
No longer must she stay aboard;
They kissed, she sighed, he hung his head.
Her lessening boat unwilling rows to land;
"Adieu!" she cries; and waved her lily hand.

John Gay [1685–1732]

IRISH MOLLY O

Oh! who is that poor foreigner that lately came to town,
And like a ghost that cannot rest still wanders up and down?
A poor, unhappy Scottish youth;—if more you wish to know,
His heart is breaking all for love of Irish Molly O!

She's modest, mild, and beautiful, the fairest I have known—
The primrose of Ireland—all blooming here alone—
The primrose of Ireland, for wheresoe'er I go,
The only one entices me is Irish Molly O!

When Molly's father heard of it, a solemn oath he swore,
That if she'd wed a foreigner he'd never see her more.
He sent for young MacDonald and he plainly told him so—
"I'll never give to such as you my Irish Molly O!"

MacDonald heard the heavy news, and grievously did say—
"Farewell, my lovely Molly, since I'm banished far away,
A poor forlorn pilgrim I must wander to and fro,
And all for the sake of my Irish Molly O!

"There is a rose in Ireland, I thought it would be mine:
But now that she is lost to me, I must for ever pine,
Till death shall come to comfort me, for to the grave I'll go,
And all for the sake of my Irish Molly O!

"And now that I am dying, this one request I crave,
To place a marble tombstone above my humble grave!
And on the stone these simple words I'd have engraven so—
" ' MacDonald lost his life for love of Irish Molly O!' "

Unknown

SONG

At setting day and rising morn,
Wi' soul that still shall love thee,
I'll ask o' Heaven thy safe return,
Wi' a' that can improve thee.
I'll visit aft the birken bush
Where first thou kindly tauld me
Sweet tales o' love, and hid my blush,
Whilst round thou didst infauld me.

To a' our haunts I will repair,
By greenwood, shaw, or fountain,
Or where the summer day I'd share
Wi' thee upon yon mountain:
There will I tell the trees an' flooers,
From thoughts unfeigned an' tender;
By vows you're mine, by love is yours
A heart that cannot wander.

Allan Ramsay [1686–1758]

LOCHABER NO MORE

Farewell to Lochaber, an' farewell my Jean,
Where heartsome wi' thee I hae mony day been;
For Lochaber no more, Lochaber no more!
We'll maybe return to Lochaber no more!
These tears that I shed, they are a' for my dear,
An' no for the dangers attending on weir,
Though borne on rough seas to a far bloody shore,
Maybe to return to Lochaber no more.

Though hurricanes rise, an' rise every wind,
They'll ne'er mak' a tempest like that in my mind;
Though loudest o' thunders on louder waves roar,
That's naething like leaving my love on the shore.
To leave thee behind me my heart is sair pained;
By ease that's inglorious no fame can be gained;

An' beauty an' love's the reward o' the brave,
An' I must deserve it before I can crave.

Then glory, my Jeanie, maun plead my excuse;
Since honor commands me, how can I refuse?
Without it I ne'er can have merit for thee,
An' without thy favor I'd better not be,
I gae, then, my lass, to win honor an' fame,
An' if I should luck to come gloriously hame,
I'll bring a heart to thee wi' love running o'er,
An' then I'll leave thee an' Lochaber no more.

Allan Ramsay [1686–1758]

WILLIE AND HELEN

"Wharefore sou'd ye talk o' love,
Unless it be to pain us?
Wharefore sou'd ye talk o' love
Whan ye say the sea maun twain us?"

"It's no because my love is light,
Nor for your angry deddy;
It's a' to buy ye pearlins bright,
An' to busk ye like a leddy."

"O Willy, I can caird an' spin,
Sae ne'er can want for cleedin';
An' gin I hae my Willy's heart,
I hae a' the pearls I'm heedin'.

"Will it be time to praise this cheek
Whan years an' tears hae blenched it?
Will it be time to talk o' love
Whan cauld an' care hae quenched it?"

He's laid ae han' about her waist—
The ither's held to heaven;
An' his luik was like the luik o' man
Wha's heart in twa is riven.

Hew Ainslie [1792–1878]

ABSENCE

With leaden foot Time creeps along
While Delia is away:
With her, nor plaintive was the song,
Nor tedious was the day.

Ah, envious Power! reverse my doom;
Now double thy career,
Strain every nerve, stretch every plume,
And rest them when she's here!

Richard Jago [1715–1781]

"MY MOTHER BIDS ME BIND MY HAIR"

My mother bids me bind my hair
With bands of rosy hue;
Tie up my sleeves with ribbons rare,
And lace my bodice blue!

"For why," she cries, "sit still and weep,
While others dance and play?"
Alas! I scarce can go, or creep,
While Lubin is away!

'Tis sad to think the days are gone
When those we love were near!
I sit upon this mossy stone,
And sigh when none can hear:

And while I spin my flaxen thread,
And sing my simple lay,
The village seems asleep, or dead,
Now Lubin is away!

Anne Hunter [1742–1821]

"BLOW HIGH! BLOW LOW!"

Blow high, blow low! let tempest tear
The mainmast by the board!
My heart (with thoughts of thee, my dear!
And love well stored)

Shall brave all danger, scorn all fear,
The roaring wind, the raging sea,
In hopes, on shore,
To be once more
Safe moored with thee.

Aloft, while mountain-high we go,
The whistling winds that scud along,
And the surge roaring from below,
Shall my signal be
To think on thee.
And this shall be my Song,
Blow high, blow low! let tempest tear. . . .

And on that night (when all the crew
The memory of their former lives,
O'er flowing cans of flip renew,
And drink their sweethearts and their wives),
I'll heave a sigh,
And think of thee.
And, as the ship toils through the sea,
The burden of my Song shall be,
Blow high, blow low! let tempest tear. . . .

Charles Dibdin [1745–1814]

THE SILLER CROUN

"And ye sall walk in silk attire,
And siller ha'e to spare,
Gin ye'll consent to be his bride,
Nor think o' Donald mair."

Oh, wha wad buy a silken goun
Wi' a puir broken heart?
Or what's to me a siller croun,
Gin' frae my luve I part?

The mind wha's every wish is pure
Far dearer is to me;
And ere I'm forced to break my faith,
I'll lay me doun and dee.

For I ha'e pledged my virgin troth
Brave Donald's fate to share;
And he has gi'en to me his heart,
Wi' a' its virtues rare.

His gentle manners wan my heart,
He gratefu' took the gift;
Could I but think to tak' it back,
It wad be waur than theft.

For langest life can ne'er repay
The love he bears to me;
And ere I'm forced to break my troth
I'll lay me doun and dee.

Susanna Blamire [1747–1794]

"MY NANNIE'S AWA'"

Now in her green mantle blithe Nature arrays,
An' listens the lambkins that bleat o'er the braes,
While birds warble welcome in ilka green shaw;
But to me it's delightless—my Nannie's awa'.

The snaw-drap an' primrose our woodlands adorn,
An' violets bathe in the weet o' the morn;
They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
They mind me o' Nannie—an' Nannie's awa'.

Thou laverock that springs frae the dews of the lawn,
The shepherd to warn o' the gray-breaking dawn,
An' thou mellow mavis that hails the night-fa',
Give over for pity—my Nannie's awa'.

Come, autumn, sae pensive, in yellow an' gray,
An' soothe me wi' tidings o' Nature's decay;
The dark, dreary winter, an' wild-driving snaw
Alane can delight me—now Nannie's awa'.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"AE FOND KISS"

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

Who shall say that Fortune grieves him
While the star of Hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy;
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever.

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met, or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"THE DAY RETURNS"

The day returns, my bosom burns,
The blissful day we twa did meet;
Though winter wild in tempest toiled,
Ne'er summer sun was half sae sweet.

Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
And crosses o'er the sultry line,—
Than kingly robes, and crowns and globes,
Heaven gave me more,—it made thee mine.

While day and night can bring delight,
Or Nature aught of pleasure give,—
While joys above my mind can move,
For thee, and thee alone, I live.
When that grim foe of life below
Comes in between to make us part,
The iron hand that breaks our band,
It breaks my bliss,—it breaks my heart.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

MY BONNIE MARY

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie,
That I may drink, before I go,
A service to my bonnie lassie.
The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,
Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry,
The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are rankèd ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody;
But it's no the roar o' sea or shore
Wad mak me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar—
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

A RED, RED ROSE

O, my luve's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O, my luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair thou art, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only luve!
And fare-thee-weel a while!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

I LOVE MY JEAN

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There's wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And monie a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings
But minds me o' my Jean.

O blaw ye westlin winds, blaw saft
Amang the leafy trees;
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees;

And bring the lassie back to me
That's aye sae neat and clean;
Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows amang the knowes
Hae passed atween us twa!
How fond to meet, how wae to part
That night she gaed awa!
The Powers aboon can only ken
To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be sae dear to me
As my sweet lovely Jean!

The first two stanzas by Robert Burns [1759–1796]
The last two by John Hamilton [1761–1814]

THE ROVER'S ADIEU

From "Rokeby"

"A WEARY lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine.
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green—
No more of me ye knew,
My Love!
No more of me ye knew.

"This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow
Ere we two meet again."
—He turned his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
Said "Adieu for evermore,
My Love!
And adieu for evermore."

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

"LOUDOUN'S BONNIE WOODS AND BRAES"

"Loudoun's bonnie woods and braes,
I maun lea' them a', lassie;
Wha can thole when Britain's faes
Wad gi'e Britons law, lassie?
Wha wad shun the field o' danger?
Wha frae fame wad live a stranger?
Now when freedom bids avenge her,
Wha wad shun her ca', lassie?
Loudoun's bonnie woods and braes
Hae seen our happy bridal days,
And gentle Hope shall soothe thy waes
When I am far awa', lassie."

"Hark! the swelling bugle sings,
Yielding joy to thee, laddie,
But the dolefu' bugle brings
Waefu' thoughts to me, laddie.
Lanely I maun climb the mountain,
Lanely stray beside the fountain,
Still the weary moments countin',
Far frae love and thee, laddie.
O'er the gory fields of war,
When Vengeance drives his crimson car,
Thou'lt maybe fa', frae me afar,
And nane to close thy e'e, laddie."

"O! resume thy wonted smile!
O! suppress thy fears, lassie!
Glorious honor crowns the toil
That the soldier shares, lassie;
Heaven will shield thy faithful lover
Till the vengeful strife is over;
Then we'll meet nae mair to sever;
Till the day we dee, lassie.
'Midst our bonnie woods and braes
We'll spend our peaceful, happy days,
As blithe's yon lightsome lamb that plays
On Loudoun's flowery lea, lassie."

Robert Tannahill [1774–1810]

"FARE THEE WELL"

FARE thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well:*
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee,—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own its life retaineth;—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is pressed,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had blessed!

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou nevermore may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Whither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee,—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 'tis done,—all words are idle,—
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well!—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Seared in heart, and lone, and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

"MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART"

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!

Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
Wooed by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

"WHEN WE TWO PARTED"

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted,
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this!

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow;
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.

Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame:
I hear thy name spoken
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee
Who knew thee too well:
Long, long shall I rue thee
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met:
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

"GO, FORGET ME"

Go, forget me! Why should sorrow
O'er that brow a shadow fling?
Go, forget me,—and to-morrow
Brightly smile and sweetly sing.
Smile—though I shall not be near thee.
Sing—though I shall never hear thee.
May thy soul with pleasure shine,
Lasting as the gloom of mine.

Like the sun, thy presence glowing
Clothes the meanest things in light;
And when thou, like him, art going,
Loveliest objects fade in night.
All things looked so bright about thee,
That they nothing seem without thee;

By that pure and lucid mind
Earthly things are too refined.

Go, thou vision, wildly gleaming,
Softly on my soul that fell;
Go, for me no longer beaming—
Hope and Beauty, fare ye well!
Go, and all that once delighted
Take—and leave me, all benighted,
Glory's burning, generous swell,
Fancy, and the poet's shell.

Charles Wolfe [1791–1823]

LAST NIGHT

I SAT with one I love last night,
She sang to me an olden strain;
In former times it woke delight,
Last night—but pain.

Last night we saw the stars arise,
But clouds soon dimmed the ether blue:
And when we sought each other's eyes
Tears dimmed them too!

We paced along our favorite walk,
But paced in silence broken-hearted:
Of old we used to smile and talk;
Last night—we parted.

George Darley [1795–1846]

ADIEU

LET time and chance combine, combine,
Let time and chance combine;
The fairest love from heaven above,
That love of yours was mine,
My dear,
That love of yours was mine.

The past is fled and gone, and gone,
  The past is fled and gone;
If naught but pain to me remain,
  I'll fare in memory on,
    My dear,
  I'll fare in memory on.

The saddest tears must fall, must fall,
  The saddest tears must fall;
In weal or woe, in this world below,
  I love you ever and all,
    My dear,
  I love you ever and all.

A long road full of pain, of pain,
  A long road full of pain;
One soul, one heart, sworn ne'er to part,—
  We ne'er can meet again,
    My dear,
  We ne'er can meet again.

Hard fate will not allow, allow,
  Hard fate will not allow;
We blessed were as the angels are,—
  Adieu forever now,
    My dear,
  Adieu forever now.

Thomas Carlyle [1795–1881]

JEANIE MORRISON

I'VE wandered east, I've wandered west,
  Through mony a weary way;
But never, never can forget
  The luve o' life's young day!
The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en,
  May weel be black gin Yule;
But blacker fa' awaits the heart
  Where first fond luve grows cule.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
The thochts o' bygane years
Still fling their shadows owre my path,
And blind my een wi' tears:
They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears,
And sair and sick I pine,
As Memory idly summons up
The blithe blinks o' langsyne.

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
'Twas then we twa did part;
Sweet time, sad time!—twa bairns at schule,
Twa bairns, and but ae heart!
'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,
To leir ilk ither lear;
And tones, and looks, and smiles were shed,
Remembered evermair.

I wonder, Jeanie, aften yet,
When sitting on that bink,
Cheek touchin' cheek, loof locked in loof,
What our wee heads could think!
When baith bent doun owre ae braid page,
Wi' ae buik on our knee,
Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
My lesson was in thee.

Oh, mind ye how we hung our heads,
How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
Whene'er the schule-weans, laughin', said,
We cleek'd thegither hame?
And mind ye o' the Saturdays
(The schule then skail't at noon),
When we ran aff to speel the braes—
The broomy braes o' June?

My head rins round and round about,
My heart flows like a sea,
As, ane by ane, the thochts rush back
O' schule-time and o' thee.

Oh, mornin' life! Oh, mornin' luve!
Oh, lichtsome days and lang,
When hinnied hopes around our hearts,
Like simmer blossoms, sprang!

Oh, mind ye, luve, how aft we left
The deavin' dinsome toun,
To wander by the green burnside,
And hear its waters croon?
The simmer leaves hung owre our heads,
The flowers burst round our feet,
And in the gloamin' o' the wud
The throssil whusslit sweet.

The throssil whusslit in the wud,
The burn sung to the trees,
And we, with Nature's heart in tune,
Concerted harmonies;
And on the knowe abune the burn
For hours thegither sat
In the silentness o' joy, till baith
Wi' very gladness grat.

Ay, ay, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Tears trinkled doun your cheek,
Like dew-beads on a rose, yet nane
Had ony power to speak!
That was a time, a blessèd time,
When hearts were fresh and young,
When freely gushed all feelings forth,
Unsyllabled—unsung!

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
Gin I hae been to thee
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts
As ye hae been to me?
Oh! tell me gin their music fills
Thine ear as it does mine;
Oh! say gin e'er your heart grows great
Wi' dreamings o' langsyne?

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
  I've borne a weary lot;
But in my wanderings, far or near,
  Ye never were forgot.
The fount that first burst frae this heart,
  Still travels on its way;
And channels deeper as it rins
  The luve o' life's young day.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
  Since we were sindered young,
I've never seen your face, nor heard
  The music o' your tongue;
But I could hug all wretchedness,
  And happy could I dee,
Did I but ken your heart still dreamed
  O' bygane days and me!

William Motherwell [1797–1835]

THE SEA-LANDS

Would I were on the sea-lands,
  Where winds know how to sting;
And in the rocks at midnight
  The lost long murmurs sing.

Would I were with my first love
  To hear the rush and roar
Of spume below the doorstep
  And winds upon the door.

My first love was a fair girl
  With ways forever new;
And hair a sunlight yellow,
  And eyes a morning blue.

The roses, have they tarried
  Or are they dun and frayed?

If we had stayed together,
  Would love, indeed, have stayed?

Ah, years are filled with learning,
  And days are leaves of change!
And I have met so many
  I knew . . . and found them strange.

But on the sea-lands tumbled
  By winds that sting and blind,
The nights we watched, so silent,
  Come back, come back to mind . . .

I mind about my first love,
  And hear the rush and roar
Of spume below the doorstep
  And winds upon the door.

Orrick Johns [1887–

FAIR INES

O saw ye not fair Ines?
  She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
  And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her,
  The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
  And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
  Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
  And stars unrivaled bright;
And blessèd will the lover be
  That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
  I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
And whispered thee so near!
Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore:
It would have been a beauteous dream,—
If it had been no more!

Alas, alas! fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, farewell,
To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines!
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blessed one lover's heart
Has broken many more!

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

A VALEDICTION

God be with thee, my belovèd,—God be with thee!
Else alone thou goest forth,
Thy face unto the north,

Moor and pleasance all around thee and beneath thee
Looking equal in one snow;
While I, who try to reach thee,
Vainly follow, vainly follow
With the farewell and the hollo,
And cannot reach thee so.
Alas, I can but teach thee!
God be with thee, my belovèd,—God be with thee!

Can I teach thee, my belovèd,—can I teach thee?
If I said, "Go left or right,"
The counsel would be light,
The wisdom, poor of all that could enrich thee;
My right would show like left;
My raising would depress thee,
My choice of light would blind thee,
Of way—would leave behind thee,
Of end—would leave bereft.
Alas, I can but bless thee!
May God teach thee, my belovèd,—may God teach thee!

Can I bless thee, my belovèd,—can I bless thee?
What blessing word can I
From mine own tears keep dry?
What flowers grow in my field wherewith to dress thee?
My good reverts to ill;
My calmnesses would move thee,
My softnesses would prick thee,
My bindings up would break thee,
My crownings curse and kill.
Alas, I can but love thee!
May God bless thee, my belovèd,—may God bless thee!

Can I love thee, my belovèd,—can I love thee?
And is *this* like love, to stand
With no help in my hand,
When strong as death I fain would watch above thee?
My love-kiss can deny
No tear that falls beneath it;

Mine oath of love can swear thee
From no ill that comes near thee,
And thou diest while I breathe it,
And *I*—I can but die!
May God love thee, my belovèd,—may God love thee!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

FAREWELL

Thou goest; to what distant place
Wilt thou thy sunlight carry?
I stay with cold and clouded face:
How long am I to tarry?
Where'er thou goest, morn will be;
Thou leavest night and gloom to me.

The night and gloom I can but take;
I do not grudge thy splendor:
Bid souls of eager men awake;
Be kind and bright and tender.
Give day to other worlds; for me
It must suffice to dream of thee.

John Addington Symonds [1840–1893]

"I DO NOT LOVE THEE"

I do not love thee!—no! I do not love thee!
And yet when thou art absent I am sad;
And envy even the bright blue sky above thee,
Whose quiet stars may see thee and be glad.

I do not love thee!—yet, I know not why,
Whate'er thou dost seems still well done, to me:
And often in my solitude I sigh
That those I do love are not more like thee!

I do not love thee!—yet, when thou art gone,
I hate the sound (though those who speak be near)
Which breaks the lingering echo of the tone
Thy voice of music leaves upon my ear.

I do not love thee!—yet thy speaking eyes,
With their deep, bright, and most expressive blue,
Between me and the midnight heaven arise,
Oftener than any eyes I ever knew.

I know I do not love thee!—yet, alas!
Others will scarcely trust my candid heart;
And oft I catch them smiling as they pass,
Because they see me gazing where thou art.

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808–1870]

THE PALM-TREE AND THE PINE

Beneath an Indian palm a girl
Of other blood reposes,
Her cheek is clear and pale as pearl,
Amid that wild of roses.

Beside a northern pine a boy
Is leaning fancy-bound,
Nor listens where with noisy joy
Awaits the impatient hound.

Cool grows the sick and feverish calm,—
Relaxed the frosty twine,—
The pine-tree dreameth of the palm,
The palm-tree of the pine.

As soon shall nature interlace
Those dimly-visioned boughs,
As these young lovers face to face
Renew their early vows!

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809–1885]

"O SWALLOW, SWALLOW, FLYING SOUTH"

From "The Princess"

O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her what I tell to thee.

O, tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

O, were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died!

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

O, tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown;
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

O, tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE FLOWER'S NAME

Here's the garden she walked across,
Arm in my arm, such a short while since:
Hark, now I push its wicket, the moss
Hinders the hinges and makes them wince!
She must have reached this shrub ere she turned,
As back with that murmur the wicket swung;
For she laid the poor snail, my chance foot spurned,
To feed and forget it the leaves among.

Down this side of the gravel-walk
She went while her robe's edge brushed the box:
And here she paused in her gracious talk
To point me a moth on the milk-white phlox.
Roses, ranged in valiant row,
I will never think that she passed you by!
She loves you, noble roses, I know;
But yonder see where the rock-plants lie!

This flower she stopped at, finger on lip,
Stooped over, in doubt, as settling its claim;
Till she gave me, with pride to make no slip,
Its soft meandering Spanish name:
What a name! Was it love or praise?
Speech half-asleep, or song half-awake?
I must learn Spanish, one of these days,
Only for that slow sweet name's sake.

Roses, if I live and do well,
I may bring her, one of these days,
To fix you fast with as fine a spell,
Fit you each with his Spanish phrase:
But do not detain me now; for she lingers
There, like sunshine over the ground,
And ever I see her soft white fingers
Searching after the bud she found.

Flower, you Spaniard, look that you grow not,
Stay as you are and be loved forever!
Bud, if I kiss you, 'tis that you blow not,
Mind, the shut pink mouth opens never!
For while it pouts, her fingers wrestle,
Twinkling the audacious leaves between,
Till round they turn, and down they nestle—
Is not the dear mark still to be seen?

Where I find her not, beauties vanish;
Whither I follow her, beauties flee;
Is there no method to tell her in Spanish
June's twice June since she breathed it with me?

Come, bud, show me the least of her traces,
Treasure my lady's lightest footfall!
—Ah, you may flout and turn up your faces,—
Roses, you are not so fair after all!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

TO MARGUERITE

YES: in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone.*
The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour;

O then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent!
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent.
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
O might our marges meet again!

Who ordered that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire?—
A God, a God their severance ruled;
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

SEPARATION

STOP!—not to me, at this bitter departing,
Speak of the sure consolations of time!
Fresh be the wound, still-renewed be its smarting,
So but thy image endure in its prime.

But, if the steadfast commandment of Nature
  Wills that remembrance should always decay—
If the loved form and the deep-cherished feature
  Must, when unseen, from the soul fade away—

Me let no half-effaced memories cumber!
  Fled, fled at once, be all vestige of thee!
Deep be the darkness and still be the slumber—
  Dead be the past and its phantoms to me!

Then, when we meet, and thy look strays towards me,
  Scanning my face and the changes wrought there:
Who, let me say, *is this stranger regards me,*
  With the gray eyes, and the lovely brown hair?

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

LONGING

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Come, as thou cam'st a thousand times,
A messenger from radiant climes,
And smile on thy new world, and be
As kind to others as to me!

Or, as thou never cam'st in sooth,
Come now, and let me dream it truth;
And part my hair, and kiss my brow,
And say: *My love! why sufferest thou?*

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

DIVIDED

I

An empty sky, a world of heather,
Purple of foxglove, yellow of broom;
We two among them wading together,
Shaking out honey, treading perfume.

Crowds of bees are giddy with clover,
Crowds of grasshoppers skip at our feet,
Crowds of larks at their matins hang over,
Thanking the Lord for a life so sweet.

Flusheth the rise with her purple favor,
Gloweth the cleft with her golden ring,
'Twixt the two brown butterflies waver,
Lightly settle, and sleepily swing.

We two walk till the purple dieth,
And short dry grass under foot is brown,
But one little streak at a distance lieth
Green like a ribbon to prank the down.

II

Over the grass we stepped unto it,
And God He knoweth how blithe we were!
Never a voice to bid us eschew it:
Hey the green ribbon that showed so fair!

Hey the green ribbon! we kneeled beside it,
We parted the grasses dewy and sheen:
Drop over drop there filtered and slided
A tiny bright beck that trickled between.

Tinkle, tinkle, sweetly it sung to us,
Light was our talk as of fairy bells;—
Fairy wedding-bells faintly rung to us
Down in their fortunate parallels.

Hand in hand, while the sun peered over,
We lapped the grass on that youngling spring;
Swept back its rushes, smoothed its clover,
And said, "Let us follow it westering."

III

A dappled sky, a world of meadows,
Circling above us the black rooks fly
Forward, backward; lo their dark shadows
Flit on the blossoming tapestry;—

Flit on the beck; for her long grass parteth
As hair from a maid's bright eyes blown back:
And, lo, the sun like a lover darteth
His flattering smile on her wayward track.

Sing on! we sing in the glorious weather
Till one steps over the tiny strand,
So narrow, in sooth, that still together
On either brink we go hand in hand.

The beck grows wider, the hands must sever,
On either margin, our songs all done,
We move apart, while she singeth ever,
Taking the course of the stooping sun.

He prays, "Come over,"—I may not follow;
I cry, "Return,"—but he cannot come:
We speak, we laugh, but with voices hollow;
Our hands are hanging, our hearts are numb.

IV

A breathing sigh, a sigh for answer,
A little talking of outward things:
The careless beck is a merry dancer,
Keeping sweet time to the air she sings.

A little pain when the beck grows wider;
"Cross to me now; for her wavelets swell";
"I may not cross,"—and the voice beside her
Faintly reacheth, though heeded well.

No backward path; ah! no returning;
  No second crossing that ripple's flow:
"Come to me now, for the west is burning;
  Come ere it darkens."—"Ah, no! ah, no!"

Then cries of pain, and arms outreaching,—
  The beck grows wider and swift and deep:
Passionate words as of one beseeching:
  The loud beck drowns them: we walk, and weep.

V

A yellow moon in splendor drooping,
  A tired queen with her state oppressed,
Low by rushes and swordgrass stooping,
  Lies she soft on the waves at rest.

The desert heavens have felt her sadness;
  Her earth will weep her some dewy tears;
The wild beck ends her tune of gladness,
  And goeth stilly as soul that fears.

We two walk on in our grassy places
  On either marge of the moonlit flood,
With the moon's own sadness in our faces,
  Where joy is withered, blossom and bud.

VI

A shady freshness, chafers whirring;
  A little piping of leaf-hid birds;
A flutter of wings, a fitful stirring;
  A cloud to the eastward snowy as curds.

Bare grassy slopes, where kids are tethered,
  Round valleys like nests all ferny-lined,
Round hills, with fluttering tree-tops feathered,
  Swell high in their freckled robes behind.

A rose-flush tender, a thrill, a quiver,
  When golden gleams to the tree-tops glide;
A flashing edge for the milk-white river,
  The beck, a river—with still sleek tide.

Broad and white, and polished as silver,
On she goes under fruit-laden trees:
Sunk in leafage cooeth the culver,
And 'plaineth of love's disloyalties.

Glitters the dew, and shines the river,
Up comes the lily and dries her bell;
But two are walking apart forever,
And wave their hands for a mute farewell.

VII

A braver swell, a swifter sliding;
The river hasteth, her banks recede.
Wing-like sails on her bosom gliding
Bear down the lily, and drown the reed.

Stately prows are rising and bowing
(Shouts of mariners winnow the air),
And level sands for banks endowing
The tiny green ribbon that showed so fair.

While, O my heart! as white sails shiver,
And clouds are passing, and banks stretch wide,
How hard to follow, with lips that quiver,
That moving speck on the far-off side.

Farther, farther; I see it, know it—
My eyes brim over, it melts away:
Only my heart to my heart shall show it
As I walk desolate day by day.

VIII

And yet I know past all doubting, truly,—
A knowledge greater than grief can dim,—
I know, as he loved, he will love me duly,—
Yea, better, e'en better than I love him.

And as I walk by the vast calm river,
The awful river so dread to see,
I say, "Thy breadth and thy depth forever
Are bridged by his thoughts that cross to me."

Jean Ingelow [1820–1897]

MY PLAYMATE

The pines were dark on Ramoth hill,
Their song was soft and low;
The blossoms in the sweet May wind
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,
The orchard birds sang clear;
The sweetest and the saddest day
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,
My playmate left her home,
And took with her the laughing spring,
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,
She laid her hand in mine:
What more could ask the bashful boy
Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May:
The constant years told o'er
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,
But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round
Of uneventful years;
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year
Her summer roses blow;
The dusky children of the sun
Before her come and go.

There haply with her jeweled hands
She smooths her silken gown,—
No more the homespun lap wherein
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,
The brown nuts on the hill,
And still the May-day flowers make sweet
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,
The bird builds in the tree,
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill
The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,
And how the old time seems,—
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice:
Does she remember mine?
And what to her is now the boy
Who fed her father's kine?

What cares she that the orioles build
For other eyes than ours,—
That other laps with nuts are filled,
And other hands with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!
Our mossy seat is green,
Its fringing violets blossom yet,
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern
A sweeter memory blow;
And there in spring the veeries sing
The song of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood
Are moaning like the sea,—
The moaning of the sea of change
Between myself and thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

A FAREWELL

With all my will, but much against my heart,
We two now part.
My Very Dear,
Our solace is, the sad road lies so clear.
It needs no art,
With faint, averted feet
And many a tear,
In our opposèd paths to persevere.
Go thou to East, I West.
We will not say
There's any hope, it is so far away.
But, O, my Best,
When the one darling of our widowhead,
The nursling Grief
Is dead,
And no dews blur our eyes
To see the peach-bloom come in evening skies,
Perchance we may,
Where now this night is day,
And even through faith of still averted feet,
Making full circle of our banishment,
Amazèd meet;
The bitter journey to the bourne so sweet
Seasoning the termless feast of our content
With tears of recognition never dry.

Coventry Patmore [1823–1896]

DEPARTURE

It was not like your great and gracious ways!
Do you, that have naught other to lament,
Never, my Love, repent
Of how, that July afternoon,
You went,
With sudden, unintelligible phrase,
And frightened eye,
Upon your journey of so many days

Without a single kiss, or a good-bye?
I knew, indeed, that you were parting soon;
And so we sate, within the low sun's rays,
You whispering to me, for your voice was weak,
Your harrowing praise.
Well, it was well
To hear you such things speak,
And I could tell
What made your eyes a glowing gloom of love,
As a warm South-wind sombers a March grove.

And it was like your great and gracious ways
To turn your talk on daily things, my Dear,
Lifting the luminous, pathetic lash
To let the laughter flash,
Whilst I drew near,
Because you spoke so low that I could scarcely hear.
But all at once to leave me at the last,
More at the wonder than the loss aghast,
With huddled, unintelligible phrase,
And frightened eye,
And go your journey of all days
With not one kiss, or a good-bye,
And the only loveless look the look with which you passed:
'Twas all unlike your great and gracious ways.

Coventry Patmore [1823–1896]

A SONG OF PARTING

My dear, the time has come to say
  Farewell to London town,
Farewell to each familiar street,
  The room where we looked down
Upon the people going by,
  The river flowing fast:
The innumerable shine of lamps,
  The bridges and—our past.

Our past of London days and nights,
  When every night we dreamed

Of Love and Art and Happiness,
And every day it seemed
Ah! little room, you held my life,
In you I found my all;
A white hand on the mantelpiece,
A shadow on the wall.

My dear, what dinners we have had,
What cigarettes and wine
In faded corners of Soho,
Your fingers touching mine!
And now the time has come to say
Farewell to London town;
The prologue of our play is done,
So ring the curtain down.

There lies a crowded life ahead
In field and sleepy lane,
A fairer picture than we saw
Framed in our window-pane.
There'll be the stars on summer nights,
The white moon through the trees,
Moths, and the song of nightingales
To float along the breeze.

And in the morning we shall see
The swallows in the sun,
And hear the cuckoo on the hill
Welcome a day begun.
And life will open with the rose
For me, sweet, and for you,
And on our life and on the rose
How soft the falling dew!

So let us take this tranquil path,
But drop a parting tear
For town, whose greatest gift to us
Was to be lovers here.

H. C. Compton Mackenzie [1883–

SONG

From "The Earthly Paradise"

Fair is the night, and fair the day,
Now April is forgot of May,
Now into June May falls away:
Fair day! fair night! O give me back
The tide that all fair things did lack
Except my Love, except my Sweet!

Blow back, O wind! thou art not kind,
Though thou art sweet: thou hast no mind
Her hair about my Sweet to bind.
O flowery sward! though thou art bright,
I praise thee not for thy delight,—
Thou hast not kissed her silver feet.

Thou know'st her not, O rustling tree!
What dost thou then to shadow me,
Whose shade her breast did never see?
O flowers! in vain ye bow adown:
Ye have not felt her odorous gown
Brush past your heads my lips to meet.

Flow on, great river! thou mayst deem
That far away, a summer stream,
Thou saw'st her limbs amidst the gleam,
And kissed her foot, and kissed her knee:
Yet get thee swift unto the sea!
With naught of true thou wilt me greet.

And Thou that men call by my name!
O helpless One! hast thou no shame
That thou must even look the same
As while agone, as while agone
When Thou and She were left alone,
And hands and lips and tears did meet?

Grow weak and pine, lie down to die,
O body! in thy misery,

Because short time and sweet goes by.
O foolish heart! how weak thou art:
Break, break, because thou needs must part
From thine own Love, from thine own Sweet!

William Morris [1834–1896]

AT PARTING

For a day and a night Love sang to us, played with us,
Folded us round from the dark and the light;
And our hearts were fulfilled of the music he made with us,
Made with our hearts and our lips while he stayed with us,
Stayed in mid passage his pinions from flight
For a day and a night.

From his foes that kept watch with his wings had he hidden us,
Covered us close from the eyes that would smite,
From the feet that had tracked and the tongues that had chidden us
Sheltering in shade of the myrtles forbidden us
Spirit and flesh growing one with delight
For a day and a night.

But his wings will not rest and his feet will not stay for us:
Morning is here in the joy of its might;
With his breath has he sweetened a night and a day for us:
Now let him pass, and the myrtles make way for us;
Love can but last in us here at his height
For a day and a night.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

"IF SHE BUT KNEW"

If she but knew that I am weeping
Still for her sake,
That love and sorrow grow with keeping
Till they must break,
My heart that breaking will adore her,
Be hers and die;
If she might hear me once implore her,
Would she not sigh?

If she but knew that it would save me
Her voice to hear,
Saying she pitied me, forgave me,
Must she forbear?
If she were told that I was dying,
Would she be dumb?
Could she content herself with sighing?
Would she not come?

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844–1881]

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN

Kathleen Mavourneen! the gray dawn is breaking,
The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill;
The lark from her light wing the bright dew is shaking,—
Kathleen Mavourneen! what, slumbering still?
Oh, hast thou forgotten how soon we must sever?
Oh! hast thou forgotten this day we must part?
It may be for years, and it may be forever!
Oh, why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?
Oh! why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen?

Kathleen Mavourneen, awake from thy slumbers!
The blue mountains glow in the sun's golden light;
Ah, where is the spell that once hung on my numbers?
Arise in thy beauty, thou star of my night!
Mavourneen, Mavourneen, my sad tears are falling,
To think that from Erin and thee I must part!
It may be for years, and it may be forever!
Then why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?
Then why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen?

Louisa Macartney Crawford [18 –

ROBIN ADAIR

What's this dull town to me?
Robin's not near,—
He whom I wished to see,
Wished for to hear;

Where's all the joy and mirth
Made life a heaven on earth?
O, they're all fled with thee,
Robin Adair!

What made the assembly shine?
Robin Adair:
What made the ball so fine?
Robin was there:
What, when the play was o'er,
What made my heart so sore?
O, it was parting with
Robin Adair!

But now thou art far from me,
Robin Adair;
But now I never see
Robin Adair;
Yet him I loved so well
Still in my heart shall dwell;
O, I can ne'er forget
Robin Adair!

Welcome on shore again,
Robin Adair!
Welcome once more again,
Robin Adair!
I feel thy trembling hand;
Tears in thy eyelids stand,
To greet thy native land,
Robin Adair!

Long I ne'er saw thee, love,
Robin Adair;
Still I prayed for thee, love,
Robin Adair;
When thou wert far at sea,
Many made love to me,
But still I thought on thee,
Robin Adair!

Come to my heart again,
Robin Adair;
Never to part again,
Robin Adair;
And if thou still art true,
I will be constant too,
And will wed none but you,
Robin Adair!

Caroline Keppel [1735– ?]

"IF YOU WERE HERE"

A SONG IN WINTER

O Love, if you were here
This dreary, weary day,—
If your lips, warm and dear,
Found some sweet word to say,—
Then hardly would seem drear
These skies of wintry gray.

But you are far away,—
How far from me, my dear!
What cheer can warm the day?
My heart is chill with fear,
Pierced through with swift dismay;
A thought has turned Life sere:

If you, from far away,
Should come not back, my dear;
If I no more might lay
My hand on yours, nor hear
That voice, now sad, now gay,
Caress my listening ear;

If you, from far away,
Should come no more, my dear,—
Then with what dire dismay
Year joined to hostile year
Would frown, if I should stay
Where memories mock and jeer!

But I would come away
To dwell with you, my dear;
Through unknown worlds to stray,—
Or sleep; nor hope, nor fear,
Nor dream beneath the clay
Of all our days that were.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850–1887]

"COME TO ME, DEAREST"

Come to me, dearest, I'm lonely without thee;
Daytime and night-time, I'm thinking about thee;
Night-time and daytime, in dreams I behold thee;
Unwelcome the waking which ceases to fold thee.
Come to me, darling, my sorrows to lighten,
Come in thy beauty to bless and to brighten;
Come in thy womanhood, meekly and lowly,
Come in thy lovingness, queenly and holy.

Swallows will flit round the desolate ruin,
Telling of spring and its joyous renewing;
And thoughts of thy love and its manifold treasure,
Are circling my heart with a promise of pleasure.
O Spring of my spirit, O May of my bosom,
Shine out on my soul, till it bourgeon and blossom;
The waste of my life has a rose-root within it,
And thy fondness alone to the sunshine can win it.

Figure that moves like a song through the even;
Features lit up by a reflex of heaven;
Eyes like the skies of poor Erin, our mother,
Where shadow and sunshine are chasing each other;
Smiles coming seldom, but childlike and simple,
Planting in each rosy cheek a sweet dimple;—
O, thanks to the Saviour, that even thy seeming
Is left to the exile to brighten his dreaming.

You have been glad when you knew I was gladdened;
Dear, are you sad now to hear I am saddened?

Our hearts ever answer in tune and in time, love,
As octave to octave, and rhyme unto rhyme, love:
I cannot weep but your tears will be flowing,
You cannot smile but my cheek will be glowing;
I would not die without you at my side, love,
You will not linger when I shall have died, love.

Come to me, dear, ere I die of my sorrow,
Rise on my gloom like the sun of to-morrow;
Strong, swift, and fond are the words which I speak, love,
With a song on your lip and a smile on your cheek, love.
Come, for my heart in your absence is weary,—
Haste, for my spirit is sickened and dreary,—
Come to my arms which alone should caress thee,
Come to the heart which is throbbing to press thee!

Joseph Brenan [1829–1857]

SONG

'Tis said that absence conquers love!
But, oh! believe it not;
I've tried, alas! its power to prove,
But thou art not forgot.
Lady, though fate has bid us part,
Yet still thou art as dear,
As fixed in this devoted heart,
As when I clasped thee here.

I plunge into the busy crowd,
And smile to hear thy name;
And yet, as if I thought aloud,
They know me still the same;
And when the wine-cup passes round,
I toast some other fair,—
But when I ask my heart the sound,
Thy name is echoed there.

And when some other name I learn,
And try to whisper love,
Still will my heart to thee return
Like the returning dove.

In vain! I never can forget,
And would not be forgot;
For I must bear the same regret,
Whate'er may be my lot.

E'en as the wounded bird will seek
Its favorite bower to die,
So, lady! I would hear thee speak,
And yield my parting sigh.
'Tis said that absence conquers love!
But, oh! believe it not;
I've tried, alas! its power to prove,
But thou art not forgot.

Frederick William Thomas [1811–1864]

PARTING

Too fair, I may not call thee mine:
Too dear, I may not see
Those eyes with bridal beacons shine;
Yet, Darling, keep for me—
Empty and hushed, and safe apart,—
One little corner of thy heart.

Thou wilt be happy, dear! and bless
Thee: happy mayst thou be.
I would not make thy pleasure less;
Yet, Darling, keep for me—
My life to light, my lot to leaven,—
One little corner of thy Heaven.

Good-by, dear heart! I go to dwell
A weary way from thee;
Our first kiss is our last farewell;
Yet, Darling, keep for me—
Who wander outside in the night,—
One little corner of thy light.

Gerald Massey [1828–1907]

THE PARTING HOUR

Not yet, dear love, not yet: the sun is high;
You said last night, "At sunset I will go."
Come to the garden, where when blossoms die
No word is spoken; it is better so:
Ah! bitter word "Farewell."

Hark! how the birds sing sunny songs of spring!
Soon they will build, and work will silence them;
So we grow less light-hearted as years bring
Life's grave responsibilities—and then
The bitter word "Farewell."

The violets fret to fragrance 'neath your feet,
Heaven's gold sunlight dreams aslant your hair:
No flower for me! your mouth is far more sweet.
O, let my lips forget, while lingering there,
Love's bitter word "Farewell."

Sunset already! have we sat so long?
The parting hour, and so much left unsaid!
The garden has grown silent—void of song,
Our sorrow shakes us with a sudden dread!
Ah! bitter word "Farewell."

Olive Custance [1874–

A SONG OF AUTUMN

All through the golden weather
Until the autumn fell,
Our lives went by together
So wildly and so well.

But autumn's wind uncloses
The heart of all your flowers;
I think, as with the roses,
So hath it been with ours.

Like some divided river
Your ways and mine will be,
To drift apart for ever,
For ever till the sea.

And yet for one word spoken,
One whisper of regret,
The dream had not been broken,
And love were with us yet.

Rennell Rodd [1858–

THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME

The dames of France are fond and free,
And Flemish lips are willing,
And soft the maids of Italy,
And Spanish eyes are thrilling;
Still, though I bask beneath their smile,
Their charms fail to bind me,
And my heart falls back to Erin's Isle,
To the girl I left behind me.

For she's as fair as Shannon's side,
And purer than its water,
But she refused to be my bride
Though many a year I sought her;
Yet, since to France I sailed away,
Her letters oft remind me
That I promised never to gainsay
The girl I left behind me.

She says, "My own dear love, come home,
My friends are rich and many,
Or else abroad with you I'll roam,
A soldier stout as any;
If you'll not come, nor let me go,
I'll think you have resigned me,"—
My heart nigh broke when I answered "No,"
To the girl I left behind me.

For never shall my true love brave
A life of war and toiling,
And never as a skulking slave
I'll tread my native soil on;
But, were it free or to be freed,
The battle's close would find me
To Ireland bound, nor message need
From the girl I left behind me.

Unknown

"WHEN WE ARE PARTED"

When we are parted let me lie
In some far corner of thy heart,
Silent, and from the world apart,
Like a forgotten melody:
Forgotten of the world beside,
Cherished by one, and one alone,
For some loved memory of its own;
So let me in thy heart abide
When we are parted.

When we are parted, keep for me
The sacred stillness of the night;
That hour, sweet Love, is mine by right;
Let others claim the day of thee!
The cold world sleeping at our feet,
My spirit shall discourse with thine;—
When stars upon thy pillow shine,
At thy heart's door I stand and beat,
Though we are parted.

Hamilton Aidé [1826–1906]

REMEMBER OR FORGET

I sat beside the streamlet,
I watched the water flow,
As we together watched it
One little year ago:

The soft rain pattered on the leaves,
The April grass was wet.
Ah! folly to remember;
'Tis wiser to forget.

The nightingales made vocal
June's palace paved with gold;
I watched the rose you gave me
Its warm red heart unfold;
But breath of rose and bird's song
Were fraught with wild regret.
'Tis madness to remember;
'Twere wisdom to forget.

I stood among the gold corn,
Alas! no more, I knew,
To gather gleaner's measure
Of the love that fell from you.
For me, no gracious harvest—
Would God we ne'er had met!
'Tis hard, Love, to remember,
But 'tis harder to forget.

The streamlet now is frozen,
The nightingales are fled,
The cornfields are deserted,
And every rose is dead.
I sit beside my lonely fire,
And pray for wisdom yet:
For calmness to remember,
Or courage to forget.

Hamilton Aidé [1826–1906]

NANCY DAWSON

Nancy Dawson, Nancy Dawson,
Not so very long ago
Some one wronged you from sheer love, dear;
Little thinking it would crush, dear,
All I cherished in you so.

But now, what's the odds, my Nancy?
Where's the guinea, there's the fancy.
Are you Nancy, that old Nancy?
Nancy Dawson.

Nancy Dawson, Nancy Dawson,
I forget you, what you were;
Till I feel the sad hours creep, dear,
O'er my heart; as o'er my cheek, dear,
Once of old, that old, old hair:
And then, unawares, my Nancy,
I remember, and I fancy
You are Nancy, that old Nancy;
Nancy Dawson.

Herbert P. Horne [1864–

MY LITTLE LOVE

God keep you safe, my little love,
All through the night.
Rest close in His encircling arms
Until the light.
My heart is with you as I kneel to pray,
"Good night! God keep you in His care alway."

Thick shadows creep like silent ghosts
About my bed.
I lose myself in tender dreams
While overhead
The moon comes stealing through the window bars.
A silver sickle gleaming 'mid the stars.

For I, though I am far away,
Feel safe and strong,
To trust you thus, dear love, and yet
The night is long.
I say with sobbing breath the old fond prayer,
"Good night! Sweet dreams! God keep you everywhere!"

Charles B. Hawley [1858–

FOR EVER

THRICE with her lips she touched my lips,
Thrice with her hand my hand,
And three times thrice looked towards the sea,
But never to the land:
Then, "Sweet," she said, "no more delay,
For Heaven forbids a longer stay."

I, with my passion in my heart,
Could find no words to waste;
But striving often to depart,
I strained her to my breast:
Her wet tears washed my weary cheek;
I could have died, but could not speak.

The anchor swings, the sheet flies loose
And, bending to the breeze,
The tall ship, never to return,
Flies through the foaming seas:
Cheerily ho! the sailors cry;—
My sweet love lessening to my eye.

O Love, turn towards the land thy sight!
No more peruse the sea;
Our God, who severs thus our hearts,
Shall surely care for thee:
For me let waste-wide ocean swing,
I too lie safe beneath His wing.

William Caldwell Roscoe [1823–1859]

AUF WIEDERSEHEN

THE little gate was reached at last,
Half hid in lilacs down the lane;
She pushed it wide, and, as she passed,
A wistful look she backward cast,
And said,—"*Auf wiedersehen!*"

With hand on latch, a vision white
  Lingered reluctant, and again
Half doubting if she did aright,
Soft as the dews that fell that night,
  She said,—"*Auf wiedersehen!*"

The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair;
  I linger in delicious pain;
Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
  Thinks she,—"*Auf wiedersehen?*" . . .

'Tis thirteen years; once more I press
  The turf that silences the lane;
I hear the rustle of her dress,
I smell the lilacs, and—ah, yes,
  I hear,—"*Auf wiedersehen!*"

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!
  The English words had seemed too fain,
But these—they drew us heart to heart,
Yet held us tenderly apart;
  She said,—"*Auf wiedersehen!*"

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

"FOREVER AND A DAY"

I LITTLE know or care
If the blackbird on the bough
Is filling all the air
With his soft crescendo now;
  For she is gone away,
  And when she went she took
  The springtime in her look,
  The peachblow on her cheek,
  The laughter from the brook,
  The blue from out the May—
  And what she calls a week
  Is forever and a day!

It's little that I mind
How the blossoms, pink or white,
At every touch of wind
Fall a-trembling with delight;
For in the leafy lane,
Beneath the garden-boughs,
And through the silent house
One thing alone I seek.
Until she come again
The May is not the May,
And what she calls a week
Is forever and a day!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

OLD GARDENS

The white rose tree that spent its musk
For lovers' sweeter praise,
The stately walks we sought at dusk,
Have missed thee many days.

Again, with once-familiar feet,
I tread the old parterre—
But, ah, its bloom is now less sweet
Than when thy face was there.

I hear the birds of evening call;
I take the wild perfume;
I pluck a rose—to let it fall
And perish in the gloom.

Arthur Upson [1877–1908]

FERRY HINKSEY

Beyond the ferry water
That fast and silent flowed,
She turned, she gazed a moment,
Then took her onward road

Between the winding willows
To a city white with spires;
It seemed a path of pilgrims
To the home of earth's desires.

Blue shade of golden branches
Spread for her journeying,
Till he that lingered lost her
Among the leaves of Spring.

Laurence Binyon [1869–

WEARYIN' FER YOU

JEST a-wearyin' fer you—
All the time a-feelin' blue;
Wishin' fer you—wonderin' when
You'll be comin' home again;
Restless—don't know *what* to do—
Jest a-wearyin' fer you!

Keep a-mopin' day by day:
Dull—in everybody's way;
Folks they smile an' pass along
Wonderin' what on earth is wrong;
'Twouldn't help 'em if they knew—
Jest a-wearyin' fer you.

Room's so lonesome, with your chair
Empty by the fireplace there,
Jest can't stand the sight o' it!
Go outdoors an' roam a bit:
But the woods is lonesome, too,
Jest a-wearyin' fer you.

Comes the wind with sounds that' jes'
Like the rustlin' o' your dress;
An' the dew on flower an' tree
Tinkles like your steps to me!
Violets, like your eyes so blue—
Jest a-wearyin' fer you!

Mornin' comes, the birds awake
(Them that sung so fer your sake!),
But there's sadness in the notes
That come thrillin' from their throats!
Seem to feel your absence, too—
  Jest a-wearyin' fer you.

Evenin' comes: I miss you more
When the dark is in the door;
'Pears jest like *you* orter be
There to open fer me!
Latch goes tinklin'—thrills me through,
  Sets me wearyin' fer you!

. . . . . .

Jest a-wearyin' fer you—
All the time a-feelin' blue!
Wishin' fer you—wonderin' when
You'll be comin' home again;
Restless—don't know *what* to do—
  Jest a-wearyin' fer you!

Frank L. Stanton [1857–

THE LOVERS OF MARCHAID

Dominic came riding down, sworded, straight and splendid,
Drave his hilt against her door, flung a golden chain.
Said: "I'll teach your lips a song sweet as his that's ended,
Ere the white rose call the bee, the almond flower again."

But he only saw her head bent within the gloom
Over heaps of bridal thread bright as apple-bloom,
Silver silk like rain that spread across the driving loom.

Dreaming Fanch, the cobbler's son, took his tools and laces,
Wrought her shoes of scarlet dye, shoes as pale as snow;
"They shall lead her wildrose feet all the fairy paces
Danced along the road of love, the road such feet should
  go"—

But he only saw her eyes turning from his gift
Out towards the silver skies where the white clouds drift,
Where the wild gerfalcon flies, where the last sails lift.

Bran has built his homestead high where the hills may shield her,
Where the young bird waits the spring, where the dawns are fair,
Said: "I'll name my trees for her, since I may not yield her
Stars of morning for her feet, of evening for her hair."

But he did not see them ride, seven dim sail and more,
All along the harbor-side, white from shore to shore,
Nor heard the voices of the tide crying at her door.

Jean-Marie has touched his pipe down beside the river
When the young fox bends the fern, when the folds are still,
Said: "I send her all the gifts that my love may give her,—
Golden notes like golden birds to seek her at my will."

But he only found the waves, heard the sea-gull's cry,
In and out the ocean caves, underneath the sky,
All above the wind-washed graves where dead seamen lie.

Marjorie L. C. Pickthall [1883–

SONG

She's somewhere in the sunlight strong,
Her tears are in the falling rain,
She calls me in the wind's soft song,
And with the flowers she comes again.

Yon bird is but her messenger,
The moon is but her silver car;
Yea! sun and moon are sent by her,
And every wistful waiting star.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866–

THE LOVER THINKS OF HIS LADY IN THE NORTH

Now many are the stately ships that northward steam away,
And gray sails northward blow black hulls, and many more are they;
And myriads of viking gulls flap to the northern seas:
But Oh my thoughts that go to you are more than all of these!

The winds blow to the northward like a million eager wings,
The driven sea a million white-capped waves to northward flings:
I send you thoughts more many than the waves that fleck the sea,
More eager than tempestuous winds, O Love long leagues from me!

O Love, long leagues from me, I would I trod the drenchèd deck
Of some ship speeding to the North and staunch against all wreck,
I would I were a sea-gull strong of wing and void of fear:
Unfaltering and fleet I'd fly the long way to my Dear!

O if I were the sea, upon your northern land I'd beat
Until my waves flowed over all, and kissed your wandering feet;
And if I were the winds, I'd waft you perfumes from the South,
And give my pleadings to your ears, my kisses to your mouth.

Though many ships are sailing, never one will carry me,
I may not hurry northward with the gulls, the winds, the sea;
But fervid thoughts they say can flash across long leagues of blue—
Ah, so my love and longing must be known, Dear Heart, to you!

Shaemas O Sheel [1886–

CHANSON DE ROSEMONDE

The dawn is lonely for the sun,
And chill and drear;
The one lone star is pale and wan
As one in fear.

But when day strides across the hills,
The warm blood rushes through
The bared soft bosom of the blue
And all the glad east thrills.

Oh, come, my King! The hounds of joy
Are waiting for thy horn
To chase the doe of heart's desire
Across the heights of morn.
Oh, come, my Sun, and let me know
The rapture of the day!
Oh, come, my love! Oh, come, my love!
Thou art so long away!

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

AD DOMNULAM SUAM

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer,
Love me: we will pass and part,
Ere this love grow stronger.

I have loved thee, Child! too well,
To do aught but leave thee:
Nay! my lips should never tell
Any tale to grieve thee.

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer
I may love thee: we will part
Ere my love grow stronger.

Soon thou leavest fairy-land;
Darker grow thy tresses:
Soon no more of hand in hand;
Soon no more caresses!

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer
Be a child; then we will part,
Ere this love grow stronger.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

MARIAN DRURY

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes full of the sea!
Acadie dreams of your coming home
All year through, and her heart gets free,—

Free on the trail of the wind to travel,
Search and course with the roving tide,
All year long where his hands unravel
Blossom and berry the marshes hide.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes full of the surge!
April over the Norland now
Walks in the quiet from verge to verge.

Burying, brimming, the building billows
Fret the long dikes with uneasy foam.
Drenched with gold weather, the idling willows
Kiss you a hand from the Norland home.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes full of the sun!
Blomidon waits for your coming home,
All day long where the white wings run.

All spring through they falter and follow,
Wander, and beckon the roving tide,
Wheel and float with the veering swallow,
Lift you a voice from the blue hillside.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes full of the rain!
April over the Norland now
Bugles for rapture, and rouses pain,—

Halts before the forsaken dwelling,
  Where in the twilight, too spent to roam,
Love, whom the fingers of death are quelling,
  Cries you a cheer from the Norland home.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
  How are the marshes filled with you!
Grand Pré dreams of your coming home,—
  Dreams while the rainbirds all night through,

Far in the uplands calling to win you,
  Tease the brown dusk on the marshes wide;
And never the burning heart within you
  Stirs in your sleep by the roving tide.

Bliss Carman [1861–

LOVE'S ROSARY

All day I tell my rosary
    For now my love's away:
To-morrow he shall come to me
    About the break of day;
A rosary of twenty hours,
    And then a rose of May;
A rosary of fettered flowers,
    And then a holy-day.

All day I tell my rosary,
    My rosary of hours:
And here's a flower of memory,
    And here's a hope of flowers,
And here's an hour that yearns with pain
    For old forgotten years,
An hour of loss, an hour of gain,
    And then a shower of tears.

All day I tell my rosary,
    Because my love's away;
And never a whisper comes to me,
    And never a word to say;

But, if it's parting more endears,
God bring him back, I pray;
Or my heart will break in the darkness
Before the break of day.

All day I tell my rosary,
My rosary of hours,
Until an hour shall bring to me
The hope of all the flowers
I tell my rosary of hours,
For O, my love's away;
And—a dream may bring him back to me
About the break of day.

Alfred Noyes [1880–

WHEN SHE COMES HOME

When she comes home again! A thousand ways
I fashion, to myself, the tenderness
Of my glad welcome: I shall tremble—yes;
And touch her, as when first in the old days
I touched her girlish hand, nor dared upraise
Mine eyes, such was my faint heart's sweet distress
Then silence: and the perfume of her dress:
The room will sway a little, and a haze
Cloy eyesight—soul-sight, even—for a space;
And tears—yes; and the ache here in the throat,
To know that I so ill deserve the place
Her arms make for me; and the sobbing note
I stay with kisses, ere the tearful face
Again is hidden in the old embrace.

James Whitcomb Riley [1852–1916]

THE TRAGEDY OF LOVE

SONG

My silks and fine array,
  My smiles and languished air,
By Love are driven away;
  And mournful lean Despair
Brings me yew to deck my grave:
Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heaven
  When springing buds unfold:
O why to him was't given,
  Whose heart is wintry cold?
His breast is Love's all-worshipped tomb,
Where all Love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an ax and spade,
  Bring me a winding-sheet;
When I my grave have made,
  Let winds and tempests beat:
Then down I'll lie, as cold as clay:
True love doth pass away!

William Blake [1757–1827]

THE FLIGHT OF LOVE

When the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead—
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendor
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.
O Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

"FAREWELL! IF EVER FONDEST PRAYER"

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal availed on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh:
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word—Farewell!—Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry:
But in my breast and in my brain
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel:
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell!—Farewell!

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

PORPHYRIA'S LOVER

The rain set early in to-night,
The sullen wind was soon awake,
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,
And did its worst to vex the lake:
I listened with heart fit to break.
When glided in Porphyria; straight
She shut the cold out and the storm,
And kneeled and made the cheerless grate
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;
Which done, she rose, and from her form
Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl,
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,
And, last, she sat down by my side
And called me. When no voice replied,
She put my arm about her waist,
And made her smooth white shoulder bare,
And all her yellow hair displaced,
And, stooping, made my cheek lie there,
And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,
Murmuring how she loved me—she
Too weak, for all her heart's endeavor,
To set its struggling passion free
From pride, and vainer ties dissever,
And give herself to me for ever.
But passion sometimes would prevail,
Nor could to-night's gay feast restrain
A sudden thought of one so pale

For love of her, and all in vain:
So, she was come through wind and rain.
Be sure I looked up at her eyes
Happy and proud; at last I knew
Porphyria worshipped me; surprise
Made my heart swell, and still it grew
While I debated what to do.
That moment she was mine, mine, fair,
Perfectly pure and good: I found
A thing to do, and all her hair
In one long yellow string I wound
Three times her little throat around,
And strangled her. No pain felt she;
I am quite sure she felt no pain.
As a shut bud that holds a bee,
I warily oped her lids: again
Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.
And I untightened next the tress
About her neck; her cheek once more
Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss:
I propped her head up as before,
Only, this time my shoulder bore
Her head, which droops upon it still:
The smiling rosy little head,
So glad it has its utmost will,
That all it scorned at once is fled,
And I, its love, am gained instead!
Porphyria's love: she guessed not how
Her darling one wish would be heard.
And thus we sit together now,
And all night long we have not stirred,
And yet God has not said a word!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

MODERN BEAUTY

I AM the torch, she saith, and what to me
If the moth die of me? I am the flame
Of Beauty, and I burn that all may see
Beauty, and I have neither joy nor shame,

But live with that clear light of perfect fire
Which is to men the death of their desire.

I am Yseult and Helen, I have seen
Troy burn, and the most loving knight lies dead.
The world has been my mirror, time has been
My breath upon the glass; and men have said,
Age after age, in rapture and despair,
Love's poor few words, before my image there.

I live, and am immortal; in my eyes
The sorrow of the world, and on my lips
The joy of life, mingle to make me wise;
Yet now the day is darkened with eclipse:
Who is there lives for beauty? Still am I
The torch, but where's the moth that still dares die?

Arthur Symons [1865–

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a fairy's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A fairy's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
"I love thee true."

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore;
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dreamed—Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:
They cried—"La belle dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

John Keats [1795–1821]

TANTALUS—TEXAS

"If I may trust your love," she cried,
"And you would have me for a bride,
Ride over yonder plain, and bring
Your flask full from the Mustang spring;
Fly, fast as western eagle's wing,
O'er the Llano Estacado!"

He heard, and bowed without a word,
His gallant steed he lightly spurred!
He turned his face, and rode away
Toward the grave of dying day,
And vanished with its parting ray
On the Llano Estacado.

Night came, and found him riding on,
Day came, and still he rode alone.
He spared not spur, he drew not rein,
Across that broad, unchanging plain,
Till he the Mustang spring might gain,
On the Llano Estacado.

A little rest, a little draught,
Hot from his hand, and quickly quaffed,
His flask was filled, and then he turned.
Once more his steed the maguey spurned,
Once more the sky above him burned,
On the Llano Estacado.

How hot the quivering landscape glowed!
His brain seemed boiling as he rode—
Was it a dream, a drunken one,
Or was he really riding on?
Was that a skull that gleamed and shone
On the Llano Estacado?

"Brave steed of mine, brave steed!" he cried,
"So often true, so often tried,

Bear up a little longer yet!"
His mouth was black with blood and sweat—
Heaven! how he longed his lips to wet
On the Llano Estacado.

And still, within his breast, he held
The precious flask so lately filled.
Oh, for a drink! But well he knew
If empty it should meet her view,
Her scorn—but still his longing grew
On the Llano Estacado.

His horse went down. He wandered on,
Giddy, blind, beaten, and alone.
While upon cushioned couch you lie,
Oh, think how hard it is to die,
Beneath the cruel, cloudless sky
On the Llano Estacado.

At last he staggered, stumbled, fell,
His day was done, he knew full well,
And raising to his lips the flask,
The end, the object of his task,
Drank to her—more she could not ask.
Ah, the Llano Estacado!

That night in the Presidio,
Beneath the torchlight's wavy glow,
She danced—and never thought of him,
The victim of a woman's whim,
Lying, with face upturned and grim,
On the Llano Estacado.

Joaquin Miller [1841–1913]

ENCHAINMENT

I WENT to her who loveth me no more,
And prayed her bear with me, if so she might;
For I had found day after day too sore,
And tears that would not cease night after night.

And so I prayed her, weeping, that she bore
To let me be with her a little; yea,
  To soothe myself a little with her sight,
Who loved me once, ah! many a night and day.

Then she who loveth me no more, maybe
  She pitied somewhat: and I took a chain
To bind myself to her, and her to me;
  Yea, so that I might call her mine again.
Lo! she forbade me not; but I and she
Fettered her fair limbs, and her neck more fair,
  Chained the fair wasted white of love's domain,
And put gold fetters on her golden hair.

Oh! the vain joy it is to see her lie
  Beside me once again; beyond release,
Her hair, her hand, her body, till she die,
  All mine, for me to do with what I please!
For, after all, I find no chain whereby
To chain her heart to love me as before,
  Nor fetter for her lips, to make them cease
From saying still she loveth me no more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844–1881]

AULD ROBIN GRAY

When the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye at hame,
And a' the warld to rest are gane,
The waes o' my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
While my gudeman lies sound by me.

Young Jamie lo'ed me weel, and sought me for his bride;
But saving a croun he had naething else beside:
To make the croun a pund, young Jamie gaed to sea;
And the croun and the pund were baith for me.

He hadna been awa' a week but only twa,
When my father brak his arm, and the kye was stown awa';
My mother she fell sick,—and my Jamie at the sea—
And auld Robin Gray came a-courtin' me.

My father couldna work, and my mother couldna spin;
I toiled day and night, but their bread I couldna win;
Auld Rob maintained them baith, and wi' tears in his e'e
Said, "Jennie, for their sakes, O, marry me!"

My heart it said nay; I looked for Jamie back;
But the wind it blew high, and the ship it was a wrack;
His ship it was a wrack—Why didna Jamie dee?
Or why do I live to cry, Wae's me!

My father urged me sair: my mother didna speak;
But she looked in my face till my heart was like to break:
They gi'ed him my hand, though my heart was in the sea;
Sae auld Robin Gray he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been a wife a week but only four,
When mournfu' as I sat on the stane at the door,
I saw my Jamie's wraith,—for I couldna think it he,
Till he said, "I'm come hame to marry thee."

O, sair, sair did we greet, and muckle did we say;
We took but ae kiss, and we tore ourselves away:
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee;
And why was I born to say, Wae's me!

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin;
I daurna think on Jamie, for that wad be a sin;
But I'll do my best a gude wife aye to be,
For auld Robin Gray he is kind unto me.

Anne Barnard [1750–1825]

LOST LIGHT

My heart is chilled and my pulse is slow,
But often and often will memory go,
Like a blind child lost in a waste of snow,
Back to the days when I loved you so—
The beautiful long ago.

I sit here dreaming them through and through,
The blissful moments I shared with you—

The sweet, sweet days when our love was new,
When I was trustful and you were true—
Beautiful days, but few!

Blest or wretched, fettered or free,
Why should I care how your life may be,
Or whether you wander by land or sea?
I only know you are dead to me,
Ever and hopelessly.

Oh, how often at day's decline
I pushed from my window the curtaining vine,
To see from your lattice the lamp-light shine—
Type of a message that, half divine,
Flashed from your heart to mine.

Once more the starlight is silvering all;
The roses sleep by the garden wall;
The night bird warbles his madrigal,
And I hear again through the sweet air fall
The evening bugle-call.

But summers will vanish and years will wane,
And bring no light to your window pane;
Nor gracious sunshine nor patient rain
Can bring dead love back to life again:
I call up the past in vain.

My heart is heavy, my heart is old,
And that proves dross which I counted gold;
I watch no longer your curtain's fold;
The window is dark and the night is cold,
And the story forever told.

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

A SIGH

It was nothing but a rose I gave her,—
Nothing but a rose
Any wind might rob of half its savor,
Any wind that blows.

When she took it from my trembling fingers
With a hand as chill —
Ah, the flying touch upon them lingers,
Stays, and thrills them still!

Withered, faded, pressed between the pages,
Crumpled fold on fold,—
Once it lay upon her breast, and ages
Cannot make it old!

Harriet Prescott Spofford [1835–

HEREAFTER

Love, when all the years are silent, vanished quite and laid to rest,
When you and I are sleeping, folded breathless breast to breast,
When no morrow is before us, and the long grass tosses o'er us,
And our grave remains forgotten, or by alien footsteps pressed—

Still that love of ours will linger, that great love enrich the earth,
Sunshine in the heavenly azure, breezes blowing joyous mirth;
Fragrance fanning off from flowers, melody of summer showers,
Sparkle of the spicy wood-fires round the happy autumn hearth.

That's our love. But you and I, dear—shall we linger with it yet,
Mingled in one dew-drop, tangled in one sunbeam's golden net—
On the violet's purple bosom, I the sheen, but you the blossom,
Stream on sunset winds, and be the haze with which some hill is wet?

Or, beloved—if ascending—when we have endowed the world
With the best bloom of our being, whither will our way be whirled,
Through what vast and starry spaces, toward what awful, holy places,
With a white light on our faces, spirit over spirit furled?

Only this our yearning answers: wheresoe'er that way defile,
Not a film shall part us through the eons of that mighty while,
In the fair eternal weather, even as phantoms still together,
Floating, floating, one forever, in the light of God's great smile.

Harriet Prescott Spofford [1835–

ENDYMION

The apple trees are hung with gold,
And birds are loud in Arcady,
The sheep lie bleating in the fold,
The wild goat runs across the wold,
But yesterday his love he told,
I know he will come back to me.
O rising moon! O Lady moon!
Be you my lover's sentinel,
You cannot choose but know him well,
For he is shod with purple shoon,
You cannot choose but know my love,
For he a shepherd's crook doth bear,
And he is soft as any dove,
And brown and curly is his hair.

The turtle now has ceased to call
Upon her crimson-footed groom,
The gray wolf prowls about the stall,
The lily's singing seneschal
Sleeps in the lily-bell, and all
The violet hills are lost in gloom.

O risen moon! O holy moon!
Stand on the top of Helice,
And if my own true love you see,
Ah! if you see the purple shoon,
The hazel crook, the lad's brown hair,
The goat-skin wrapped about his arm,
Tell him that I am waiting where
The rushlight glimmers in the Farm.

The falling dew is cold and chill,
And no bird sings in Arcady,
The little fauns have left the hill,
Even the tired daffodil
Has closed its gilded doors, and still
My lover comes not back to me.
False moon! False moon! O waning moon!
Where is my own true lover gone,
Where are the lips vermilion,
The shepherd's crook, the purple shoon?
Why spread that silver pavilion,
Why wear that veil of drifting mist?
Ah! thou hast young Endymion,
Thou hast the lips that should be kissed!

Oscar Wilde [1856–1900]

"LOVE IS A TERRIBLE THING"

I WENT out to the farthest meadow,
I lay down in the deepest shadow;

And I said unto the earth, "Hold me,"
And unto the night, "O enfold me!"

And unto the wind petulantly
I cried, "You know not for you are free!"

And I begged the little leaves to lean
Low and together for a safe screen;

Then to the stars I told my tale:
"That is my home-light, there in the vale,

"And O, I know that I shall return,
But let me lie first mid the unfeeling fern;

"For there is a flame that has blown too near,
And there is a name that has grown too dear,
And there is a fear" . . . .

And to the still hills and cool earth and far sky I made moan,
"The heart in my bosom is not my own!

"O would I were free as the wind on wing;
Love is a terrible thing!"

Grace Fallow Norton [18 –

THE BALLAD OF THE ANGEL

"Who is it knocking in the night,
That fain would enter in?"
"The ghost of Lost Delight am I,
The sin you would not sin,
Who comes to look in your two eyes
And see what might have been."

"Oh, long ago and long ago
I cast you forth," he said,
"For that your eyes were all too blue,
Your laughing mouth too red,
And my torn soul was tangled in
The tresses of your head."

"Now mind you with what bitter words
You cast me forth from you?"
"I bade you back to that fair Hell
From whence your breath you drew,
And with great blows I broke my heart
Lest it might follow too.

"Yea, from the grasp of your white hands
I freed my hands that day,
And have I not climbed near to God
As these His henchmen may?"
"Ah, man,—ah, man! 'twas my two hands
That led you all the way."

"I hid my eyes from your two eyes
That they might see aright."
"Yet think you 'twas a star that led
Your feet from height to height?
It was the flame of my two eyes
That drew you through the night."

With trembling hands he threw the door,
Then fell upon his knee:
"O, Vision armed and cloaked in light,
Why do you honor me?"
"The Angel of your Strength am I
Who was your sin," quoth she.

"For that you slew me long ago
My hands have raised you high;
For that mine eyes you closed, mine eyes
Are lights to lead you by;
And 'tis my touch shall swing the gates
Of Heaven when you die!"

Theodosia Garrison [1874–

"LOVE CAME BACK AT FALL O' DEW"

Love came back at fall o' dew,
Playing his old part;
But I had a word or two,
That would break his heart.

"He who comes at candlelight,
That should come before,
Must betake him to the night
From a barrèd door."

This the word that made us part
In the fall o' dew;
This the word that brake his heart—
Yet it brake mine, too!

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856–

I SHALL NOT CARE

When I am dead and over me bright April
Shakes out her rain-drenched hair,
Though you should lean above me broken-hearted,
I shall not care.

I shall have peace, as leafy trees are peaceful
When rain bends down the bough,
And I shall be more silent and cold-hearted
Than you are now. *Sara Teasdale* [1884–

OUTGROWN

Nay, you wrong her, my friend, she's not fickle; her love she has simply outgrown:
One can read the whole matter, translating her heart by the light of one's own.

Can you bear me to talk with you frankly? There is much that my heart would say;
And you know we were children together, have quarreled and "made up" in play.

And so, for the sake of old friendship, I venture to tell you the truth,—
As plainly, perhaps, and as bluntly, as I might in our earlier youth.

Five summers ago, when you wooed her, you stood on the selfsame plane,
Face to face, heart to heart, never dreaming your souls should be parted again.

She loved you at that time entirely, in the bloom of her life's early May;
And it is not her fault, I repeat it, that she does not love you to-day.

Nature never stands still, nor souls either: they ever go up or go down;
And hers has been steadily soaring—but how has it been with your own?

She has struggled and yearned and aspired, grown purer and wiser each year:
The stars are not farther above you in yon luminous atmosphere!

For she whom you crowned with fresh roses, down yonder, five summers ago,
Has learned that the first of our duties to God and ourselves is to grow.

Her eyes they are sweeter and calmer: but their vision is clearer as well;
Her voice has a tenderer cadence, but is pure as a silver bell.

Her face has the look worn by those who with God and his angels have talked:
The white robes she wears are less white than the spirits with whom she has walked.

And you? Have you aimed at the highest? Have you, too, aspired and prayed?
Have you looked upon evil unsullied? Have you conquered it undismayed?

Have you, too, grown purer and wiser, as the months and the years have rolled on?
Did you meet her this morning rejoicing in the triumph of victory won?

Nay, hear me! The truth cannot harm you. When to-day in her presence you stood
Was the hand that you gave her as white and clean as that of her womanhood?

Go measure yourself by her standard; look back on the years that have fled:
Then ask, if you need, why she tells you that the love of her girlhood is dead.

She cannot look down to her lover: her love, like her soul, aspires;
He must stand by her side, or above her, who would kindle its holy fires.

Now farewell! For the sake of old friendship I have ventured to tell you the truth,
As plainly, perhaps, and as bluntly as I might in our earlier youth.

Julia C. R. Dorr [1825–1913]

A TRAGEDY

Among his books he sits all day
To think and read and write;
He does not smell the new-mown hay,
The roses red and white.

I walk among them all alone,
His silly, stupid wife;
The world seems tasteless, dead and done—
An empty thing is life.

At night his window casts a square
Of light upon the lawn;
I sometimes walk and watch it there
Until the chill of dawn.

I have no brain to understand
The books he loves to read;
I only have a heart and hand
He does not seem to need.

He calls me "Child"—lays on my hair
Thin fingers, cold and mild;
Oh! God of Love, who answers prayer,
I wish I were a child!

And no one sees and no one knows
(He least would know or see),
That ere Love gathers next year's rose
Death will have gathered me.

Edith Nesbit [1858–

LEFT BEHIND

It was the autumn of the year;
The strawberry-leaves were red and sere;
October's airs were fresh and chill,
When, pausing on the windy hill,
The hill that overlooks the sea,
You talked confidingly to me,—
Me whom your keen, artistic sight
Has not yet learned to read aright,
Since I have veiled my heart from you,
And loved you better than you knew.

You told me of your toilsome past;
The tardy honors won at last,
The trials borne, the conquests gained,
The longed-for boon of Fame attained;
I knew that every victory
But lifted you away from me,
That every step of high emprise
But left me lowlier in your eyes;
I watched the distance as it grew,
And loved you better than you knew.

You did not see the bitter trace
Of anguish sweep across my face;
You did not hear my proud heart beat,
Heavy and slow, beneath your feet;
You thought of triumphs still unwon,
Of glorious deeds as yet undone;
And I, the while you talked to me,
I watched the gulls float lonesomely,
Till lost amid the hungry blue,
And loved you better than you knew.

You walk the sunny side of fate;
The wise world smiles, and calls you great;
The golden fruitage of success
Drops at your feet in plenteousness;
And you have blessings manifold:—
Renown and power and friends and gold,—

They build a wall between us twain,
Which may not be thrown down again,
Alas! for I, the long years through,
Have loved you better than you knew.

Your life's proud aim, your art's high truth,
Have kept the promise of your youth;
And while you won the crown, which now
Breaks into bloom upon your brow,
My soul cried strongly out to you
Across the ocean's yearning blue,
While, unremembered and afar,
I watched you, as I watch a star
Through darkness struggling into view,
And loved you better than you knew.

I used to dream in all these years
Of patient faith and silent tears,
That Love's strong hand would put aside
The barriers of place and pride,
Would reach the pathless darkness through,
And draw me softly up to you;
But that is past. If you should stray
Beside my grave, some future day,
Perchance the violets o'er my dust
Will half betray their buried trust,
And say, their blue eyes full of dew,
"She loved you better than you knew."

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow,
Now the salt tides seaward flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go.—
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain,—
Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;
This way, this way!
"Mother dear, we cannot stay!
The wild white horses foam and fret."
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little gray church on the windy shore;
Then come down!
She will not come, though you call all day;
Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little gray church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world,—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves:
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;
Come!" I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town,
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little gray church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
From the humming street, and the child with its toy!
From the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
From the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare,
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children;
Come, children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing: "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she!
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie;
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hillside—
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

THE PORTRAIT

MIDNIGHT past! Not a sound of aught
Through the silent house, but the wind at his prayers.
I sat by the dying fire, and thought
Of the dear dead woman up-stairs.

A night of tears! for the gusty rain
Had ceased, but the eaves were dripping yet;
And the moon looked forth, as though in pain,
With her face all white and wet:

Nobody with me, my watch to keep,
But the friend of my bosom, the man I love:
And grief had sent him fast to sleep
In the chamber up above.

Nobody else, in the country place
All round, that knew of my loss beside,
But the good young Priest with the Raphael-face,
Who confessed her when she died.

That good young Priest is of gentle nerve,
And my grief had moved him beyond control;
For his lip grew white, as I could observe,
When he speeded her parting soul.

I sat by the dreary hearth alone:
I thought of the pleasant days of yore:
I said, "The staff of my life is gone:
The woman I loved is no more.

"On her cold dead bosom my portrait lies,
Which next to her heart she used to wear—
Haunting it o'er with her tender eyes
When my own face was not there.

"It is set all round with rubies red,
And pearls which a Peri might have kept.
For each ruby there my heart hath bled:
For each pearl my eyes have wept."

And I said—"The thing is precious to me:
They will bury her soon in the churchyard clay;
It lies on her heart, and lost must be
If I do not take it away."

I lighted my lamp at the dying flame,
And crept up the stairs that creaked for fright,
Till into the chamber of death I came,
Where she lay all in white.

The moon shone over her winding-sheet,
There stark she lay on her carven bed:
Seven burning tapers about her feet,
And seven about her head.

As I stretched my hand, I held my breath;
I turned as I drew the curtains apart:
I dared not look on the face of death:
I knew where to find her heart.

I thought at first, as my touch fell there,
It had warmed that heart to life, with love;
For the thing I touched was warm, I swear,
And I could feel it move.

'Twas the hand of a man, that was moving slow
O'er the heart of the dead,—from the other side:
And at once the sweat broke over my brow:
"Who is robbing the corpse?" I cried.

Opposite me by the tapers' light,
The friend of my bosom, the man I loved,
Stood over the corpse, and all as white,
And neither of us moved.

"What do you here, my friend?" The man
Looked first at me, and then at the dead.
"There is a portrait here," he began:
"There is. It is mine," I said.

Said the friend of my bosom, "Yours, no doubt,
The portrait was, till a month ago,
When this suffering angel took that out,
And placed mine there, I know."

"This woman, she loved me well," said I.
"A month ago," said my friend to me:
"And in your throat," I groaned, "you lie!"
He answered, . . . "Let us see."

"Enough!" I returned, "let the dead decide:
And whosesoever the portrait prove,
His shall it be, when the cause is tried,
Where Death is arraigned by Love."

We found the protrait there, in its place:
We opened it by the tapers' shine:
The gems were all unchanged: the face
Was—neither his nor mine.

"One nail drives out another, at least!
The face of the portrait there," I cried,
"Is our friend's, the Raphael-faced young Priest,
Who confessed her when she died."

The setting is all of rubies red,
And pearls which a Peri might have kept.
For each ruby there my heart hath bled:
For each pearl my eyes have wept.

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831–1891]

THE ROSE AND THORN

She's loveliest of the festal throng
In delicate form and Grecian face,—
A beautiful, incarnate song,
A marvel of harmonious grace;
And yet I know the truth I speak:
From those gay groups she stands apart,
A rose upon her tender cheek,
A thorn within her heart.

Though bright her eyes' bewildering gleams,
Fair tremulous lips and shining hair,
A something born of mournful dreams
Breathes round her sad enchanted air;
No blithesome thoughts at hide and seek
From out her dimples smiling start;
If still the rose be on her cheek,
A thorn is in her heart.

Young lover, tossed 'twixt hope and fear,
Your whispered vow and yearning eyes
Yon marble Clytie pillared near
Could move as soon to soft replies;

Or, if she thrill at words you speak,
Love's memory prompts the sudden start;
The rose has paled upon her cheek,
The thorn has pierced her heart.

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830–1886]

TO HER—UNSPOKEN

Go to him, ah, go to him, and lift your eyes aglow to him;
Fear not royally to give whatever he may claim;
All your spirit's treasury scruple not to show to him.
He is noble; meet him with a pride too high for shame.

Say to him, ah, say to him, that soul and body sway to him;
Cast away the cowardice that counsels you to flight,
Lest you turn at last to find that you have lost the way to him,
Lest you stretch your arms in vain across a starless night.

Be to him, ah, be to him, the key that sets joy free to him;
Teach him all the tenderness that only love can know,
And if ever there should come a memory of me to him,
Bid him judge me gently for the sake of long ago.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878–

A LIGHT WOMAN

So far as our story approaches the end,
Which do you pity the most of us three?—
My friend, or the mistress of my friend
With her wanton eyes, or me?

My friend was already too good to lose,
And seemed in the way of improvement yet,
When she crossed his path with her hunting-noose,
And over him drew her net.

When I saw him tangled in her toils,
A shame, said I, if she adds just him
To her nine-and-ninety other spoils,
The hundredth for a whim!

And before my friend be wholly hers,
How easy to prove to him, I said,
An eagle's the game her pride prefers,
Though she snaps at a wren instead!

So, I gave her eyes my own eyes to take,
My hand sought hers as in earnest need,
And round she turned for my noble sake,
And gave me herself indeed.

The eagle am I, with my fame in the world,
The wren is he, with his maiden face.
—You look away and your lip is curled?
Patience, a moment's space!

For see, my friend goes shaking and white;
He eyes me as the basilisk:
I have turned, it appears, his day to night,
Eclipsing his sun's disk.

And I did it, he thinks, as a very thief:
"Though I love her—that, he comprehends—
One should master one's passions, (love, in chief)
And be loyal to one's friends!"

And she,—she lies in my hand as tame
As a pear late basking over a wall;
Just a touch to try and off it came;
'Tis mine,—can I let it fall?

With no mind to eat it, that's the worst!
Were it thrown in the road, would the case assist?
'Twas quenching a dozen blue-flies' thirst
When I gave its stalk a twist.

And I,—what I seem to my friend, you see:
What I soon shall seem to his love, you guess:
What I seem to myself, do you ask of me?
No hero, I confess.

'Tis an awkward thing to play with souls,
And matter enough to save one's own:
Yet think of my friend, and the burning coals
He played with for bits of stone!

One likes to show the truth for the truth;
That the woman was light is very true:
But suppose she says,—Never mind that youth!
What wrong have I done to you?

Well, anyhow, here the story stays,
So far at least as I understand;
And, Robert Browning, you writer of plays,
Here's a subject made to your hand!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

FROM THE TURKISH

The chain I gave was fair to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound,
The heart that offered both was true,
And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charmed by secret spell
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well,
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet—till thou couldst think
In other hands its notes were such.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shivered in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restring the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they altered too;
The chain is broke, the music mute:
'Tis past—to them and thee adieu—
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

A SUMMER WOOING

THE wind went wooing the rose,
For the rose was fair.
How the rough wind won her, who knows?
But he left her there.
Far away from her grave he blows:
Does the free wind care?

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835–1908]

BUTTERFLIES

AT sixteen years she knew no care;
How could she, sweet and pure as light?
And there pursued her everywhere
Butterflies all white.

A lover looked. She dropped her eyes
That glowed like pansies wet with dew;
And lo, there came from out the skies
Butterflies all blue.

Before she guessed her heart was gone;
The tale of love was swiftly told;
And all about her wheeled and shone
Butterflies all gold.

Then he forsook her one sad morn;
She wept and sobbed, "Oh, love, come back!"
There only came to her forlorn
Butterflies all black.

John Davidson [1857–1909]

UNSEEN SPIRITS

THE shadows lay along Broadway,
'Twas near the twilight-tide,
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride.
Alone walked she; but, viewlessly,
Walked spirits at her side.

Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And Honor charmed the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair,—
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true,
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo—
But honored well are charms to sell
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair—
A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail:
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray;
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way!—
But the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven
By man is cursed alway!

Nathaniel Parker Willis [1806–1867]

"GRANDMITHER, THINK NOT I FORGET"

GRANDMITHER, think not I forget, when I come back to town,
An' wander the old ways again, an' tread them up and down.
I never smell the clover bloom, nor see the swallows pass,
Without I mind how good ye were unto a little lass.
I never hear the winter rain a-pelting all night through,
Without I think and mind me of how cold it falls on you.
And if I come not often to your bed beneath the thyme,
Mayhap 'tis that I'd change wi' ye, and gie my bed for thine,
Would like to sleep in thine.

I never hear the summer winds among the roses blow,
Without I wonder why it was ye loved the lassie so.
Ye gave me cakes and lollipops and pretty toys a store,—
I never thought I should come back and ask ye now for more.
Grandmither, gie me your still, white hands, that lie upon
your breast,
For mine do beat the dark all night, and never find me
rest;
They grope among the shadows, an' they beat the cold black
air,
They go seekin' in the darkness, an' they never find him
there,
They never find him there.

Grandmither, gie me your sightless eyes, that I may never
see
His own a-burnin' full o' love that must not shine for me.
Grandmither, gie me your peaceful lips, white as the kirk-
yard snow,
For mine be tremblin' wi' the wish that he must never
know.
Grandmither, gie me your clay-stopped ears, that I may
never hear
My lad a-singin' in the night when I am sick wi' fear;
A-singin' when the moonlight over a' the land is white—
Ah, God! I'll up an' go to him a-singin' in the night,
A-callin' in the night.

Grandmither, gie me your clay-cold heart that has forgot to
ache,
For mine be fire within my breast and yet it cannot break.
Wi' every beat it's callin' for things that must not be,—
An' can ye not let me creep in an' rest awhile by ye?
A little lass afeard o' dark slept by ye years agone—
An' she has found what night can hold 'twixt sundown an'
the dawn!
So when I plant the rose an' rue above your grave for ye,
Ye'll know it's under rue an' rose that I would like to be,
That I would like to be.

Willa Sibert Cather [1875–

LITTLE WILD BABY

THROUGH the fierce fever I nursed him, and then he said
I was the woman—I!—that he would wed;
He sent a boat with men for his own white priest,
And he gave my father horses, and made a feast.
I am his wife: if he has forgotten me,
I will not live for scorning eyes to see.
(*Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,*
Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.)

Three moons ago—it was but three moons ago—
He took his gun, and started across the snow;
For the river was frozen, the river that still goes down
Every day, as I watch it, to find the town;
The town whose name I caught from his sleeping lips,
A place of many people and many ships.
(*Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,*
Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.)

I to that town am going, to search the place,
With his little white son in my arms, till I see his face.
Only once shall I need to look in his eyes,
To see if his soul, as I knew it, lives or dies.
If it lives, we live, and if it is dead, we die,
And the soul of my baby will never ask me why.
(*Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,*
Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.)

I have asked about the river: one answered me,
That after the town it goes to find the sea;
That great waves, able to break the stoutest bark,
Are there, and the sea is very deep and dark.
If he is happy without me, so best, so best;
I will take his baby and go away to my rest.
(*Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,*
Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.
The river flows swiftly, the sea is dark and deep:
Little wild baby, lie still! Lie still and sleep.)

Margaret Thomson Janvier [1845–1913]

A CRADLE SONG

Come little babe, come silly soul,
Thy father's shame, thy mother's grief,
Born as I doubt to all our dole,
And to thyself unhappy chief:
Sing lullaby, and lap it warm,
Poor soul that thinks no creature harm.

Thou little think'st and less dost know
The cause of this thy mother's moan;
Thou want'st the wit to wail her woe,
And I myself am all alone:
Why dost thou weep? why dost thou wail?
And know'st not yet what thou dost ail.

Come, little wretch—ah, silly heart!
Mine only joy, what can I more?
If there be any wrong thy smart,
That may the destinies implore:
'Twas I, I say, against my will,
I wail the time, but be thou still.

And dost thou smile? O, thy sweet face!
Would God Himself He might thee see!—
No doubt thou wouldst soon purchase grace,
I know right well, for thee and me:
But come to mother, babe, and play,
For father false is fled away.

Sweet boy, if it by fortune chance
Thy father home again to send,
If death do strike me with his lance,
Yet may'st thou me to him commend:
If any ask thy mother's name,
Tell how by love she purchased blame.

Then will his gentle heart soon yield:
I know him of a noble mind:
Although a lion in the field,
A lamb in town thou shalt him find:

Ask blessing, babe, be not afraid,
His sugared words hath me betrayed.

Then may'st thou joy and be right glad;
Although in woe I seem to moan,
Thy father is no rascal lad,
A noble youth of blood and bone:
His glancing looks, if he once smile,
Right honest women may beguile.

Come, little boy, and rock asleep;
Sing lullaby and be thou still;
I, that can do naught else but weep,
Will sit by thee and wail my fill:
God bless my babe, and lullaby
From this thy father's quality.

Nicholas Breton [1545?–1626?]

LADY ANNE BOTHWELL'S LAMENT

Balow, my babe, lie still and sleep!
It grieves me sore to see thee weep.
Wouldst thou be quiet I'se be glad,
Thy mourning makes my sorrow sad:
Balow my boy, thy mother's joy,
Thy father breeds me great annoy—
Balow, la-low!

When he began to court my love,
And with his sugared words me move,
His feignings false and flattering cheer
To me that time did not appear:
But now I see most cruelly
He cares ne for my babe nor me—
Balow, la-low!

Lie still, my darling, sleep awhile,
And when thou wak'st thou'll sweetly smile:
But smile not as thy father did,
To cozen maids: nay, God forbid!

But yet I fear thou wilt go near
Thy father's heart and face to bear—
Balow, la-low!

I cannot choose but ever will
Be loving to thy father still;
Where'er he go, where'er he ride,
My love with him doth still abide;
In weal or woe, where'er he go,
My heart shall ne'er depart him fro—
Balow, la-low!

But do not, do not, pretty mine,
To feignings false thy heart incline!
Be loyal to thy lover true,
And never change her for a new:
If good or fair, of her have care
For women's banning's wondrous sair—
Balow, la-low!

Bairn, by thy face I will beware;
Like Sirens' words, I'll come not near;
My babe and I together will live;
He'll comfort me when cares do grieve.
My babe and I right soft will lie,
And ne'er respect man's cruelty—
Balow, la-low!

Farewell, farewell, the falsest youth
That ever kissed a woman's mouth!
I wish all maids be warned by me
Never to trust man's courtesy;
For if we do but chance to bow,
They'll use us then they care not how—
Balow, la-low!

Unknown

A WOMAN'S LOVE

A SENTINEL angel, sitting high in glory,
Heard this shrill wail ring out from Purgatory:
"Have mercy, mighty angel, hear my story!

"I loved,—and, blind with passionate love, I fell.
Love brought me down to death, and death to Hell;
For God is just, and death for sin is well.

"I do not rage against His high decree,
Nor for myself do ask that grace shall be;
But for my love on earth who mourns for me.

"Great Spirit! Let me see my love again
And comfort him one hour, and I were fain
To pay a thousand years of fire and pain."

Then said the pitying angel, "Nay, repent
That wild vow! Look, the dial-finger's bent
Down to the last hour of thy punishment!"

But still she wailed, "I pray thee, let me go!
I cannot rise to peace and leave him so.
O, let me soothe him in his bitter woe!"

The brazen gates ground sullenly ajar,
And upwards, joyous, like a rising star,
She rose and vanished in the ether far.

But soon adown the dying sunset sailing,
And like a wounded bird her pinions trailing,
She fluttered back, with broken-hearted wailing,

She sobbed, "I found him by the summer sea
Reclined, his head upon a maiden's knee,—
She curled his hair and kissed him. Woe is me!"

She wept, "Now let my punishment begin!
I have been fond and foolish. Let me in
To expiate my sorrow and my sin."

The angel answered, "Nay, sad soul, go higher!
To be deceived in your true heart's desire
Was bitterer than a thousand years of fire!"

John Hay [1838–1905]

A TRAGEDY

She was only a woman, famished for loving,
Mad with devotion, and such slight things;
And he was a very great musician,
And used to finger his fiddle-strings.

Her heart's sweet gamut is cracking and breaking
For a look, for a touch,—for such slight things;
But he's such a very great musician
Grimacing and fingering his fiddle-strings.

Théophile Marzials [1850–

"MOTHER, I CANNOT MIND MY WHEEL"

Mother, I cannot mind my wheel;
My fingers ache, my lips are dry:
O, if you felt the pain I feel!
But O, who ever felt as I?

No longer could I doubt him true—
All other men may use deceit;
He always said my eyes were blue,
And often swore my lips were sweet.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

AIRLY BEACON

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;
O the pleasant sight to see
Shires and towns from Airly Beacon,
While my love climbed up to me!

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;
O the happy hours we lay
Deep in fern on Airly Beacon,
Courting through the summer's day!

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;
O the weary haunt for me,
All alone on Airly Beacon,
With his baby on my knee!

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

A SEA CHILD

THE lover of child Marjory
Had one white hour of life brim full;
Now the old nurse, the rocking sea,
Hath him to lull.

The daughter of child Marjory
Hath in her veins, to beat and run,
The glad indomitable sea,
The strong white sun.

Bliss Carman [1861–

FROM THE HARBOR HILL

"Is it a sail?" she asked.
"No," I said.
"Only a white sea-gull with its pinions spread."

"Is it a spar?" she asked.
"No," said I.
"Only the slender light-house tower against the sky."

"Flutters a pennant there?"
"No," I said.
"Only a shred of cloud in the sunset red."

"Surely a hull, a hull!"
"Where?" I cried.
"Only a rock half-bared by the ebbing tide."

"Wait you a ship?" I asked.
"Aye!" quoth she.
"The *Harbor Belle;* her mate comes home to marry me.

"Surely the good ship hath
Met no harm?"
Was it the west wind wailed or the babe on her arm?

"The *Harbor Belle!*" she urged.
Naught said I.—
For I knew o'er the grave o' the *Harbor Belle* the sea-gulls fly.

Gustav Kobbé [1857–

ALLAN WATER

On the banks of Allan Water,
When the sweet spring-time did fall,
Was the miller's lovely daughter,
Fairest of them all.

For his bride a soldier sought her,
And a winning tongue had he,
On the banks of Allan Water,
None so gay as she.

On the banks of Allan Water,
When brown autumn spread his store,
There I saw the miller's daughter,
But she smiled no more.

For the summer grief had brought her,
And the soldier false was he,
On the banks of Allan Water,
None so sad as she.

On the banks of Allan Water,
When the winter snow fell fast,
Still was seen the miller's daughter,
Chilling blew the blast.

But the miller's lovely daughter,
Both from cold and care was free;
On the banks of Allan Water,
There a corse lay she.

Matthew Gregory Lewis [1775–1818]

FORSAKEN

O WALY waly up the bank,
And waly waly down the brae,
And waly waly yon burn-side
Where I and my Love wont to gae!

I leaned my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree;
But first it bowed, and syne it brak,
Sae my true Love did lichtly me.

O waly waly, but love be bonny
A little while when it is new;
But when 'tis auld, it waxeth cauld
And fades awa' like morning dew.
O wherefore should I busk my head?
Or wherefore should I kame my hair?
For my true Love has me forsook,
And says he'll never loe me mair.

Now Arthur-seat sall be my bed;
The sheets shall ne'er be pressed by me:
Saint Anton's well sall be my drink,
Since my true Love has forsaken me.
Martinmas wind, when wilt thou blaw
And shake the green leaves aff the tree?
O gentle Death, when wilt thou come?
For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost, that freezes fell,
Nor blawing snaw's inclemencie;
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
But my Love's heart grown cauld to me.
When we cam in by Glasgow town
We were a comely sight to see;
My Love was clad in black velvet.
And I mysel in cramasie.

But had I wist, before I kissed,
That love had been sae ill to win;
I had locked my heart in a case of gowd
And pinned it with a siller pin.
And, O! if my young babe were born,
And sat upon the nurse's knee,
And I mysel were dead and gane,
And the green grass growing over me!

Unknown

BONNIE DOON

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love;
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frae aff its thorny tree;
And my fause luver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

THE TWO LOVERS

The lover of her body said:
"She is more beautiful than night,—
But like the kisses of the dead
Is my despair and my delight."

The lover of her soul replied:
"She is more wonderful than death,—
But bitter as the aching tide
Is all the speech of love she saith."

The lover of her body said:
"To know one secret of her heart,
For all the joy that I have had,
Is past the reach of all my art."

The lover of her soul replied:
"The secrets of her heart are mine,—
Save how she lives, a riven bride,
Between the dust and the divine."

The lover of her body sware:
"Though she should hate me, wit you well,
Rather than yield one kiss of her
I give my soul to burn in hell."

The lover of her soul cried out:
"Rather than leave her to your greed,
I would that I were walled about
With death,—and death were death indeed!"

The lover of her body wept,
And got no good of all his gain,
Knowing that in her heart she kept
The penance of the other's pain.

The lover of her soul went mad,
But when he did himself to death,
Despite of all the woe he had,
He smiled as one who vanquisheth.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

THE VAMPIRE

AS SUGGESTED BY THE PAINTING BY PHILIP BURNE-JONES

A FOOL there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I!)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
(We called her the woman who did not care),
But the fool he called her his lady fair
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the years we waste and the tears we waste,
And the work of our head and hand,
Belong to the woman who did not know
(*And now we know that she never could know*)
And did not understand.

A fool there was and his goods he spent
(Even as you and I!)
Honor and faith and a sure intent
(And it wasn't the least what the lady meant),
But a fool must follow his natural bent
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost,
And the excellent things we planned,
Belong to the woman who didn't know why
(*And now we know she never knew why*)
And did not understand.

The fool was stripped to his foolish hide
(Even as you and I!)
Which she might have seen when she threw him aside,—
(But it isn't on record the lady tried)
So some of him lived but the most of him died—
(Even as you and I!)

And it isn't the shame and it isn't the blame
That stings like a white-hot brand.
It's coming to know that she never knew why
(*Seeing at last she could never know why*)
And never could understand.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

AGATHA

She wanders in the April woods,
That glisten with the fallen shower;
She leans her face against the buds,
She stops, she stoops, she plucks a flower.
She feels the ferment of the hour:

She broodeth when the ringdove broods;
The sun and flying clouds have power
Upon her cheek and changing moods.
She cannot think she is alone,
As o'er her senses warmly steal
Floods of unrest she fears to own.
And almost dreads to feel.

Along the summer woodlands wide
Anew she roams, no more alone;
The joy she feared is at her side,
Spring's blushing secret now is known.
The primrose and its mates have flown,
The thrush's ringing note hath died;
But glancing eye and glowing tone
Fall on her from her god, her guide.
She knows not, asks not, what the goal,
She only feels she moves towards bliss,
And yields her pure unquestioning soul
To touch and fondling kiss.

And still she haunts those woodland ways,
Though all fond fancy finds there now
To mind of spring or summer days,
Are sodden trunk and songless bough.
The past sits widowed on her brow,
Homeward she wends with wintry gaze,
To walls that house a hollow vow,
To hearth where love hath ceased to blaze:
Watches the clammy twilight wane,
With grief too fixed for woe or tear;
And, with her forehead 'gainst the pane,
Envies the dying year.

Alfred Austin [1835–1913]

"A ROSE WILL FADE"

You were always a dreamer, Rose—red Rose,
As you swung on your perfumed spray,
Swinging, and all the world was true,
Swaying, what did it trouble you?
A rose will fade in a day.

Why did you smile to his face, red Rose,
As he whistled across your way?
And all the world went mad for you,
All the world it knelt to woo.
A rose will bloom in a day.

I gather your petals, Rose—red Rose,
The petals he threw away.
And all the world derided you;
Ah! the world, how well it knew
A rose will fade in a day!

Dora Sigerson Shorter [18 –

AFFAIRE D'AMOUR

One pale November day
Flying Summer paused,
They say:
And growing bolder,
O'er rosy shoulder
Threw her lover such a glance
That Autumn's heart began to dance.
(O happy lover!)

A leafless peach-tree bold
Thought for him she smiled,
I'm told;
And, stirred by love,
His sleeping sap did move,
Decking each naked branch with green
To show her that her look was seen!
(Alas, poor lover!)

But Summer, laughing fled,
Nor knew he loved her!
'Tis said
The peach-tree sighed,
And soon he gladly died:
And Autumn, weary of the chase,
Came on at Winter's sober pace
(O careless lover!)

Margaret Deland [1857–

A CASUAL SONG

She sang of lovers met to play
"Under the may bloom, under the may,"
But when I sought her face so fair,
I found the set face of Despair.

She sang of woodland leaves in spring,
And joy of young love dallying;
But her young eyes were all one moan,
And Death weighed on her heart like stone.

I could not ask, I know not now,
The story of that mournful brow;
It haunts me as it haunted then,
A flash from fire of hellbound men.

Roden Noel [1834–1894]

THE WAY OF IT

The wind is awake, pretty leaves, pretty leaves,
Heed not what he says; he deceives, he deceives:
Over and over
To the lowly clover
He has lisped the same love (and forgotten it, too)
He will soon be lisping and pledging to you.

The boy is abroad, pretty maid, pretty maid,
Beware his soft words; I'm afraid, I'm afraid:
He has said them before
Times many a score,
Ay, he died for a dozen ere his beard pricked through,
And the very same death he will die for you.

The way of the boy is the way of the wind,
As light as the leaves is dainty maid-kind;
One to deceive,
And one to believe—
That is the way of it, year to year;
But I know you will learn it too late, my dear.

John Vance Cheney [1848–

"WHEN LOVELY WOMAN STOOPS TO FOLLY"

From "The Vicar of Wakefield"

WHEN lovely woman stoops to folly
And finds too late that men betray,—
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover
And wring his bosom, is—to die.

Oliver Goldsmith [1728–1774]

FOLK-SONG

BACK she came through the trembling dusk;
And her mother spoke and said:
"What is it makes you late to-day,
And why do you smile and sing as gay
As though you just were wed?"
"*Oh mother, my hen that never had chicks*
Has hatched out six!"

Back she came through the flaming dusk;
And her mother spoke and said:
"What gives your eyes that dancing light,
What makes your lips so strangely bright,
And why are your cheeks so red?"
"*Oh mother, the berries I ate in the lane*
Have left a stain."

Back she came through the faltering dusk;
And her mother spoke and said:
"You are weeping; your footstep is heavy with care—
What makes you totter and cling to the stair,
And why do you hang your head?"
"*Oh mother—oh mother—you never can know—*
I loved him so!"

Louis Untermeyer [1885–

A VERY OLD SONG

"Daughter, thou art come to die:
Sound be thy sleeping, lass."
"Well: without lament or cry,
Mother, let me pass."

"What things on mould were best of all?
(Soft be thy sleeping, lass.)"
"The apples reddening till they fall
In the sun beside the convent wall.
Let me pass."

"Whom on earth hast thou loved best?
(Sound be thy sleeping, lass.)"
"Him that shared with me thy breast;
Thee and a knight last year our guest.
He hath an heron to his crest.
Let me pass."

"What leavest thou of fame or hoard?
(Soft be thy sleeping, lass.)"
"My far-blown shame for thy reward;
To my brother, gold to get him a sword.
Let me pass."

"But what wilt leave thy lover, Grim?
(Sound be thy sleeping, lass.)"
"The hair he kissed to strangle him.
Mother, let me pass."

William Laird [1888–

"SHE WAS YOUNG AND BLITHE AND FAIR"

She was young and blithe and fair,
Firm of purpose, sweet and strong;
Perfect was her crown of hair,
Perfect most of all her song.

Yesterday beneath an oak,
She was chanting in the wood:

Wandering harmonies awoke;
Sleeping echoes understood.

To-day without a song, without a word,
She seems to drag one piteous fallen wing
Along the ground, and, like a wounded bird,
Move silent, having lost the heart to sing.

She was young and blithe and fair,
Firm of purpose, sweet and strong;
Perfect was her crown of hair,
Perfect most of all her song.

Harold Monro [1879–

THE LASS THAT DIED OF LOVE

Life is not dear or gay
  Till lovers kiss it,
Love stole my life away
  Ere I might miss it.
In sober March I vowed
  I'd have no lover,
Love laid me in my shroud
  Ere June was over.

I felt his body take
  My body to it,
And knew my heart would break
  Ere I should rue it;
June roses are not sad
  When dew-drops steep them,
My moments were so glad
  I could not keep them.

Proud was I love had made
  Desire to fill me,
I shut my eyes and prayed
  That he might kill me.
I saw new wonders wreathe
  The stars above him.
And oh, I could not breathe
  For kissing of him.

Is love too sweet to last,
  Too fierce to cherish,
Can kisses fall too fast
  And lovers perish?
Who heeds since love disarms
  Death, ere we near him?
Within my lover's arms
  I did not fear him!

But since I died in sin
  And all unshriven,
They would not let me win
  Into their heaven;
They would not let my bier
  Into God's garden,
But bade me tarry here
  And pray for pardon.

I lie and wait for grace
  That shall surround me,
His kisses on my face,
  His arms around me;
And sinless maids draw near
  To drop above me
A virginal sad tear
  For envy of me.

Richard Middleton [1882–1911]

THE PASSION-FLOWER

My love gave me a passion-flower.
I nursed it well—so brief its hour!
My eyelids ache, my throat is dry:
He told me that it would not die.

My love and I are one, and yet
Full oft my cheeks with tears are wet—
So sweet the night is and the bower!
My love gave me a passion-flower.

So sweet! Hold fast my hands. Can God
Make all this joy revert to sod,
And leave to me but this for dower—
My love gave me a passion-flower.

Margaret Fuller [1871–

NORAH

I KNEW his house by the poplar-trees,
Green and silvery in the breeze;

"A heaven-high hedge," were the words he said,
"And holly-hocks, pink and white and red. . . ."

It seemed so far from McChesney's Hall—
Where first he told me about it all.

A long path runs inside from the gate,—
He still can take it, early or late;

But where in the world is the path for me
Except the river that runs to the sea!

Zoë Akins [1886–

OF JOAN'S YOUTH

I WOULD unto my fair restore
A simple thing:
The flushing cheek she had before!
Out-velveting
No more, no more,
On our sad shore,
The carmine grape, the moth's auroral wing.

Ah, say how winds in flooding grass
Unmoor the rose;
Or guileful ways the salmon pass
To sea, disclose;
For so, alas,
With Love, alas,
With fatal, fatal Love a girlhood goes.

Louise Imogen Guiney [1861–

THERE'S WISDOM IN WOMEN

"Oh love is fair, and love is rare;" my dear one she said,
"But love goes lightly over." I bowed her foolish head,
And kissed her hair and laughed at her. Such a child was she;
So new to love, so true to love, and she spoke so bitterly.

But there's wisdom in women, of more than they have known,
And thoughts go blowing through them, are wiser than their own,
Or how should my dear one, being ignorant and young,
Have cried on love so bitterly, with so true a tongue?

Rupert Brooke [1887–1915]

GOETHE AND FREDERIKA

Wander, oh, wander, maiden sweet,
In the fairy bower, while yet you may;
See in rapture he lies at your feet;
Rest on the truth of the glorious youth,
Rest—for a summer day.
That great clear spirit of flickering fire
You have lulled awhile in magic sleep,
But you cannot fill his wide desire.
His heart is tender, his eyes are deep,
His words divinely flow;
But his voice and his glance are not for you;
He never can be to a maiden true;
Soon will he wake and go.
Well, well, 'twere a piteous thing
To chain forever that strong young wing.
Let the butterfly break for his own sweet sake
The gossamer threads that have bound him;
Let him shed in free flight his rainbow light,
And gladden the world around him.
Short is the struggle and slight is the strain;
Such a web was made to be broken,
And she that wove it may weave again

Or, if no power of love to bless
Can heal the wound in her bosom true,
It is but a lorn heart more or less,
And hearts are many and poets few,
So his pardon is lightly spoken.

Henry Sidgwick [1838–1901]

THE SONG OF THE KING'S MINSTREL

I SING no longer of the skies,
And the swift clouds like driven ships,
For there is earth upon my eyes
And earth between my singing lips.
Because the King loved not my song
That he had found so sweet before,
I lie at peace the whole night long,
And sing no more.

The King liked well my song that night;
Upon the palace roof he lay
With his fair Queen, and as I might
I sang, until the morning's gray
Crept o'er their faces, and the King,
Mocked by the breaking dawn above,
Clutched at his youth and bade me sing
A song of love.

Well it might be—the King was old,
And though his Queen was passing fair,
His dull eyes might not catch the gold
That tangled in her wayward hair,
It had been much to see her smile,
But with my song I made her weep,
Our heavens last but a little while,
So now I sleep.

More than the pleasures that I had
I would have flung away to know
My song of love could make her sad,
Her sweet eyes fill and tremble so.

What were my paltry store of years,
My body's wretched life to stake,
Against the treasure of her tears,
For my love's sake?

Not lightly is a King made wise;
My body ached beneath his whips,
And there is earth upon my eyes,
And earth between my singing lips.
But I sang once—and for that grace
I am content to lie and store
The vision of her dear, wet face,
And sing no more.

Richard Middleton [1882–1911]

ANNIE SHORE AND JOHNNIE DOON

Annie Shore, 'twas, sang last night
Down in South End saloon;
A tawdry creature in the light,
Painted cheeks, eyes over bright,
Singing a dance-hall tune.

I'd be forgetting Annie's singing—
I'd not have thought again—
But for the thing that cried and fluttered
Through all the shrill refrain:
Youth crying above foul words, cheap music,
And innocence in pain.

They sentenced Johnnie Doon today
For murder, stark and grim:
Death's none too dear a price, they say,
For such-like men as him to pay:
No need to pity him!

And Johnnie Doon I'd not be pitying—
I could forget him now—
But for the childish look of trouble
That fell across his brow,
For the twisting hands he looked at dumbly
As if they'd sinned, he knew not how.

Patrick Orr [18

EMMY

Emmy's exquisite youth and her virginal air,
Eyes and teeth in the flash of a musical smile,
Come to me out of the past, and I see her there
As I saw her once for a while.

Emmy's laughter rings in my ears, as bright,
Fresh and sweet as the voice of a mountain brook,
And still I hear her telling us tales that night,
Out of Boccaccio's book.

There, in the midst of the villainous dancing-hall,
Leaning across the table, over the beer,
While the music maddened the whirling skirts of the ball,
As the midnight hour drew near,

There with the women, haggard, painted and old,
One fresh bud in a garland withered and stale,
She, with her innocent voice and her clear eyes, told
Tale after shameless tale.

And ever the witching smile, to her face beguiled,
Paused and broadened, and broke in a ripple of fun,
And the soul of a child looked out of the eyes of a child,
Or ever the tale was done.

O my child, who wronged you first, and began
First the dance of death that you dance so well?
Soul for soul: and I think the soul of a man
Shall answer for yours in hell.

Arthur Symons [1865–

THE BALLAD OF CAMDEN TOWN

I walked with Maisie long years back
The streets of Camden Town,
I splendid in my suit of black,
And she divine in brown.

Hers was a proud and noble face,
A secret heart and eyes
Like water in a lonely place
Beneath unclouded skies.

A bed, a chest, a faded mat,
And broken chairs a few,
Were all we had to grace our flat
In Hazel Avenue.

But I could walk to Hampstead Heath,
And crown her head with daisies,
And watch the streaming world beneath,
And men with other Maisies.

When I was ill and she was pale
And empty stood our store,
She left the latchkey on its nail,
And saw me nevermore.

Perhaps she cast herself away
Lest both of us should drown:
Perhaps she feared to die, as they
Who die in Camden Town.

What came of her? The bitter nights
Destroy the rose and lily,
And souls are lost among the lights
Of painted Piccadilly.

What came of her? The river flows
So deep and wide and stilly,
And waits to catch the fallen rose
And clasp the broken lily.

I dream she dwells in London still
And breathes the evening air,
And often walk to Primrose Hill,
And hope to meet her there.

Once more together we will live,
For I will find her yet:
I have so little to forgive;
So much, I can't forget.

James Elroy Flecker [1884–1915]

LOVE AND DEATH

HELEN OF KIRCONNELL

I WISH I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell lea!

Cursed be the heart that thought the thought,
And cursed the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropped,
And died to succor me!

O think na ye my heart was sair,
When my Love dropped and spak nae mair!
There did she swoon wi' meikle care,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll mak a garland o' thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I dee!

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, "Haste, and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I'd be blest,
Where thou lies low and taks thy rest,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn owre my e'en,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

Unknown

WILLY DROWNED IN YARROW

"Willy's rare, and Willy's fair,
And Willy's wondrous bonny;
And Willy hecht to marry me,
Gin e'er he married ony.

"Yestreen I made my bed fu' braid,
This night I'll make it narrow;
For a' the livelang winter night
I lie twined of my marrow.

"Oh came you by yon water-side?
Pu'd you the rose or lily?
Or came you by yon meadow green?
Or saw you my sweet Willy?"

She sought him east, she sought him west,
She sought him braid and narrow;
Syne in the cleaving of a craig,
She found him drowned in Yarrow.

Unknown

ANNAN WATER

"Annan Water's wading deep,
And my Love Annie's wondrous bonny;
And I am laith she should wet her feet,
Because I love her best of ony."

He's loupen on his bonny gray,
He rade the right gate and the ready;
For all the storm he wadna stay,
For seeking of his bonny lady.

And he has ridden o'er field and fell,
Through moor, and moss, and many a mire;
His spurs of steel were sair to bide,
And from her four feet flew the fire.

"My bonny gray, now play your part!
If ye be the steed that wins my dearie,
With corn and hay ye'll be fed for aye,
And never spur shall make you wearie."

The gray was a mare, and a right gude mare;
But when she wan the Annan Water,
She could not have ridden the ford that night
Had a thousand merks been wadded at her.

"O boatman, boatman, put off your boat,
Put off your boat for golden money!"
But for all the gold in fair Scotland,
He dared not take him through to Annie.

"Oh, I was sworn so late yestreen,
Not by a single oath, but mony!
I'll cross the drumly stream tonight,
Or never could I face my honey."

The side was stey, and the bottom deep,
From bank to brae the water pouring;
The bonny gray mare she swat for fear,
For she heard the water-kelpy roaring.

He spurred her forth into the flood,
I wot she swam both strong and steady;
But the stream was broad, and her strength did fail,
And he never saw his bonny lady!

Unknown

THE LAMENT OF THE BORDER WIDOW

My love he built me a bonnie bower,
And clad it a' wi' lily flower;
A brawer bower ye ne'er did see,
Than my true-love he built for me.

There came a man, by middle day,
He spied his sport, and went away;
And brought the king that very night,
Who brake my bower, and slew my knight.

He slew my knight, to me sae dear;
He slew my knight, and poin'd his gear:
My servants all for life did flee,
And left me in extremitie.

I sewed his sheet, making my mane;
I watched the corpse, mysel alane;
I watched his body night and day;
No living creature came that way.

I took his body on my back,
And whiles I gaed, and whiles I sat;
I digged a grave, and laid him in,
And happed him with the sod sae green.

But think na ye my heart was sair,
When I laid the moul' on his yellow hair?
O, think na ye my heart was wae,
When I turned about, away to gae?

Nae living man I'll love again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain;
Wi' ae lock o' his yellow hair
I'll chain my heart for evermair.

Unknown

ASPATIA'S SONG

From "The Maid's Tragedy"

LAY a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow branches bear;
Say, I died true.

My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth.
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

John Fletcher [1579–1625]

A BALLAD

From the "What-d'ye-call-it"

'TWAS when the seas were roaring
With hollow blasts of wind,
A damsel lay deploring,
All on a rock reclined.
Wide o'er the foaming billows
She cast a wistful look;
Her head was crowned with willows,
That trembled o'er the brook.

"Twelve months are gone and over,
And nine long tedious days;
Why didst thou, venturous lover,
Why didst thou trust the seas?
Cease, cease thou cruel ocean,
And let my lover rest;
Ah! what's thy troubled motion
To that within my breast?

"The merchant robbed of pleasure,
Sees tempests in despair;
But what's the loss of treasure,
To losing of my dear?

Should you some coast be laid on,
Where gold and diamonds grow,
You'd find a richer maiden,
But none that loves you so.

"How can they say that nature
Has nothing made in vain;
Why then, beneath the water,
Should hideous rocks remain?
No eyes the rocks discover
That lurk beneath the deep,
To wreck the wandering lover,
And leave the maid to weep."

All melancholy lying,
Thus wailed she for her dear;
Repaid each blast with sighing,
Each billow with a tear.
When, o'er the white wave stooping,
His floating corpse she spied,
Then, like a lily drooping,
She bowed her head, and died.

John Gay [1685–1732]

THE BRAES OF YARROW

Thy braes were bonnie, Yarrow stream,
When first on them I met my lover:
Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream,
When now thy waves his body cover!
Forever now, O Yarrow stream!
Thou art to me a stream of sorrow;
For never on thy banks shall I
Behold my love, the flower of Yarrow.

He promised me a milk-white steed,
To bear me to his father's bowers;
He promised me a little page,
To squire me to his father's towers;

He promised me a wedding-ring,—
The wedding-day was fixed to-morrow;
Now he is wedded to his grave,
Alas! his watery grave, in Yarrow.

Sweet were his words when last we met:
My passion I as freely told him:
Clasped in his arms, I little thought
That I should never more behold him!
Scarce was he gone, I saw his ghost;
It vanished with a shriek of sorrow;
Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,
And gave a doleful groan through Yarrow.

His mother from the window looked,
With all the longing of a mother;
His little sister weeping walked
The greenwood path to meet her brother.
They sought him east, they sought him west,
They sought him all the forest thorough;
They only saw the cloud of night,
They only heard the roar of Yarrow!

No longer from thy window look,—
Thou hast no son, thou tender mother!
No longer walk, thou little maid;
Alas! thou hast no more a brother.
No longer seek him east or west,
And search no more the forest thorough;
For, wandering in the night so dark,
He fell a lifeless corse in Yarrow.

The tear shall never leave my cheek,
No other youth shall be my marrow:
I'll seek thy body in the stream,
And then with thee I'll sleep in Yarrow.
The tear did never leave her cheek,
No other youth became her marrow;
She found his body in the stream,
And now with him she sleeps in Yarrow.

John Logan [1748–1788]

THE CHURCHYARD ON THE SANDS

My love lies in the gates of foam,
The last dear wreck of shore;
The naked sea-marsh binds her home,
The sand her chamber door.

The gray gull flaps the written stones,
The ox-birds chase the tide;
And near that narrow field of bones
Great ships at anchor ride.

Black piers with crust of dripping green,
One foreland, like a hand,
O'er intervals of grass between
Dim lonely dunes of sand.

A church of silent weathered looks,
A breezy reddish tower,
A yard whose mounded resting-nooks
Are tinged with sorrel flower.

In peace the swallow's eggs are laid
Along the belfry walls;
The tempest does not reach her shade,
The rain her silent halls.

But sails are sweet in summer sky,
The lark throws down a lay;
The long salt levels steam and dry,
The cloud-heart melts away.

But patches of the sea-pink shine,
The pied crows poise and come;
The mallow hangs, the bind-weeds twine,
Where her sweet lips are dumb.

The passion of the wave is mute;
No sound or ocean shock;
No music save the trilling flute
That marks the curlew flock.

But yonder when the wind is keen,
And rainy air is clear,
The merchant city's spires are seen,
The toil of men grows near.

Along the coast-way grind the wheels
Of endless carts of coal;
And on the sides of giant keels
The shipyard hammers roll.

The world creeps here upon the shout,
And stirs my heart to pain;
The mist descends and blots it out,
And I am strong again.

Strong and alone, my dove, with thee;
And though mine eyes be wet,
There's nothing in the world to me
So dear as my regret.

I would not change my sorrow sweet
For others' nuptial hours;
I love the daisies at thy feet
More than their orange flowers.

My hand alone shall tend thy tomb
From leaf-bud to leaf-fall,
And wreathe around each season's bloom
Till autumn ruins all.

Let snowdrops early in the year
Droop o'er her silent breast;
And bid the later cowslip rear
The amber of its crest.

Come hither, linnets tufted-red;
Drift by, O wailing tern;
Set pure vale lilies at her head,
At her feet lady-fern.

Grow, samphire, at the tidal brink,
Wave pansies of the shore,
To whisper how alone I think
Of her for evermore.

Bring blue sea-hollies thorny, keen,
Long lavender in flower;
Gray wormwood like a hoary queen,
Stanch mullein like a tower.

O sea-wall, mounded long and low,
Let iron bounds be thine;
Nor let the salt wave overflow
That breast I held divine.

Nor float its sea-weed to her hair,
Nor dim her eyes with sands;
No fluted cockle burrow where
Sleep folds her patient hands.

Though thy crest feel the wild sea's breath,
Though tide-weight tear thy root,
Oh, guard the treasure-house, where death
Has bound my Darling mute.

Though cold her pale lips to reward
With love's own mysteries,
Ah, rob no daisy from her sward,
Rough gale of eastern seas!

Ah, render sere no silken bent
That by her head-stone waves;
Let noon and golden summer blent
Pervade these ocean graves.

And, ah, dear heart, in thy still nest,
Resign this earth of woes,
Forget the ardors of the west,
Neglect the morning glows.

Sleep and forget all things but one,
Heard in each wave of sea,—
How lonely all the years will run
Until I rest by thee.

John Byrne Leicester Warren [1835–1895]

THE MINSTREL'S SONG

From "Ælla"

Oh sing unto my roundelay;
Oh drop the briny tear with me;
Dance no more at holiday;
Like a running river be!
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow tree!

Black his hair as the winter night,
White his throat as the summer snow,
Red his cheek as the morning light,
Cold he lies in the grave below.

Sweet his tongue as the throstle's note;
Quick in dance as thought can be;
Deft his tabor, cudgel stout,
Oh, he lies by the willow tree.

Hark! the raven flaps his wing
In the briery dell below;
Hark! the death-owl loud doth sing,
To the night-mares as they go.

See! the white moon shines on high;
Whiter is my true love's shroud;
Whiter than the morning sky,
Whiter than the evening cloud.

Here, upon my true love's grave,
Shall the barren flowers be laid;
Not one holy saint to save
All the coldness of a maid.

With my hands I'll twist the briers
Round his holy corpse to gre;
Elfin fairy, light your fires,
Here my body still shall be.

Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,
Drain my heartès blood away;
Life and all its good I scorn,
Dance by night, or feast by day.

Water-witches, crowned with reeds,
Bear me to your deadly tide.
I die! I come! my true love waits!—
Thus the damsel spake, and died.

Thomas Chatterton [1752–1770]

HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel's wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and locked embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But, O! fell Death's untimely frost,
That nipped my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly;
And moldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

TO MARY IN HEAVEN

Thou lingering star, with lessening ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace,—
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined amorous round the raptured scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be pressed,
The birds sang love on every spray,—
Till soon, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

LUCY

I

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a lover's head!
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"

II

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh,
The difference to me!

III

I traveled among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed,
The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

IV

Three years she grew in sun and shower;
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mold the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

V

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, or force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

PROUD MAISIE

From "The Heart of Midlothian"

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?"
—"When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?"
—"The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady!"

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

SONG

EARL MARCH looked on his dying child,
And, smit with grief to view her—
The youth, he cried, whom I exiled
Shall be restored to woo her.

She's at the window many an hour
His coming to discover;
And he looked up to Ellen's bower
And she looked on her lover—

But ah! so pale, he knew her not,
Though her smile on him was dwelling!
And I am then forgot—forgot?
It broke the heart of Ellen.

In vain he weeps, in vain he sighs,
Her cheek is cold as ashes;
Nor love's own kiss shall wake those eyes
To lift their silken lashes.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

THE MAID'S LAMENT

From "The Examination of Shakespeare"

I LOVED him not; and yet now he is gone
I feel I am alone.
I checked him while he spoke; yet could he speak,
Alas! I would not check.

For reasons not to love him once I sought,
And wearied all my thought
To vex myself and him: I now would give
My love, could he but live
Who lately lived for me, and when he found
'Twas vain, in holy ground
He hid his face amid the shades of death.
I waste for him my breath
Who wasted his for me; but mine returns,
And this lorn bosom burns
With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,
And waking me to weep
Tears that had melted his soft heart: for years
Wept he as bitter tears.
Merciful God! Such was his latest prayer,
These may she never share!
Quieter is his breath, his breast more cold,
Than daisies in the mold,
Where children spell, athwart the churchyard gate,
His name and life's brief date.
Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you be,
And, oh! pray too for me!

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

"SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND"

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
And lovers are round her, sighing:
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awaking;—
Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking.

He had lived for his love, for his country he died,
They were all that to life had entwined him;
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his love stay behind him.

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the West,
From her own loved island of sorrow.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"AT THE MID HOUR OF NIGHT"

At the mid hour of night, when stars are weeping, I fly
To the lone vale we loved, when life shone warm in thine eye;
And I think oft, if spirits can steal from the regions of air
To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt come to me there,
And tell me our love is remembered even in the sky.

Then I sing the wild song 'twas once such rapture to hear,
When our voices commingling breathed like one on the ear;
And, as Echo far off through the vale my sad orison rolls,
I think, O my love! 'tis thy voice from the Kingdom of Souls
Faintly answering still the notes that once were so dear.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

ON A PICTURE BY POUSSIN REPRESENTING SHEPHERDS IN ARCADIA

Ah, happy youths, ah, happy maid,
Snatch present pleasure while ye may;
Laugh, dance, and sing in sunny glade,
Your limbs are light, your hearts are gay;
Ye little think there comes a day
('Twill come to you, it came to me)
When love and life shall pass away:
I, too, once dwelt in Arcady.

Or listless lie by yonder stream,
And muse and watch the ripples play,
Or note their noiseless flow, and deem
That life thus gently glides away—
That love is but a sunny ray
To make our years go smiling by.
I knew that stream, I too could dream,
I, too, once dwelt in Arcady.

Sing, shepherds, sing; sweet lady, listen;
Sing to the music of the rill,
With happy tears her bright eyes glisten,
For, as each pause the echoes fill,
They waft her name from hill to hill—
So listened my lost love to me,
The voice she loved has long been still;
I, too, once dwelt in Arcady.

John Addington Symonds [1840–1893]

THRENODY

THERE'S a grass-grown road from the valley—
A winding road and steep—
That leads to the quiet hill-top,
Where lies your love asleep.
While mine is lying, God knows where,
A hundred fathoms deep.

I saw you kneel at a grave-side—
How still a grave can be,
Wrapped in the tender starlight,
Far from the moaning sea!
But through all dreams and starlight,
The breakers call to me.

Oh, steep is your way to Silence—
But steeper the ways I roam,
For never a road can take me
Beyond the wind and foam,
And never a road can reach him
Who lies so far from home.

Ruth Guthrie Harding [1882–

STRONG AS DEATH

O DEATH, when thou shalt come to me
From out thy dark, where she is now,
Come not with graveyard smell on thee,
Or withered roses on thy brow.

Come not, O Death, with hollow tone,
And soundless step, and clammy hand—
Lo, I am now no less alone
Than in thy desolate, doubtful land;

But with that sweet and subtle scent
That ever clung about her (such
As with all things she brushed was blent);
And with her quick and tender touch.

With the dim gold that lit her hair,
Crown thyself, Death; let fall thy tread
So light that I may dream her there,
And turn upon my dying bed.

And through my chilling veins shall flame
My love, as though beneath her breath;
And in her voice but call my name,
And I will follow thee, O Death.

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855–1896]

"I SHALL NOT CRY RETURN"

I SHALL not cry Return! Return!
Nor weep my years away;
But just as long as sunsets burn,
And dawns make no delay,
I shall be lonesome—I shall miss
Your hand, your voice, your smile, your kiss.

Not often shall I speak your name,
For what would strangers care
That once a sudden tempest came
And swept my gardens bare,
And then you passed, and in your place
Stood Silence with her lifted face.

Not always shall this parting be,
For though I travel slow,

I, too, may claim eternity
And find the way you go;
And so I do my task and wait
The opening of the outer gate.

Ellen M. H. Gates [1835–

"OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM"

Oh! snatched away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturbed the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,
That Death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou,—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

TO MARY

If I had thought thou couldst have died,
I might not weep for thee;
But I forgot, when by thy side,
That thou couldst mortal be:
It never through my mind had passed
The time would e'er be o'er,
And I on thee should look my last,
And thou shouldst smile no more!

And still upon that face I look,
And think 'twill smile again;
And still the thought I will not brook,
That I must look in vain.
But when I speak—thou dost not say
What thou ne'er left'st unsaid;
And now I feel, as well I may,
Sweet Mary, thou art dead!

If thou wouldst stay, e'en as thou art,
All cold and all serene,
I still might press thy silent heart,
And where thy smiles have been.
While e'en thy chill, bleak corse I have,
Thou seemest still mine own;
But there I lay thee in thy grave,—
And I am now alone!

I do not think, where'er thou art,
Thou hast forgotten me;
And I, perhaps, may soothe this heart
In thinking, too, of thee;
Yet there was round thee such a dawn
Of light ne'er seen before,
As fancy never could have drawn,
And never can restore!

Charles Wolfe [1791–1823]

MY HEART AND I

Enough! we're tired, my heart and I.
We sit beside the headstone thus,
And wish that name were carved for us.
The moss reprints more tenderly
The hard types of the mason's knife,
As Heaven's sweet life renews earth's life
With which we're tired, my heart and I.

You see we're tired, my heart and I.
We dealt with books, we trusted men,
And in our own blood drenched the pen,

As if such colors could not fly.
We walked too straight for fortune's end,
We loved too true to keep a friend;
At last we're tired, my heart and I.

How tired we feel, my heart and I!
We seem of no use in the world;
Our fancies hang gray and uncurled
About men's eyes indifferently;
Our voice which thrilled you so, will let
You sleep; our tears are only wet:
What do we here, my heart and I?

So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
It was not thus in that old time
When Ralph sat with me 'neath the lime
To watch the sunset from the sky.
"Dear love, you're looking tired," he said:
I, smiling at him, shook my head.
'Tis now we're tired, my heart and I.

So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
Though now none takes me on his arm
To fold me close and kiss me warm
Till each quick breath end in a sigh
Of happy languor. Now, alone,
We lean upon this graveyard stone,
Uncheered, unkissed, my heart and I.

Tired out we are, my heart and I.
Suppose the world brought diadems
To tempt us, crusted with loose gems
Of powers and pleasures? Let it try.
We scarcely care to look at even
A pretty child, or God's blue heaven,
We feel so tired, my heart and I.

Yet who complains? My heart and I?
In this abundant earth no doubt
Is little room for things worn out:

Disdain them, break them, throw them by!
And if before the days grew rough
We *once* were loved, used,—well enough,
I think, we've fared, my heart and I.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

ROSALIND'S SCROLL

From "The Poet's Vow"

I LEFT thee last, a child at heart,
A woman scarce in years:
I come to thee, a solemn corpse
Which neither feels nor fears.
I have no breath to use in sighs;
They laid the dead-weights on mine eyes
To seal them safe from tears.

Look on me with thine own calm look:
I meet it calm as thou.
No look of thine can change *this* smile,
Or break thy sinful vow:
I tell thee that my poor scorned heart
Is of thine earth—thine earth, a part:
It cannot vex thee now.

But out, alas! these words are writ
By a living, loving one,
Adown whose cheeks the proofs of life,
The warm quick tears do run:
Ah, let the unloving corpse control
Thy scorn back from the loving soul
Whose place of rest is won.

I have prayed for thee with bursting sob
When passion's course was free;
I have prayed for thee with silent lips
In the anguish none could see;
They whispered oft, "She sleepeth soft"—
But I only prayed for thee.

Go to! I pray for thee no more:
The corpse's tongue is still;
Its folded fingers point to heaven,
But point there stiff and chill:
No farther wrong, no farther woe
Hath license from the sin below
Its tranquil heart to thrill.

I charge thee, by the living's prayer,
And the dead's silentness,
To wring from out thy soul a cry
Which God shall hear and bless!
Lest Heaven's own palm droop in my hand,
And pale among the saints I stand,
A saint companionless.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

LAMENT OF THE IRISH EMIGRANT

I'm sittin' on the stile, Mary,
Where we sat side by side
On a bright May mornin' long ago,
When first you were my bride.
The corn was springin' fresh and green,
And the lark sang loud and high,
And the red was on your lip, Mary,
And the love-light in your eye.

The place is little changed, Mary,
The day is bright as then,
The lark's loud song is in my ear,
And the corn is green again;
But I miss the soft clasp of your hand,
And your breath, warm on my cheek:
And I still keep list'nin' for the words
You never more will speak.

'Tis but a step down yonder lane,
And the little church stands near—
The church where we were wed, Mary;
I see the spire from here.

But the graveyard lies between, Mary,
And my step might break your rest—
For I've laid you, darling, down to sleep,
With your baby on your breast.

I'm very lonely now, Mary,
For the poor make no new friends;
But, oh! they love the better still
The few our Father sends.
And you were all I had, Mary,
My blessin' and my pride:
There's nothin' left to care for now,
Since my poor Mary died.

Yours was the good, brave heart, Mary,
That still kept hoping on,
When the trust in God had left my soul,
And my arm's young strength was gone;
There was comfort ever on your lip,
And the kind look on your brow—
I bless you, Mary, for that same,
Though you cannot hear me now.

I thank you for the patient smile
When your heart was fit to break,
When the hunger pain was gnawin' there,
And you hid it for my sake;
I bless you for the pleasant word,
When your heart was sad and sore—
Oh! I'm thankful you are gone, Mary,
Where grief can't reach you more!

I'm biddin' you a long farewell,
My Mary—kind and true!
But I'll not forget you, darling,
In the land I'm goin' to:
They say there's bread and work for all,
And the sun shines always there,
But I'll not forget old Ireland,
Were it fifty times as fair!

And often in those grand old woods
I'll sit, and shut my eyes,
And my heart will travel back again
To the place where Mary lies;
And I'll think I see the little stile
Where we sat side by side,
And the springin' corn, and the bright May morn,
When first you were my bride.

Helen Selina Sheridan [1807–1867]

THE KING OF DENMARK'S RIDE

Word was brought to the Danish king
(Hurry!)
That the love of his heart lay suffering,
And pined for the comfort his voice would bring;
(O, ride as though you were flying!)
Better he loves each golden curl
On the brow of that Scandinavian girl
Than his rich crown jewels of ruby and pearl:
And his rose of the isles is dying!

Thirty nobles saddled with speed;
(Hurry!)
Each one mounting a gallant steed
Which he kept for battle and days of need;
(O, ride as though you were flying!)
Spurs were struck in the foaming flank;
Worn-out chargers staggered and sank;
Bridles were slackened, and girths were burst;
But ride as they would, the king rode first,
For his rose of the isles lay dying!

His nobles are beaten, one by one;
(Hurry!)
They have fainted, and faltered, and homeward gone;
His little fair page now follows alone,
For strength and for courage trying!
The king looked back at that faithful child;
Wan was the face that answering smiled;

They passed the drawbridge with clattering din,
Then he dropped; and only the king rode in
Where his rose of the isles lay dying!

The king blew a blast on his bugle horn;
(Silence!)
No answer came; but faint and forlorn
An echo returned on the cold gray morn,
Like the breath of a spirit sighing.
The castle portal stood grimly wide;
None welcomed the king from that weary ride;
For dead, in the light of the dawning day,
The pale sweet form of the welcomer lay,
Who had yearned for his voice while dying!

The panting steed, with a drooping crest,
Stood weary.
The king returned from her chamber of rest,
The thick sobs choking in his breast;
And, that dumb companion eyeing,
The tears gushed forth which he strove to check;
He bowed his head on his charger's neck:
"O steed, that every nerve didst strain,
Dear steed, our ride hath been in vain
To the halls where my love lay dying!"

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808–1878]

THE WATCHER

A rose for a young head,
A ring for a bride,
Joy for the homestead
Clean and wide—
Who's that waiting
In the rain outside?

A heart for an old friend,
A hand for the new:
Love can to earth lend
Heaven's hue—
Who's that standing
In the silver dew?

A smile for the parting,
A tear as they go,
God's sweethearting
Ends just so—
Who's that watching
Where the black winds blow?

He who is waiting
In the rain outside,
He who is standing
Where the dew drops wide,
He who is watching
In the wind must ride
(Though the pale hands cling)
With the rose
And the ring
And the bride,
Must ride
With the red of the rose,
And the gold of the ring,
And the lips and the hair of the bride.

James Stephens [18

THE THREE SISTERS

Gone are those three, those sisters rare
With wonder-lips and eyes ashine.
One was wise and one was fair,
And one was mine.

Ye mourners, weave for the sleeping hair
Of only two your ivy vine.
For one was wise and one was fair,
But one was mine.

Arthur Davison Ficke [1883–

BALLAD

He said: "The shadows darken down,
The night is near at hand.
Now who's the friend will follow me
Into the sunless land?

"For I have vassals leal and true,
And I have comrades kind,
And wheresoe'er my soul shall speed,
They will not stay behind."

He sought the brother young and blithe
Who bore his spear and shield:
"In the long chase you've followed me,
And in the battle-field.

"Few vows you make; but true's your heart,
And you with me will win."
He said: "God speed you, brother mine,
But I am next of kin."

He sought the friar, the gray old priest
Who loved his father's board.
The friar he turned him to the east
And reverently adored.

He said: "A godless name you bear,
A godless life you've led,
And whoso wins along with you,
His spirit shall have dread.

"Oh, hasten, get your guilty soul
From every burden shriven;
Yet you are bound for flame and dole,
But I am bound for heaven."

He sought the lady bright and proud,
Who sate at his right hand:
"Make haste, O Love, to follow me
Into the sunless land."

She said: "And pass you in your prime?
Heaven give me days of cheer!
And keep me from the sunless clime
Many and many a year."

All heavily the sun sank down
  Among black clouds of fate.
There came a woman fair and wan
  Unto the castle gate.

Through gazing vassals, idle serfs,
  So silently she sped!
The winding staircase echoed not
  Unto her light, light tread.

His lady eyed her scornfully.
  She stood at his right hand;
She said: "And I will follow you
  Into the sunless land.

"There is no expiation, none.
  A bitter load I bore:
Now I shall love you nevermore,
  Never and nevermore.

"There is no touch or tone of yours
  Can make the old love wake."
She said: "But I will follow you,
  Even for the old love's sake."

Oh, he has kissed her on the brow,
  He took her by the hand:
Into the sunless land they went,
  Into the starless land.

May Kendall [1861–

"O THAT 'TWERE POSSIBLE"

From "Maud"

O THAT 'twere possible
  After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
  Round me once again!

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent moody places
Of the land that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixed with kisses sweeter, sweeter
Than anything on earth.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee.
Ah, Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be!

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

"HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD"

From "The Princess"

Home they brought her warrior dead;
She nor swooned, nor uttered cry.
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Called him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stepped,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee,—
Like summer tempest came her tears,
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

EVELYN HOPE

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass.
Little has yet been changed, I think:
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir,
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew—
And, just because I was thrice as old,
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love:
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed, it may be, for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few:
Much is to learn, much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come,—at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?

Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red,—
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me:
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!
My heart seemed full as it could hold;
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.
So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep:
See, I shut it inside the sweet, cold hand!
There, that is our secret: go to sleep!
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

REMEMBRANCE

Cold in the earth—and the deep snow piled above thee,
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
Have I forgot, my only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
Over the mountains, on that northern shore,
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
Thy noble heart for ever, ever more?

Cold in the earth—and fifteen wild Decembers,
From those brown hills, have melted into spring:
Faithful, indeed, is the spirit that remembers
After such years of change and suffering!

Sweet Love of youth, forgive, if I forget thee,
While the world's tide is bearing me along;
Other desires and other hopes beset me,
Hopes which obscure, but cannot do thee wrong!

No later light has lightened up my heaven,
No second morn has ever shone for me;
All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given,
All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

But, when the days of golden dreams had perished,
And even Despair was powerless to destroy;
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
Strengthened, and fed without the aid of joy.

Then did I check the tears of useless passion—
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
Down to that tomb already more than mine.

And, even yet, I dare not let it languish,
Dare not indulge in memory's rapturous pain;
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
How could I seek the empty world again?

Emily Brontë [1818–1848]

SONG

The linnet in the rocky dells,
The moor-lark in the air,
The bee among the heather bells
That hide my lady fair:

The wild deer browse above her breast;
The wild birds raise their brood;
And they, her smiles of love caressed,
Have left her solitude.

I ween that, when the grave's dark wall
Did first her form retain,
They thought their hearts could ne'er recall
The light of joy again.

They thought the tide of grief would flow
  Unchecked through future years;
But where is all their anguish now,
  And where are all their tears?

Well, let them fight for honor's breath,
  Or pleasure's shade pursue:
The dweller in the land of death
  Is changed and careless too.

And, if their eyes should watch and weep
  Till sorrow's source were dry,
She would not, in her tranquil sleep,
  Return a single sigh.

Blow, west-wind, by the lonely mound,
  And murmur, summer streams!
There is no need of other sound
  To soothe my lady's dreams.

Emily Brontë [1818–1848]

SONG OF THE OLD LOVE

From "Supper at the Mill"

WHEN sparrows build, and the leaves break forth,
  My old sorrow wakes and cries,
For I know there is dawn in the far, far north,
  And a scarlet sun doth rise;
Like a scarlet fleece the snow-field spreads,
  And the icy founts run free,
And the bergs begin to bow their heads,
  And plunge, and sail in the sea.

O my lost love, and my own, own love,
  And my love that loved me so!
Is there never a chink in the world above
  Where they listen for words from below?
Nay, I spoke once, and I grieved thee sore,
  I remember all that I said,
And now thou wilt hear me no more—no more
  Till the sea gives up her dead.

Thou didst set thy foot on the ship, and sail
To the ice-fields and the snow;
Thou wert sad, for thy love did naught avail,
And the end I could not know;
How could I tell I should love thee to-day,
Whom that day I held not dear?
How could I know I should love thee away
When I did not love thee anear?

We shall walk no more through the sodden plain
With the faded bents o'erspread,
We shall stand no more by the seething main
While the dark wrack drives o'erhead;
We shall part no more in the wind and the rain,
Where thy last farewell was said;
But perhaps I shall meet thee and know thee again
When the sea gives up her dead.

Jean Ingelow [1820–1897]

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes:
Ah! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required:
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample Spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of Death.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

TOO LATE

"DOWGLAS, DOWGLAS, TENDIR AND TREU"

COULD ye come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Never a scornful word should grieve ye,
I'd smile on ye sweet as the angels do:
Sweet as your smile on me shone ever,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Oh, to call back the days that are not!
My eyes were blinded, your words were few:
Do you know the truth now, up in heaven,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true?

I never was worthy of you, Douglas;
Not half worthy the like of you:
Now all men beside seem to me like shadows—
I love you, Douglas, tender and true.

Stretch out your hand to me, Douglas, Douglas,
Drop forgiveness from heaven like dew;
As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true!

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

FOUR YEARS

AT the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
Said I mournful—Though my life be in its prime,
Bare lie my meadows all shorn before their time,
O'er my sere woodlands the leaves are turning brown;
It is the hot Midsummer, when the hay is down.

At the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
Stood she by the brooklet, young and very fair,
With the first white bindweed twisted in her hair—
Hair that drooped like birch-boughs, all in her simple gown—
That eve in high Midsummer, when the hay was down.

At the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
Crept she a willing bride close into my breast;
Low-piled the thunder-clouds had sunk into the west,
Red-eyed the sun out-glared like knight from leaguered town;
It was the high Midsummer, and the sun was down.

It is Midsummer—all the hay is down,
Close to her forehead press I dying eyes,
Praying God shield her till we meet in Paradise,
Bless her in love's name who was my joy and crown,
And I go at Midsummer, when the hay is down.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

BARBARA

On the Sabbath-day,
Through the churchyard old and gray,
Over the crisp and yellow leaves, I held my rustling way;
And amid the words of mercy, falling on my soul like balms;
'Mid the gorgeous storms of music—in the mellow organ-calms,
'Mid the upward streaming prayers, and the rich and solemn psalms,
I stood careless, Barbara.

My heart was otherwhere
While the organ shook the air,
And the priest, with outspread hands, blessed the people with a prayer;
But, when rising to go homeward, with a mild and saint-like shine
Gleamed a face of airy beauty with its heavenly eyes on mine—
Gleamed and vanished in a moment—O that face was surely thine
Out of heaven, Barbara!

O pallid, pallid face!
O earnest eyes of grace!
When last I saw thee, dearest, it was in another place.
You came running forth to meet me with my love-gift on your wrist:

The flutter of a long white dress, then all was lost in mist—
A purple stain of agony was on the mouth I kissed,
That wild morning, Barbara!

I searched in my despair,
Sunny noon and midnight air;
I could not drive away the thought that you were lingering there.
O many and many a winter night I sat when you were gone,
My worn face buried in my hands, beside the fire alone.
Within the dripping churchyard, the rain plashing on your stone,
You were sleeping, Barbara.

'Mong angels, do you think
Of the precious golden link
I clasped around your happy arm while sitting by yon brink?
Or when that night of gliding dance, of laughter and guitars,
Was emptied of its music, and we watched, through lattice-bars,
The silent midnight heaven creeping o'er us with its stars,
Till the day broke, Barbara?

In the years I've changed;
Wild and far my heart has ranged,
And many sins and errors now have been on me avenged;
But to you I have been faithful, whatsoever good I lacked:
I loved you, and above my life still hangs that love intact—
Your love the trembling rainbow, I the reckless cataract.
Still I love you, Barbara!

Yet, love, I am unblest;
With many doubts oppressed,
I wander like a desert wind, without a place of rest.
Could I but win you for an hour from off that starry shore,
The hunger of my soul were stilled, for Death hath told you more
Than the melancholy world doth know; things deeper than all lore
Will you teach me, Barbara?

In vain, in vain, in vain!
You will never come again.
There droops upon the dreary hills a mournful fringe of rain;
The gloaming closes slowly round, loud winds are in the tree,
Round selfish shores for ever moans the hurt and wounded sea,
There is no rest upon the earth, peace is with Death and thee, Barbara!

Alexander Smith [1830–1867]

SONG

When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress-tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember
And haply may forget.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

HELEN

The autumn seems to cry for thee,
Best lover of the autumn days!
Each scarlet-tipped and wine-red tree,
Each russet branch and branch of gold,

Gleams through its veil of shimmering haze,
And seeks thee as they sought of old:
For all the glory of their dress,
They wear a look of wistfulness.

In every wood I see thee stand,
The ruddy boughs above thy head,
And heaped in either slender hand
The frosted white and amber ferns,
The sumach's deep, resplendent red,
Which like a fiery feather burns,
And, over all, thy happy eyes,
Shining as clear as autumn skies.

I hear thy call upon the breeze,
Gay as the dancing wind, and sweet,
And, underneath the radiant trees,
O'er lichens gray and darkling moss,
Follow the trace of those light feet
Which never were at fault or loss,
But, by some forest instinct led,
Knew where to turn and how to tread.

Where art thou, comrade true and tried?
The woodlands call for thee in vain,
And sadly burns the autumn-tide
Before my eyes, made dim and blind
By blurring, puzzling mists of pain.
I look before, I look behind;
Beauty and loss seem everywhere,
And grief and glory fill the air.

Already, in these few short weeks,
A hundred things I leave unsaid,
Because there is no voice that speaks
In answer, and no listening ear,
No one to care now thou art dead!
And month by month, and year by year,
I shall but miss thee more, and go
With half my thought untold, I know.

I do not think thou hast forgot,
I know that I shall not forget,
And some day, glad, but wondering not,
We two shall meet, and, face to face,
In still, fair fields unseen as yet,
Shall talk of each old time and place,
And smile at pain interpreted
By wisdom learned since we were dead.

Sarah Chauncey Woolsey [1845–1905]

LOVE AND DEATH

In the wild autumn weather, when the rain was on the sea,
And the boughs sobbed together, Death came and spake to me:
"Those red drops of thy heart I have come to take from thee;
As the storm sheds the rose, so thy love shall broken be,"
Said Death to me.

Then I stood straight and fearless while the rain was in the wave,
And I spake low and tearless: "When thou hast made my grave,
Those red drops from my heart then thou shalt surely have;
But the rose keeps its bloom, as I my love will save
All for my grave."

In the wild autumn weather a dread sword slipped from its sheath;
While the boughs sobbed together, I fought a fight with Death,
And I vanquished him with prayer, and I vanquished him by faith:
Now the summer air is sweet with the rose's fragrant breath
That conquered Death.

Rosa Mulholland [18 –

TO ONE IN PARADISE

Thou wast all that to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out of the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast.

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
No more—no more—no more—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar.

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulcher
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me;
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulcher there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

FOR ANNIE

Thank Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length:
But no matter—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And O! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst

For the naphthaline river
  Of Passion accurst—
I have drunk of a water
  That quenches all thirst,

—Of a water that flows,
  With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
  Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
  Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
  Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy,
  And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
  In a different bed—
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
  In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
  Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
  Regretting, its roses—
Its old agitations
  Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
  Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
  About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odor,
  Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
  Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
  Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
  And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
  Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
Now, in my bed
(Knowing her love),
That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
Now, in my bed
(With her love at my breast),
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

TELLING THE BEES

Here is the place; right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—
The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door,—
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
  Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
  Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
  Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
  Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
  For the dead to-day:
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
  The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill
  With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
  Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
  In my ears sounds on:—
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
  Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

A TRYST

I WILL not break the tryst, my dear,
  That we have kept so long,
Though winter and its snows are here,
  And I've no heart for song.

You went into the voiceless night;
  Your path led far away.
Did you forget me, Heart's Delight,
  As night forgets the day?

Sometimes I think that you would speak
  If still you held me dear;
But space is vast, and I am weak—
  Perchance I do not hear.

Surely, howe'er remote the star
Your wandering feet may tread,
When I shall pass the sundering bar
Our souls must still be wed.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835–1908]

LOVE'S RESURRECTION DAY

Round among the quiet graves,
When the sun was low,
Love went grieving,—Love who saves:
Did the sleepers know?

At his touch the flowers awoke,
At his tender call
Birds into sweet singing broke,
And it did befall

From the blooming, bursting sod
All Love's dead arose,
And went flying up to God
By a way Love knows.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835–1908]

HEAVEN

Only to find Forever, blest
By thine encircling arm;
Only to lie beyond unrest
In passion's dreamy calm!

Only to meet and never part,
To sleep and never wake,—
Heart unto heart and soul to soul,
Dead for each other's sake.

Martha Gilbert Dickinson [18 –

JANETTE'S HAIR

Oh, loosen the snood that you wear, Janette,
Let me tangle a hand in your hair—my pet;

For the world to me had no daintier sight
Than your brown hair veiling your shoulders white;
  Your beautiful dark brown hair—my pet.

It was brown with a golden gloss, Janette,
It was finer than silk of the floss—my pet;
'Twas a beautiful mist falling down to your wrist,
'Twas a thing to be braided, and jewelled, and kissed—
  'Twas the loveliest hair in the world—my pet.

My arm was the arm of a clown, Janette,
It was sinewy, bristled, and brown—my pet;
But warmly and softly it loved to caress
Your round white neck and your wealth of tress,
  Your beautiful plenty of hair—my pet.

Your eyes had a swimming glory, Janette.
Revealing the old, dear story—my pet;
They were gray with that chastened tinge of the sky
When the trout leaps quickest to snap the fly,
  And they matched with your golden hair—my pet.

Your lips—but I have no words, Janette—
They were fresh as the twitter of birds—my pet,
When the spring is young, and the roses are wet,
With the dewdrops in each red bosom set,
  And they suited your gold brown hair—my pet.

Oh, you tangled my life in your hair, Janette,
'Twas a silken and golden snare—my pet;
But, so gentle the bondage, my soul did implore
The right to continue your slave evermore,
  With my fingers enmeshed in your hair—my pet.

Thus ever I dream what you were, Janette,
With your lips, and your eyes, and your hair—my pet,
In the darkness of desolate years I moan,
And my tears fall bitterly over the stone
  That covers your golden hair—my pet.

Charles Graham Halpine [1829–1868]

THE DYING LOVER

The grass that is under me now
Will soon be over me, Sweet;
When you walk this way again
I shall not hear your feet.

You may walk this way again,
And shed your tears like dew;
They will be no more to me then
Than mine are now to you!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825–1903]

"WHEN THE GRASS SHALL COVER ME"

When the grass shall cover me,
Head to foot where I am lying;
When not any wind that blows,
Summer blooms nor winter snows,
Shall awake me to your sighing:
Close above me as you pass,
You will say, "How kind she was,"
You will say, "How true she was,"
When the grass grows over me.

When the grass shall cover me,
Holden close to earth's warm bosom,—
While I laugh, or weep, or sing,
Nevermore, for anything,
You will find in blade and blossom,
Sweet small voices, odorous,
Tender pleaders in my cause,
That shall speak me as I was—
When the grass grows over me.

When the grass shall cover me!
Ah, belovèd, in my sorrow
Very patient, I can wait,
Knowing that, or soon or late,

There will dawn a clearer morrow:
When your heart will moan "Alas!
Now I know how true she was;
Now I know how dear she was"—
When the grass grows over me!

Ina Coolbrith [1844-

GIVE LOVE TO-DAY

When the lean, gray grasses
Cover me, bury me deep,
No sea wind that passes
Shall break my sleep.

When you come, my lover,
Sorrowful-eyed to me,
Earth mine eyes will cover;
I shall not see.

Though with sad words splendid,
Praising, you call me dear,
It will be all ended;
I shall not hear.

You may live love's riot
Laughingly over my head,
But I shall lie quiet
With the gray dead.

Love, you will not wake me
With all your singing carouse
Nor your dancing shake me
In my dark house.

Though you should go weeping,
Sorrowful for my sake,
Fain to break my sleeping,
I could not wake.

Now, ere time destroy us—
Shadows beneath and above;
Death has no song joyous,
Nor dead men love—

Now, while deep-eyed, golden,
Love on the mountain sings,
Let him be close holden;
Fetter his wings.

Love, nor joy nor sorrow
Troubles the end of day.
Leave the Fates to-morrow;
Give Love to-day.

Ethel Talbot [18 -

UNTIL DEATH

MAKE me no vows of constancy, dear friend,
To love me, though I die, thy whole life long,
And love no other till thy days shall end—
Nay, it were rash and wrong.

If thou canst love another, be it so;
I would not reach out of my quiet grave
To bind thy heart, if it should choose to go—
Love should not be a slave.

My placid ghost, I trust, will walk serene
In clearer light than gilds those earthly morns,
Above the jealousies and envies keen,
Which sow this life with thorns.

Thou wouldst not feel my shadowy caress;
If, after death, my soul should linger here;
Men's hearts crave tangible, close tenderness,
Love's presence, warm and near.

It would not make me sleep more peacefully
That thou wert wasting all thy life in woe
For my poor sake; what love thou hast for me,
Bestow it ere I go.

Carve not upon a stone when I am dead
The praises which remorseful mourners give
To women's graves—a tardy recompense—
But speak them while I live.

Heap not the heavy marble o'er my head
To shut away the sunshine and the dew;
Let small blooms grow there, and let grasses wave,
And raindrops filter through.

Thou wilt meet many fairer and more gay
Than I; but, trust me, thou canst never find
One who will love and serve thee night and day
With a more single mind.

Forget me when I die! The violets
Above my breast will blossom just as blue,
Nor miss thy tears; e'en nature's self forgets;
But while I live, be true.

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

FLORENCE VANE

I LOVED thee long and dearly,
Florence Vane;
My life's bright dream and early
Hath come again;
I renew in my fond vision,
My heart's dear pain—
My hopes, and thy derision,
Florence Vane.

The ruin, lone and hoary,
The ruin old,
Where thou didst hark my story,
At even told—

That spot—the hues Elysian
Of sky and plain—
I treasure in my vision,
Florence Vane.

Thou wast lovelier than the roses
In their prime;
Thy voice excelled the closes
Of sweetest rhyme;
Thy heart was as a river
Without a main.
Would I had loved thee never,
Florence Vane!

But, fairest, coldest wonder!
Thy glorious clay
Lieth the green sod under—
Alas, the day!
And it boots not to remember
Thy disdain,
To quicken love's pale ember,
Florence Vane.

The lilies of the valley
By young graves weep;
The daisies love to dally
Where maidens sleep.
May their bloom, in beauty vying,
Never wane
Where thine earthly part is lying,
Florence Vane!

Philip Pendleton Cooke [1816–1850]

"IF SPIRITS WALK"

If spirits walk, love, when the night climbs slow
The slant footpath where we were wont to go,
Be sure that I shall take the selfsame way
To the hill-crest, and shoreward, down the gray,
Sheer, graveled slope, where vetches straggling grow.

Look for me not when gusts of winter blow,
When at thy pane beat hands of sleet and snow;
I would not come thy dear eyes to affray,
If spirits walk.

But when, in June, the pines are whispering low,
And when their breath plays with thy bright hair so
As some one's fingers once were used to play—
That hour when birds leave song, and children pray,
Keep the old tryst, sweetheart, and thou shalt know
If spirits walk.

Sophie Jewett [1861–1909]

REQUIESCAT

TREAD lightly, she is near,
Under the snow;
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a woman, so
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,
Lie on her breast;
I vex my heart alone,
She is at rest.

Peace, peace; she cannot hear
Lyre or sonnet;
All my life's buried here—
Heap earth upon it.

Oscar Wilde [1856–1900]

LYRIC

Ah, dans ces mornes sējours
Les jamais sont les toujours.—PAUL VERLAINE

You would have understood me, had you waited;
I could have loved you, dear! as well as he:
Had we not been impatient, dear! and fated
Always to disagree.

What is the use of speech? Silence were fitter:
Lest we should still be wishing things unsaid.
Though all the words we ever spake were bitter,
Shall I reproach you dead?

Nay, let this earth, your portion, likewise cover
All the old anger, setting us apart:
Always, in all, in truth was I your lover;
Always, I held your heart.

I have met other women who were tender,
As you were cold, dear! with a grace as rare.
Think you I turned to them, or made surrender,
I who had found you fair?

Had we been patient, dear! ah, had you waited,
I had fought death for you, better than he:
But from the very first, dear! we were fated
Always to disagree.

Late, late, I come to you, now death discloses
Love that in life was not to be our part:
On your low-lying mound between the roses,
Sadly I cast my heart.

I would not waken you: nay! this is fitter;
Death and the darkness give you unto me;
Here we who loved so, were so cold and bitter,
Hardly can disagree.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

ROMANCE

My Love dwelt in a Northern land.
A gray tower in a forest green
Was hers, and far on either hand
The long wash of the waves was seen,
And leagues and leagues of yellow sand,
The woven forest boughs between!

And through the silver Northern night
The sunset slowly died away,
And herds of strange deer, lily-white,
Stole forth among the branches gray;
About the coming of the light,
They fled like ghosts before the day!

I know not if the forest green
Still girdles round that castle gray;
I know not if the boughs between
The white deer vanish ere the day;
Above my Love the grass is green,
My heart is colder than the clay!

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

GOOD-NIGHT

Good-night, dear friend! I say good-night to thee
Across the moonbeams, tremulous and white,
Bridging all space between us, it may be.
Lean low, sweet friend; it is the last good-night.

For, lying low upon my couch, and still,
The fever flush evanished from my face,
I heard them whisper softly, "'Tis His will;
Angels will give her happier resting-place!"

And so from sight of tears that fell like rain,
And sounds of sobbing smothered close and low,
I turned my white face to the window-pane,
To say good-night to thee before I go.

Good-night! good-night! I do not fear the end,
The conflict with the billows dark and high;
And yet, if I could touch thy hand, my friend,
I think it would be easier to die;

If I could feel through all the quiet waves
Of my deep hair thy tender breath a-thrill,
I could go downward to the place of graves
With eyes a-shine and pale lips smiling still;

Or it may be that, if through all the strife
And pain of parting I should hear thy call,
I would come singing back to sweet, sweet life,
And know no mystery of death at all.

It may not be. Good-night, dear friend, good-night!
And when you see the violets again,
And hear, through boughs with swollen buds a-white,
The gentle falling of the April rain,

Remember her whose young life held thy name
With all things holy, in its outward flight,
And turn sometimes from busy haunts of men
To hear again her low good-night! good-night!

Hester A. Benedict [18 –

REQUIESCAT

Bury me deep when I am dead,
Far from the woods where sweet birds sing;
Lap me in sullen stone and lead,
Lest my poor dust should feel the Spring.

Never a flower be near me set,
Nor starry cup nor slender stem,
Anemone nor violet,
Lest my poor dust remember them.

And you—wherever you may fare—
Dearer than birds, or flowers, or dew—
Never, ah me, pass never there,
Lest my poor dust should dream of you.

Rosamund Marriott Watson [1863–1911]

THE FOUR WINDS

Wind of the North,
Wind of the Norland snows,
Wind of the winnowed skies and sharp, clear stars—
Blow cold and keen across the naked hills,
And crisp the lowland pools with crystal films,
And blur the casement-squares with glittering ice,
But go not near my love.

Wind of the West,
Wind of the few, far clouds,
Wind of the gold and crimson sunset lands—
Blow fresh and pure across the peaks and plains,
And broaden the blue spaces of the heavens,
And sway the grasses and the mountain pines,
But let my dear one rest.

Wind of the East,
Wind of the sunrise seas,
Wind of the clinging mists and gray, harsh rains—
Blow moist and chill across the wastes of brine,
And shut the sun out, and the moon and stars,
And lash the boughs against the dripping eaves,
Yet keep thou from my love.

But thou, sweet wind!
Wind of the fragrant South,
Wind from the bowers of jasmine and of rose!—
Over magnolia glooms and lilied lakes
And flowering forests come with dewy wings,
And stir the petals at her feet, and kiss
The low mound where she lies.

Charles Henry Lüders [1858–1891]

THE KING'S BALLAD

Good my King, in your garden close,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Why so sad when the maiden rose
Love at your feet is spilling?

Golden the air and honey-sweet,
Sapphire the sky, it is not meet
Sorrowful faces should flowers greet,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling).

All alone walks the King to-day.
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Far from his throne he steals away
Loneness and quiet willing.
Roses and tulips and lilies fair
Smile for his pleasure everywhere,
Yet of their joyance he takes no share,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Ladies wait in the palace, Sire,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Red and white for the king's desire,
Love-warm and sweet and thrilling;
Breasts of moonshine and hair of night,
Glances amorous, soft and bright,
Nothing is lacking for your delight,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Kneels the King in a grassy place,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Little flowers under his face
With his warm tears are filling.
Says the King, "Here my heart lies dead
Where my fair love is buried,
Would I were lying here instead!"
(Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Joyce Kilmer [1886–

HELIOTROPE

Amid the chapel's chequered gloom
She laughed with Dora and with Flora,
And chattered in the lecture-room,—
That saucy little sophomora!

Yet while, as in her other schools,
She was a privileged transgressor,
She never broke the simple rules
Of one particular professor.

But when he spoke of varied lore,
Paroxytones and modes potential,
She listened with a face that wore
A look half fond, half reverential.
To her, that earnest voice was sweet,
And, though her love had no confessor,
Her girlish heart lay at the feet
Of that particular professor.

And he had learned, among his books
That held the lore of ages olden,
To watch those ever-changing looks,
The wistful eyes, the tresses golden,
That stirred his pulse with passion's pain
And thrilled his soul with soft desire,
And bade fond youth return again,
Crowned with its coronet of fire.

Her sunny smile, her winsome ways,
Were more to him than all his knowledge,
And she preferred his words of praise
To all the honors of the college.
Yet "What am foolish I to him?"
She whispered to her heart's confessor.
"She thinks me old and gray and grim,"
In silence pondered the professor.

Yet once when Christmas bells were rung
Above ten thousand solemn churches,
And swelling anthems grandly sung
Pealed through the dim cathedral arches,—
Ere home returning, filled with hope,
Softly she stole by gate and gable,
And a sweet spray of heliotrope
Left on his littered study-table.

Nor came she more from day to day
  Like sunshine through the shadows rifting:
Above her grave, far, far away,
  The ever-silent snows were drifting;
    And those who mourned her winsome face
      Found in its stead a swift successor
    And loved another in her place—
      All, save the silent old professor.

But, in the tender twilight gray,
  Shut from the sight of carping critic,
His lonely thoughts would often stray
  From Vedic verse and tongues Semitic,
    Bidding the ghost of vanished hope
      Mock with its past the sad possessor
    Of the dead spray of heliotrope
      That once she gave the old professor.

Harry Thurston Peck [1856–1914]

"LYDIA IS GONE THIS MANY A YEAR"

Lydia is gone this many a year,
  Yet when the lilacs stir,
In the old gardens far or near,
  This house is full of her.

They climb the twisted chamber stair;
  Her picture haunts the room;
On the carved shelf beneath it there,
  They heap the purple bloom.

A ghost so long has Lydia been,
  Her cloak upon the wall,
Broidered, and gilt, and faded green,
  Seems not her cloak at all.

The book, the box on mantle laid,
  The shells in a pale row,
Are those of some dim little maid,
  A thousand years ago.

And yet the house is full of her;
She goes and comes again;
And longings thrill, and memories stir,
Like lilacs in the rain.

Out in their yards the neighbors walk,
Among the blossoms tall;
Of Anne, of Phyllis do they talk,
Of Lydia not at all.

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-

AFTER

Oh, the littles that remain!
Scent of mint out in the lane;
Flare of window, sound of bees;—
These, but these.

Three times sitting down to bread;
One time climbing up to bed;
Table-setting o'er and o'er;
Drying herbs for winter's store;
This thing; that thing;—nothing more.

But just now out in the lane,
Oh, the scent of mint was plain!

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-

MEMORIES

Of my ould loves, of their ould ways,
I sit an' think, these bitther days.

(I've kissed—'gainst rason an' 'gainst rhyme—
More mouths than one in my mad time!)

Of their soft ways an' words I dream,
But far off now, in faith, they seem.

Wid betther lives, wid betther men,
They've all long taken up again!

For me an' mine they're past an' done—
Aye, all but one—yes, all but one!

Since I kissed *her* 'neath Tullagh Hill
That one gerrl stays close wid me still.

Och! up to mine her face still lifts,
An' round us still the white May drifts;

An' her soft arm, in some ould way,
Is here beside me, night an' day;

But, faith, 'twas her they buried deep,
Wid all that love she couldn't keep,

Aye, deep an' cold, in Killinkere,
This many a year—this many a year!

Arthur Stringer [1874-

TO DIANE

THE ruddy poppies bend and bow,
Diane! do you remember?
The sun you knew shines proudly now,
The lake still lists the breezes vow,
Your towers are fairer for their stains,
Each stone you smiled upon remains.
Sing low—where is Diane?
Diane! do you remember?

I come to find you through the years,
Diane! do you remember?
For none may rule my love's soft fears.
The ladies now are not your peers,
I seek you through your tarnished halls,
Pale sorrow on my spirit falls,
High, low—where is Diane?
Diane! do you remember?

I crush the poppies where I tread,
Diane! do you remember?
Your flower of life, so bright, so red—
She does not hear—Diane is dead.

I pace the sunny bowers alone
Where naught of her remains but stone.
Sing low—where is Diane?
Diane does not remember.

Helen Hay Whitney [18 –

"MUSIC I HEARD"

Music I heard with you was more than music,
And bread I broke with you was more than bread.
Now that I am without you, all is desolate,
All that was once so beautiful is dead.

Your hands once touched this table and this silver,
And I have seen your fingers hold this glass.
These things do not remember you, beloved:
And yet your touch upon them will not pass.

For it was in my heart you moved among them,
And blessed them with your hands and with your eyes.
And in my heart they will remember always:
They knew you once, O beautiful and wise!

Conrad Aiken [1889–

HER DWELLING-PLACE

Amid the fairest things that grow
My lady hath her dwelling-place;
Where runnels flow, and frail buds blow
As shy and pallid as her face.

The wild, bright creatures of the wood
About her fearless flit and spring;
To light her dusky solitude
Comes April's earliest offering.

The calm Night from her urn of rest
Pours downward an unbroken stream;
All day upon her mother's breast
My lady lieth in a dream.

Love could not chill her low, soft bed
With any sad memorial stone;
He put a red rose at her head—
A flame as fragrant as his own.

Ada Foster Murray [18 –

THE WIFE FROM FAIRYLAND

Her talk was all of woodland things,
Of little lives that pass
Away in one green afternoon,
Deep in the haunted grass;

For she had come from fairyland,
The morning of a day
When the world that still was April
Was turning into May.

Green leaves and silence and two eyes—
'Twas so she seemed to me,
A silver shadow of the woods,
Whisper and mystery.

I looked into her woodland eyes,
And all my heart was hers,
And then I led her by the hand
Home up my marble stairs;

And all my granite and my gold
Was hers for her green eyes,
And all my sinful heart was hers
From sunset to sunrise;

I gave her all delight and ease
That God had given to me,
I listened to fulfil her dreams,
Rapt with expectancy.

But all I gave, and all I did,
Brought but a weary smile
Of gratitude upon her face;
As though a little while,

She loitered in magnificence
  Of marble and of gold,
And waited to be home again
  When the dull tale was told.

Sometimes, in the chill galleries,
  Unseen, she deemed, unheard,
I found her dancing like a leaf
  And singing like a bird.

So lone a thing I never saw
  In lonely earth or sky,
So merry and so sad a thing,
  One sad, one laughing, eye.

There came a day when on her heart
  A wildwood blossom lay,
And the world that still was April
  Was turning into May.

In the green eyes I saw a smile
  That turned my heart to stone:
My wife that came from fairyland
  No longer was alone.

For there had come a little hand
  To show the green way home,
Home through the leaves, home through the dew,
  Home through the greenwood—home.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866–

IN THE FALL O' YEAR

I WENT back an old-time lane
  In the fall o' year,
There was wind and bitter rain
  And the leaves were sere.

Once the birds were lilting high
  In a far-off May—
I remember, you and I
  Were as glad as they.

But the branches now are bare
And the lad you knew,
Long ago was buried there—
Long ago, with you!

Thomas S. Jones, Jr. [1882–

THE INVISIBLE BRIDE

THE low-voiced girls that go
In gardens of the Lord,
Like flowers of the field they grow
In sisterly accord.

Their whispering feet are white
Along the leafy ways;
They go in whirls of light
Too beautiful for praise.

And in their band forsooth
Is one to set me free—
The one that touched my youth—
The one God gave to me.

She kindles the desire
Whereby the gods survive—
The white ideal fire
That keeps my soul alive.

Now at the wondrous hour,
She leaves her star supreme,
And comes in the night's still power,
To touch me with a dream.

Sibyl of mystery
On roads beyond our ken,
Softly she comes to me,
And goes to God again.

Edwin Markham [1852–

RAIN ON A GRAVE

Clouds spout upon her
  Their waters amain
  In ruthless disdain,—
Her who but lately
  Had shivered with pain
As at touch of dishonor
If there had lit on her
So coldly, so straightly
  Such arrows of rain.

She who to shelter
  Her delicate head
Would quicken and quicken
  Each tentative tread
If drops chanced to pelt her
  That summertime spills
  In dust-paven rills
When thunder-clouds thicken
  And birds close their bills.

Would that I lay there
  And she were housed here!
Or better, together
Were folded away there
Exposed to one weather
We both,—who would stray there
When sunny the day there,
  Or evening was clear
  At the prime of the year.

Soon will be growing
  Green blades from her mound,
And daisies be showing
  Like stars on the ground,
Till she form part of them—
Ay—the sweet heart of them,
Loved beyond measure
With a child's pleasure
  All her life's round.

Thomas Hardy [1840–

PATTERNS

I WALK down the garden paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.
I walk down the patterned garden-paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
With my powdered hair and jewelled fan,
I too am a rare
Pattern. As I wander down
The garden paths.

My dress is richly figured,
And the train
Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders.
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high-heeled, ribboned shoes.
Not a softness anywhere about me,
Only whale-bone and brocade.
And I sink on a seat in the shade
Of a lime-tree. For my passion
Wars against the stiff brocade.
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze
As they please.
And I weep;
For the lime-tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my bosom.

And the plashing of waterdrops
In the marble fountain
Comes down the garden-paths.
The dripping never stops.
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick, she cannot see her lover hiding.

But she guesses he is near,
And the sliding of the water
Seems the stroking of a dear
Hand upon her.
What is Summer in a fine brocaded gown!
I should like to see it lying in a heap upon the ground.
All the pink and silver crumpled upon the ground.

I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,
And he would stumble after,
Bewildered by my laughter.
I should see the sun flashing from his sword-hilt and the buckles on his shoes.
I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned paths,
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy-booted lover,
Till he caught me in the shade,
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my body as he clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid.
With the shadows of the leaves and the sundrops,
And the plopping of the waterdrops,
All about us in the open afternoon—
I am very like to swoon
With the weight of this brocade,
For the sun sifts through the shade.

Underneath the fallen blossom
In my bosom,
Is a letter I have hid.
It was brought to me this morning by a rider from the Duke.
"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell
Died in action Thursday se'nnight."
As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes.
"Any answer, Madam?" said my footman.
"No," I told him.
"See that the messenger takes some refreshment.
No, no answer."
And I walked into the garden,

Up and down the patterned paths,
In my stiff, correct brocade.
The blue and yellow flowers stood up proudly in the sun,
Each one.
I stood upright too,
Held rigid to the pattern
By the stiffness of my gown.
Up and down I walked,
Up and down.

In a month he would have been my husband.
In a month, here, underneath this lime,
We would have broke the pattern;
He for me, and I for him,
He as Colonel, I as Lady,
On this shady seat.
He had a whim
That sunlight carried blessing.
And I answered, "It shall be as you have said."
Now he is dead.

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
Up and down
The patterned garden-paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
The squills and daffodils
Will give place to pillared roses, and to asters, and to snow.
I shall go
Up and down,
In my gown.
Gorgeously arrayed,
Boned and stayed.
And the softness of my body will be guarded from embrace
By each button, hook, and lace.
For the man who should loose me is dead,
Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,
In a pattern called a war.
Christ! What are patterns for?

Amy Lowell [1874–

DUST

When the white flame in us is gone,
And we that lost the world's delight
Stiffen in darkness, left alone
To crumble in our separate night;

When your swift hair is quiet in death,
And through the lips corruption thrust
Has stilled the labor of my breath—
When we are dust, when we are dust!—

Not dead, not undesirous yet,
Still sentient, still unsatisfied,
We'll ride the air, and shine, and flit,
Around the places where we died,

And dance as dust before the sun,
And light of foot, and unconfined,
Hurry from road to road, and run
About the errands of the wind.

And every mote, on earth or air,
Will speed and gleam, down later days,
And like a secret pilgrim fare
By eager and invisible ways,

Nor ever rest, nor ever lie,
Till, beyond thinking, out of view,
One mote of all the dust that's I
Shall meet one atom that was you.

Then in some garden hushed from wind,
Warm in a sunset's afterglow,
The lovers in the flowers will find
A sweet and strange unquiet grow

Upon the peace; and, past desiring,
So high a beauty in the air,
And such a light, and such a quiring,
And such a radiant ecstasy there,

They'll know not if it's fire, or dew,
  Or out of earth, or in the height,
Singing, or flame, or scent, or hue,
  Or two that pass, in light, to light,

Out of the garden, higher, higher. . . .
  But in that instant they shall learn
The shattering ecstasy of our fire,
  And the weak passionless hearts will burn

And faint in that amazing glow,
  Until the darkness close above;
And they will know—poor fools, they'll know!—
  One moment, what it is to love.

Rupert Brooke [1887–1915]

BALLAD

The roses in my garden
  Were white in the noonday sun,
But they were dyed with crimson
  Before the day was done.

All clad in golden armor,
  To fight the Saladin,
He left me in my garden,
  To weep, to sing, and spin.

When fell the dewy twilight
  I heard the wicket grate,
There came a ghost who shivered
  Beside my garden gate.

All clad in golden armor,
  But dabbled with red dew;
He did not lift his vizor,
  And yet his face I knew.

And when he left my garden
The roses all were red
And dyed in a fresh crimson;
Only my heart was dead.

The roses in my garden
Were white in the noonday sun;
But they were dyed with crimson
Before the day was done.

Maurice Baring [1874–1916]

"THE LITTLE ROSE IS DUST, MY DEAR"

The little rose is dust, my dear;
The elfin wind is gone
That sang a song of silver words
And cooled our hearts with dawn.

And what is left to hope, my dear,
Or what is left to say?
The rose, the little wind and you
Have gone so far away.

Grace Hazard Conkling [18

DIRGE

Never the nightingale,
Oh, my dear,
Never again the lark
Thou wilt hear;
Though dusk and the morning still
Tap at thy window-sill,
Though ever love call and call
Thou wilt not hear at all,
My dear, my dear.

Adelaide Crapsey [1878–1914]

THE ROSARY

THE hours I spent with thee, dear heart,
Are as a string of pearls to me;
I count them over, every one apart,
My rosary.

Each hour a pearl, each pearl a prayer,
To still a heart in absence wrung;
I tell each bead unto the end and there
A cross is hung.

Oh memories that bless—and burn!
Oh barren gain—and bitter loss!
I kiss each bead, and strive at last to learn
To kiss the cross,
Sweetheart,
To kiss the cross.

Robert Cameron Rogers [1862–1912]

LOVE'S FULFILMENT

"MY TRUE-LOVE HATH MY HEART"

From the "Arcadia"

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a better bargain driven:
His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his, because in me it bides.

His heart his wound receivèd from my sight;
My heart was wounded from his wounded heart;
For as from me, on him his hurt did light,
So still me thought in me his heart did smart:
Both equal hurt, in this change sought our bliss,
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

Philip Sidney [1554–1586]

SONG

O sweet delight, O more than human bliss,
With her to live that ever loving is!
To hear her speak whose words are so well placed
That she by them, as they in her are graced:
Those looks to view that feast the viewer's eye,
How blest is he that may so live and die!

Such love as this the Golden Times did know,
When all did reap, yet none took care to sow;
Such love as this an endless summer makes,
And all distaste from frail affection takes.
So loved, so blest, in my beloved am I:
Which till their eyes ache, let iron men envy!

Thomas Campion [? –1619]

THE GOOD-MORROW

I WONDER, by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we loved? were we not weaned till then?
But sucked on country pleasures, childishly?
Or snored we in the Seven Sleepers' den?
'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be;
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone;
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown,
Let us possess one world; each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
Where can we find two fitter hemispheres
Without sharp north, without declining west?
Whatever dies, was not mixed equally;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I
Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die.

John Donne [1573–1631]

"THERE'S GOWD IN THE BREAST"

THERE'S gowd in the breast of the primrose pale,
An' siller in every blossom;
There's riches galore in the breeze of the vale,
And health in the wild wood's bosom.
Then come, my love, at the hour of joy,
When warbling birds sing o'er us;
Sweet nature for us has no alloy,
And the world is all before us.

The courtier joys in bustle and power,
The soldier in war-steeds bounding,
The miser in hoards of treasured ore,
The proud in their pomp surrounding:

But we hae yon heaven sae bonnie and blue,
  And laverocks skimming o'er us;
The breezes of health, and the valleys of dew—
  Oh, the world is all before us!

James Hogg [1770–1835]

THE BEGGAR MAID

Her arms across her breast she laid;
  She was more fair than words can say:
Bare-footed came the beggar maid
  Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stepped down,
  To meet and greet her on her way;
"It is no wonder," said the lords,
  "She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
  She in her poor attire was seen:
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
  One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
  In all that land had never been:
Cophetua sware a royal oath:
  "This beggar maid shall be my queen!"

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

REFUGE

Twilight, a timid fawn, went glimmering by,
  And Night, the dark-blue hunter, followed fast,
Ceaseless pursuit and flight were in the sky,
  But the long chase had ceased for us at last.

We watched together while the driven fawn
  Hid in the golden thicket of the day.
We, from whose hearts pursuit and flight were gone,
  Knew on the hunter's breast her refuge lay.

A. E. (*George William Russell*) [1867–

AT SUNSET

Clasp her and hold her and love her,
Here in the arching green
Of boughs that bend above her
With belts of blue between.

Clasp her and hold her and love her,
Swift! Ere the splendor dies;
The blue grows black above her,
The earth in shadow lies.

Flowers of dream enfold her.
Soft! Let me bend above,
Clasp her and love her and hold her,
Clasp her and hold and love.

Louis V. Ledoux [1880–

"ONE MORNING, OH! SO EARLY"

One morning, oh! so early, my belovèd, my belovèd,
All the birds were singing blithely, as if never they would cease;
'Twas a thrush sang in my garden, "Hear the story, hear the story!"
And the lark sang, "Give us glory!"
And the dove said, "Give us peace!"

Then I hearkened, oh! so early, my belovèd, my belovèd,
To that murmur from the woodland of the dove, my dear, the dove;
When the nightingale came after, "Give us fame to sweeten duty!"
When the wren sang, "Give us beauty!"
She made answer, "Give us love!"

Sweet is spring, and sweet the morning, my belovèd, my belovèd;
Now for us doth spring, doth morning, wait upon the year's increase,

And my prayer goes up, "Oh, give us, crowned in youth with marriage glory,
Give for all our life's dear story,
Give us love, and give us peace!"

Jean Ingelow [1820–1897]

ACROSS THE DOOR

The fiddles were playing and playing,
The couples were out on the floor;
From converse and dancing he drew me,
And across the door.

Ah! strange were the dim, wide meadows,
And strange was the cloud-strewn sky,
And strange in the meadows the corncrakes,
And they making cry!

The hawthorn bloom was by us,
Around us the breath of the south.
White hawthorn, strange in the night-time—
His kiss on my mouth!

Padraic Colum [1881–

MAY MARGARET

If you be that May Margaret
That lived on Kendal Green,
Then where's that sunny hair of yours
That crowned you like a queen?
That sunny hair is dim, lad,
They said was like a crown—
The red gold turned to gray, lad,
The night a ship went down.

If you be yet May Margaret,
May Margaret now as then,
Then where's that bonny smile of yours
That broke the hearts of men?

The bonny smile is wan, lad,
That once was glad as day—
And oh! 'tis weary smiling
To keep the tears away.

If you be that May Margaret,
As yet you swear to me,
Then where's that proud, cold heart of yours
That sent your love to sea?
Ah, me! that heart is broken,
The proud, cold heart has bled
For one light word outspoken,
For all the love unsaid.

Then Margaret, my Margaret,
If all you say be true,
Your hair is yet the sunniest gold,
Your eyes the sweetest blue.
And dearer yet and fairer yet
For all the coming years—
The fairer for the waiting,
The dearer for the tears!

Théophile Marzials [1850–

RONDEL

Kissing her hair, I sat against her feet,
Wove and unwove it, wound and found it sweet;
Made fast therewith her hands, drew down her eyes,
Deep as deep flowers and dreamy like dim skies;
With her own tresses bound and found her fair,
Kissing her hair.

Sleep were no sweeter than her face to me,
Sleep of cold sea-bloom under the cold sea;
What pain could get between my face and hers?
What new sweet thing would love not relish worse?
Unless, perhaps, white death had kissed me there,
Kissing her hair.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

A SPRING JOURNEY

We journeyed through broad woodland ways,
  My Love and I.
The maples set the shining fields ablaze.
  The blue May sky
Brought to us its great Spring surprise;
While we saw all things through each other's eyes.

And sometimes from a steep hillside
  Shone fair and bright
The shadbush, like a young June bride,
  Fresh clothed in white.
Sometimes came glimpses glad of the blue sea;
But I smiled only on my Love; he smiled on me.

The violets made a field one mass of blue—
  Even bluer than the sky;
The little brook took on that color too,
  And sang more merrily.
"Your dress is blue," he laughing said. "Your eyes,"
My heart sang, "sweeter than the bending skies."

We spoke of poets dead so long ago,
  And their wise words;
We glanced at apple-trees, like drifted snow;
  We watched the nesting birds,—
Only a moment! Ah, how short the day!
Yet all the winters cannot blow its sweetness quite away.

Alice Freeman Palmer [1855–1902]

THE BROOKSIDE

I wandered by the brookside,
I wandered by the mill;
I could not hear the brook flow,—
The noisy wheel was still;
There was no burr of grasshopper,
No chirp of any bird,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

I sat beneath the elm-tree;
I watched the long, long shade,
And, as it grew still longer,
I did not feel afraid;
For I listened for a footfall,
I listened for a word,—
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

He came not,—no, he came not,—
The night came on alone,—
The little stars sat, one by one,
Each on his golden throne;
The evening wind passed by my cheek,
The leaves above were stirred,—
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

Fast silent tears were flowing,
When something stood behind;
A hand was on my shoulder,—
I knew its touch was kind:
It drew me nearer,—nearer,—
We did not speak one word,
For the beating of our own hearts
Was all the sound we heard.

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809–1885]

SONG

For me the jasmine buds unfold
And silver daisies star the lea,
The crocus hoards the sunset gold,
And the wild rose breathes for me.
I feel the sap through the bough returning,
I share the skylark's transport fine,
I know the fountain's wayward yearning;
I love, and the world is mine!

I love, and thoughts that sometime grieved,
Still well remembered, grieve not me;
From all that darkened and deceived
Upsoars my spirit free.
For soft the hours repeat one story,
Sings the sea one strain divine,
My clouds arise all flushed with glory;
I love, and the world is mine!

Florence Earle Coates [1850–

WHAT MY LOVER SAID

By the merest chance, in the twilight gloom,
In the orchard path he met me;
In the tall, wet grass, with its faint perfume,
And I tried to pass, but he made no room,
Oh, I tried, but he would not let me.
So I stood and blushed till the grass grew red,
With my face bent down above it,
While he took my hand as he whispering said—
(How the clover lifted each pink, sweet head,
To listen to all that my lover said;
Oh, the clover in bloom, I love it!)

In the high, wet grass went the path to hide,
And the low, wet leaves hung over;
But I could not pass upon either side,
For I found myself, when I vainly tried,
In the arms of my steadfast lover.
And he held me there and he raised my head,
While he closed the path before me,
And he looked down into my eyes and said—
(How the leaves bent down from the boughs o'erhead
To listen to all that my lover said,
Oh, the leaves hanging lowly o'er me!)

Had he moved aside but a little way,
I could surely then have passed him;
And he knew I never could wish to stay,
And would not have heard what he had to say,

Could I only aside have cast him.
It was almost dark, and the moments sped,
And the searching night wind found us,
But he drew me nearer and softly said—
(How the pure, sweet wind grew still, instead,
To listen to all that my lover said;
Oh, the whispering wind around us!)

I am sure he knew when he held me fast,
That I must be all unwilling;
For I tried to go, and I would have passed,
As the night was come with its dew, at last,
And the sky with its stars was filling.
But he clasped me close when I would have fled,
And he made me hear his story,
And his soul came out from his lips and said—
(How the stars crept out where the white moon led,
To listen to all that my lover said;
Oh, the moon and the stars in glory!)

I know that the grass and the leaves will not tell,
And I'm sure that the wind, precious rover,
Will carry my secret so safely and well
That no being shall ever discover
One word of the many that rapidly fell
From the soul-speaking lips of my lover;
And the moon and the stars that looked over
Shall never reveal what a fairy-like spell
They wove round about us that night in the dell,
In the path through the dew-laden clover,
Nor echo the whispers that made my heart swell
As they fell from the lips of my lover.

Homer Greene [1853–

MAY-MUSIC

Oh! lose the winter from thine heart, the darkness from thine eyes,
And from the low hearth-chair of dreams, my Love-o'-May, arise;

And let the maidens robe thee like a white white-lilac tree,
Oh! hear the call of Spring, fair Soul,—and wilt thou come with me?

Even so, and even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go.
I will follow thee.

Then wilt thou see the orange trees star-flowering over Spain,
Or arched and mounded Kaiser-towns that molder mid Almain,
Or through the cypress-gardens go of magic Italy?
Oh! East or West or South or North, say, wilt thou come with me?

Even so, or even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go.
I will follow thee.

But wilt thou farther come with me through hawthorn red and white
Until we find the wall that hides the Land of Heart's Delight?
The gates all carved with olden things are strange and dread to see:
But I will lift thee through, fair Soul. Arise and come with me!

Even so, Love, even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go!
Lo, I follow thee.

Rachel Annand Taylor [18 –

SONG

Flame at the core of the world,
And flame in the red rose-tree;
The one is the fire of the ancient spheres,
The other is Junes to be;
And, oh, there's a flame that is both their flames
Here at the heart of me!

As strong as the fires of stars,
As the prophet rose-tree true,
The fire of my life is tender and wild,
Its beauty is old and new;
For out of the infinite past it came
With the love in the eyes of you!

Arthur Upson [1877–1908]

A MEMORY

The Night walked down the sky
With the moon in her hand;
By the light of that yellow lantern
I saw you stand.

The hair that swept your shoulders
Was yellow, too,
Your feet as they touched the grasses
Shamed the dew.

The Night wore all her jewels,
And you wore none,
But your gown had the odor of lilies
Drenched with sun.

And never was Eve of the Garden
Or Mary the Maid
More pure than you as you stood there
Bold, yet afraid.

And the sleeping birds woke, trembling,
And the folded flowers were aware,
And my senses were faint with the fragrant
Gold of your hair.

And our lips found ways of speaking
What words cannot say,
Till a hundred nests gave music,
And the East was gray.

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869–1905]

LOVE TRIUMPHANT

Helen's lips are drifting dust;
Ilion is consumed with rust;
All the galleons of Greece
Drink the ocean's dreamless peace;
Lost was Solomon's purple show
Restless centuries ago;
Stately empires wax and wane—
Babylon, Barbary, and Spain;—
Only one thing, undefaced,
Lasts, though all the worlds lie waste
And the heavens are overturned.
—Dear, how long ago we learned!

There's a sight that blinds the sun,
Sound that lives when sounds are done,
Music that rebukes the birds,
Language lovelier than words,
Hue and scent that shame the rose,
Wine no earthly vineyard knows,
Silence stiller than the shore
Swept by Charon's stealthy oar,
Ocean more divinely free
Than Pacific's boundless sea,—
Ye who love have learned it true.
—Dear, how long ago we knew!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869–1905]

LINES

Love within the lover's breast
Burns like Hesper in the West,
O'er the ashes of the sun,
Till the day and night are done;
Then, when dawn drives up his car—
Lo! it is the morning star.

Love! thy love pours down on mine,
As the sunlight on the vine,

As the snow rill on the vale,
As the salt breeze on the sail;
As the song unto the bird
On my lips thy name is heard.

As a dewdrop on the rose
In thy heart my passion glows;
As a skylark to the sky,
Up into thy breast I fly;
As a sea-shell of the sea
Ever shall I sing of thee.

George Meredith [1828–1909]

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

WHERE the quiet-colored end of evening smiles
Miles and miles
On the solitary pastures where our sheep
Half-asleep
Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray or stop
As they crop—
Was the site once of a city great and gay,
(So they say)
Of our country's very capital, its prince
Ages since
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
Peace or war.

Now,—the country does not even boast a tree,
As you see,
To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
From the hills
Intersect and give a name to (else they run
Into one),
Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
Up like fires
O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor be pressed,
Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was!
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'erspreads
And embeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone—
Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Long ago;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame;
And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

Now,—the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
Overscored,
While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
Through the chinks—
Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,
And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,
And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored eve
Smiles to leave
To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
In such peace,
And the slopes and rills in undistinguished gray
Melt away—
That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
Waits me there
In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul
For the goal,
When the king looked, where she looks now, breathless, dumb,
Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,

All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades'
Colonnades,
All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—and then,
All the men!
When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
South and North,
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
As the sky,
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force—
Gold, of course.
Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!
Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
Shut them in,
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
Love is best!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

EARL MERTOUN'S SONG

From "The Blot in the 'Scutcheon"

THERE's a woman like a dewdrop, she's so purer than the purest;
And her noble heart's the noblest, yes, and her sure faith's the surest:
And her eyes are dark and humid, like the depth on depth of luster
Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sunnier than the wild-grape cluster,
Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her neck's rose-misted marble;
Then her voice's music . . . call it the well's bubbling, the bird's warble!

And this woman says, "My days were sunless and my nights were moonless,
Parched the pleasant April herbage, and the lark's heart's outbreak tuneless,
If you loved me not!" And I who (ah, for words of flame!) adore her,
Who am mad to lay my spirit prostrate palpably before her—
I may enter at her portal soon, as now her lattice takes me,
And by noontide as by midnight make her mine, as hers she makes me!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

MEETING AT NIGHT

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed in the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spirt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

PARTING AT MORNING

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE TURN OF THE ROAD

Soft, gray buds on the willow,
Warm, moist winds from the bay,
Sea-gulls out on the sandy beach,
And a road my eager feet would reach,
That leads to the Far-away.

Dust on the wayside flower,
The meadow-lark's luring tone
Is silent now, from the grasses tipped
With dew at the dawn, the pearls have slipped—
Far have I fared alone.

And then, by the alder thicket
The turn of the road—and *you!*
Though the earth lie white in the noonday heat,
Or the swift storm follow our hurrying feet,
What do we care—we two!

Alice Rollit Coe [18 –

"MY DELIGHT AND THY DELIGHT"

My delight and thy delight
Walking, like two angels white,
In the gardens of the night:

My desire and thy desire
Twining to a tongue of fire,
Leaping live, and laughing higher;

Through the everlasting strife
In the mystery of life.

Love, from whom the world begun,
Hath the secret of the sun.

Love can tell, and love alone,
Whence the million stars were strown,
Why each atom knows its own,
How, in spite of woe and death,
Gay is life, and sweet is breath:

This he taught us, this we knew,
Happy in his science true,
Hand in hand as we stood
'Neath the shadows of the wood,
Heart to heart as we lay
In the dawning of the day.

Robert Bridges [1844–

"O, SAW YE THE LASS"

O, SAW ye the lass wi' the bonny blue een?
Her smile is the sweetest that ever was seen;
Her cheek like the rose is, but fresher, I ween;
She's the loveliest lassie that trips on the green.
The home of my love is below in the valley,
Where wild-flowers welcome the wandering bee;
But the sweetest of flowers in that spot that is seen
Is the maid that I love wi' the bonny blue een.

When night overshadows her cot in the glen,
She'll steal out to meet her loved Donald again;
And when the moon shines on the valley so green,
I'll welcome the lass wi' the bonny blue een.
As the dove that has wandered away from his nest
Returns to the mate his fond heart loves the best,
I'll fly from the world's false and vanishing scene,
To my dear one, the lass wi' the bonny blue een.

Richard Ryan [1796–1849]

LOVE AT SEA

IMITATED FROM THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

WE are in love's land to-day;
Where shall we go?
Love, shall we start or stay,
Or sail or row?
There's many a wind and way,
And never a May but May;
We are in love's hand to-day;
Where shall we go?

Our land-wind is the breath
Of sorrows kissed to death
And joys that were;
Our ballast is a rose;
Our way lies where God knows
And love knows where.
We are in love's hand to-day—

Our seamen are fledged Loves,
Our masts are bills of doves,
Our decks fine gold;
Our ropes are dead maids' hair,
Our stores are love-shafts fair
And manifold.
We are in love's land to-day—

Where shall we land you, sweet?
On fields of strange men's feet,
Or fields near home?
Or where the fire-flowers blow,
Or where the flowers of snow
Or flowers of foam?
We are in love's hand to-day—

Land me, she says, where love
Shows but one shaft, one dove,
One heart, one hand,—
A shore like that, my dear,
Lies where no man will steer,
No maiden land.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

MARY BEATON'S SONG

From "Chastelard"

Between the sunset and the sea
My love laid hands and lips on me;
Of sweet came sour, of day came night,
Of long desire came brief delight:
Ah love, and what thing came of thee
Between the sea-downs and the sea?

Between the sea-mark and the sea
Joy grew to grief, grief grew to me;
Love turned to tears, and tears to fire,
And dead delight to new desire;
Love's talk, love's touch there seemed to be
Between the sea-sand and the sea.

Between the sundown and the sea
Love watched one hour of love with me;
Then down the all-golden water-ways
His feet flew after yesterday's;
I saw them come and saw them flee
Between the sea-foam and the sea.

Between the sea-strand and the sea
Love fell on sleep, sleep fell on me;
The first star saw twain turn to one
Between the moonrise and the sun;
The next, that saw not love, saw me
Between the sea-banks and the sea.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

PLIGHTED

Mine to the core of the heart, my beauty!
Mine, all mine, and for love, not duty:
Love given willingly, full and free,
Love for love's sake,—as mine to thee.
Duty's a slave that keeps the keys,
But Love, the master, goes in and out
Of his goodly chambers with song and shout,
Just as he please,—just as he please.

Mine, from the dear head's crown, brown-golden,
To the silken foot that's scarce beholden;
Give to a few friends hand or smile,
Like a generous lady, now and awhile,
But the sanctuary heart, that none dare win,
Keep holiest of holiest evermore;
The crowd in the aisles may watch the door,
The high-priest only enters in.

Mine, my own, without doubts or terrors,
With all thy goodnesses, all thy errors,
Unto me and to me alone revealed,
"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."
Many may praise thee,—praise mine as thine,
Many may love thee,—I'll love them too;
But thy heart of hearts, pure, faithful, and true,
Must be mine, mine wholly, and only mine.

Mine!—God, I thank Thee that Thou hast given
Something all mine on this side heaven:
Something as much myself to be
As this my soul which I lift to Thee:
Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone,
Life of my life, whom Thou dost make
Two to the world for the world's work's sake,—
But each unto each, as in Thy sight, *one*.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

A WOMAN'S QUESTION

Before I trust my fate to thee,
Or place my hand in thine,
Before I let thy future give
Color and form to mine,
Before I peril all for thee, question thy soul to-night for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
A shadow of regret:
Is there one link within the past
That holds thy spirit yet?
Or is thy faith as clear and free as that which I can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,
Untouched, unshared by mine?
If so, at any pain or cost, O, tell me before all is lost.

Look deeper still. If thou canst feel,
Within thy inmost soul,
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have staked the whole,
Let no false pity spare the blow, but in true mercy tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
That mine cannot fulfil?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now—lest at some future day my whole life wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid
The demon-spirit change,
Shedding a passing glory still
On all things new and strange?
It may not be thy fault alone,—but shield my heart against thy own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day
And answer to my claim,
That Fate, and that to-day's mistake—
Not thou—had been to blame?
Some soothe their conscience thus; but thou wilt surely warn and save me now.

Nay, answer not,—I dare not hear,
The words would come too late;
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
So, comfort thee, my Fate,—
Whatever on my heart may fall—remember, I would risk it all!

Adelaide Anne Procter [1825–1864]

"DINNA ASK ME"

O, DINNA ask me gin I lo'e ye:
Troth, I daurna tell!
Dinna ask me gin I lo'e ye,—
Ask it o' yoursel'.

O, dinna look sae sair at me,
For weel ye ken me true;
O, gin ye look sae sair at me,
I daurna look at you.

When ye gang to yon braw, braw town,
And bonnier lassies see,
O, dinna, Jamie, look at them,
Lest ye should mind na me.

For I could never bide the lass
That ye'd lo'e mair than me;
And O, I'm sure my heart wad brak,
Gin ye'd prove fause to me!

John Dunlop [1755–1820]

A SONG

SING me a sweet, low song of night
Before the moon is risen,
A song that tells of the stars' delight
Escaped from day's bright prison,
A song that croons with the cricket's voice,
That sleeps with the shadowed trees,
A song that shall bid my heart rejoice
At its tender mysteries!

And then when the song is ended, love,
Bend down your head unto me,
Whisper the word that was born above
Ere the moon had swayed the sea;
Ere the oldest star began to shine,
Or the farthest sun to burn,—
The oldest of words, O heart of mine,
Yet newest, and sweet to learn.

Hildegarde Hawthorne [18 –

THE REASON

OH, hark the pulses of the night,
The crickets hidden in the field,
That beat out music of delight
Till summoned dawn stands half revealed!

Oh, mark above the bearded corn
And the green wheat and bending rye,
Tuned to the earth, and calling morn,
The stars vibrating in the sky!

And know, divided soul of me,
Here in the meadow, sweet in speech,
This perfect night could never be
Were we not mated each to each.

James Oppenheim [1882–

"MY OWN CÁILIN DONN"

The blush is on the flower, and the bloom is on the tree,
And the bonnie, bonnie sweet birds are caroling their glee;
And the dews upon the grass are made diamonds by the sun,
All to deck a path of glory for my own Cáilin Donn!

Oh fair she is! Oh rare she is! Oh dearer still to me,
More welcome than the green leaf to winter-stricken tree!
More welcome than the blossom to the weary, dusty bee,
Is the coming of my true love—my own Cáilin Donn!

O sycamore! O sycamore! wave, wave your banners green!
Let all your pennons flutter, O beech! before my queen!
Ye fleet and honeyed breezes, to kiss her hand ye run;
But my heart has passed before ye to my own Cáilin Donn.

Ring out, ring out, O linden, your merry leafy bells!
Unveil your brilliant torches, O chestnut! to the dells;
Strew, strew the glade with splendor, for morn it cometh on!
Oh, the morn of all delight to me—my own Cáilin Donn!

She is coming, where we parted, where she wanders every day;
There's a gay surprise before her who thinks me far away;
Oh, like hearing bugles triumph when the fight of freedom's won,
Is the joy around your footsteps, my own Cáilin Donn!

George Sigerson [1839–

NOCTURNE

All the earth a hush of white,
White with moonlight all the skies;
Wonder of a winter night—
And . . . your eyes.

Hues no palette dares to claim
Where the spoils of sunken ships
Leap to light in singing flame—
And . . . your lips.

Darkness as the shadows creep
Where the embers sigh to rest;
Silence of a world asleep—
And . . . your breast.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878–

SURRENDER

As I look back upon your first embrace
I understand why from your sudden touch
Angered I sprang, and struck you in the face.
You asked at once too little and too much.
But now that of my spirit you require
Love's very soul that unto death endures,
Crown as you will the cup of your desire—
I am all yours.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878–

"BY YON BURN SIDE"

We'll meet beside the dusky glen, on yon burn side,
Where the bushes form a cosie den, on yon burn side;
Though the broomy knowes be green,
And there we may be seen,
Yet we'll meet—we'll meet at e'en, down by yon burn side.

I'll lead thee to the birken bower, on yon burn side,
Sae sweetly wove wi' woodbine flower, on yon burn side;
There the busy prying eye,
Ne'er disturbs the lover's joy,
While in ither's arms they lie, down by yon burn side.

Awa', ye rude, unfeeling crew, frae yon burn side,
Those fairy scenes are no for you, by yon burn side;
There fancy smooths her theme,
By the sweetly murmuring stream,
And the rock-lodged echoes skim, down by yon burn side.

Now the plantin' taps are tinged wi' goud, on yon burn side,
And gloamin' draws her foggy shroud o'er yon burn side;
Far frae the noisy scene,
I'll through the fields alane,
There we'll meet, my ain dear Jean, down by yon burn side.

Robert Tannahill [1774–1810]

A PASTORAL

Flower of the medlar,
Crimson of the quince,
I saw her at the blossom-time,
And loved her ever since!
She swept the draughty pleasance,
The blooms had left the trees,
The whilst the birds sang canticles,
In cherry symphonies.

Whiteness of the white rose,
Redness of the red,
She went to cut the blush-rose buds
To tie at the altar-head;
And some she laid in her bosom,
And some around her brows,
And, as she passed, the lily-heads
All becked and made their bows.

Scarlet of the poppy,
  Yellow of the corn,
The men were at the garnering,
  A-shouting in the morn;
I chased her to a pippin-tree,—
  The waking birds all whist,—
And oh! it was the sweetest kiss
  That I have ever kissed.

Marjorie, mint, and violets
  A-drying round us set,
'Twas all done in the faience-room
  A-spicing marmalet;
On one tile was a satyr,
  On one a nymph at bay,
Methinks the birds will scarce be home
  To wake our wedding-day!

Théophile Marzials [1850–

"WHEN DEATH TO EITHER SHALL COME"

When Death to either shall come,—
  I pray it be first to me,—
Be happy as ever at home,
  If so, as I wish, it be.

Possess thy heart, my own;
  And sing to thy child on thy knee,
Or read to thyself alone
  The songs that I made for thee.

Robert Bridges [1844–

THE RECONCILIATION

From "The Princess"

As through the land at eve we went,
  And plucked the ripened ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O, we fell out, I know not why,
  And kissed again with tears.

And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears!

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O, there above the little grave,
We kissed again with tears.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

SONG

Wait but a little while—
The bird will bring
A heart in tune for melodies
Unto the spring,
Till he who's in the cedar there
Is moved to trill a song so rare,
And pipe her fair.

Wait but a little while—
The bud will break;
The inner rose will open and glow
For summer's sake;
Fond bees will lodge within her breast
Till she herself is plucked and pressed
Where I would rest.

Wait but a little while—
The maid will grow
Gracious with lips and hands to thee,
With breast of snow.
To-day Love's mute, but time hath sown
A soul in her to match thine own,
Though yet ungrown.

Norman Gale [1862–

CONTENT

Though singing but the shy and sweet
Untrod by multitudes of feet,
Songs bounded by the brook and wheat,
I have not failed in this,
The only lure my woodland note,
To win all England's whitest throat!
O bards in gold and fire who wrote,
Be yours all other bliss!

Norman Gale [1862–

CHE SARA SARA

Preach wisdom unto him who understands!
When there's such lovely longing in thine eyes,
And such a pulse in thy small clinging hands,
What is the good of being great or wise?

What is the good of beating up the dust
On the world's highway, vexed with droughty heat?
Oh, I grow fatalist—what must be must,
Seeing that thou, beloved, art so sweet!

Victor Plarr [1863–

"BID ADIEU TO GIRLISH DAYS"

Bid adieu, adieu, adieu,
Bid adieu to girlish days,
Happy Love is come to woo
Thee and woo thy girlish ways—
The zone that doth become thee fair,
The snood upon thy yellow hair.

When thou hast heard his name upon
The bugles of the cherubim,
Begin thou softly to unzone
Thy girlish bosom unto him,
And softly to undo the snood
That is the sign of maidenhood.

James Joyce [1882–

TO F. C.

FAST falls the snow, O lady mine,
Sprinkling the lawn with crystals fine,
But by the gods we won't repine
While we're together,
We'll chat and rhyme, and kiss and dine,
Defying weather.

So stir the fire and pour the wine,
And let those sea-green eyes divine
Pour their love-madness into mine:
I don't care whether
'Tis snow or sun or rain or shine
If we're together.

Mortimer Collins [1827–1876]

SPRING PASSION

BLUE sky, green fields, and lazy yellow sun!
Why should I hunger for the burning South,
Where beauty needs no travail to be won,
Now I may kiss her pure impassioned mouth?

Winds rippling with the rich delight of spring!
Why should I yearn for myriad-colored skies,
Lit by auroral suns, when I may sing
The flame and rapture of her starry eyes?

Oh, song of birds, and flowers fair to see!
Why should I thirst for far-off Eden-isles,
When I may hear her discourse melody,
And bask, a dreamer, in her dreamy smiles?

Joel Elias Spingarn [1875–

ADVICE TO A LOVER

OH, if you love her,
Show her the best of you;
So will you move her
To bear with the rest of you.

Coldness and jealousy
Cannot but seem to her
Signs that a tempest lurks
Where was sunbeam to her.
Patience and tenderness
Still will awake in her
Hopes of new sunshine,
Though the storm break for her;
Love, she will know, for her,
Like the blue firmament,
Under the tempest lies
Gentle and permanent.
Nor will she ever
Gentleness find the less
When the storm overblown
Leaveth clear kindliness.
Deal with her tenderly,
Skylike above her,
Smile on her waywardness,
Oh, if you love her!

S. Charles Jellicoe [18 –

"YES"

They stood above the world,
In a world apart;
And she dropped her happy eyes,
And stilled the throbbing pulses
Of her happy heart.
And the moonlight fell above her,
Her secret to discover;
And the moonbeams kissed her hair,
As though no human lover
Had laid his kisses there.

"Look up, brown eyes," he said,
"And answer mine;
Lift up those silken fringes
That hide a happy light
Almost divine."

The jealous moonlight drifted
To the finger half-uplifted,
  Where shone the opal ring—
Where the colors danced and shifted
  On the pretty, changeful thing.

Just the old, old story
  Of light and shade,
Love like the opal tender,
Like it may be to vary—
  May be to fade.
Just the old tender story,
Just a glimpse of morning glory
  In an earthly Paradise,
With shadowy reflections
  In a pair of sweet brown eyes.

Brown eyes a man might well
  Be proud to win!
Open to hold his image,
Shut under silken lashes,
  Only to shut him in.
O glad eyes, look together,
For life's dark, stormy weather
  Grows to a fairer thing
When young eyes look upon it
  Through a slender wedding ring.

Richard Doddridge Blackmore [1825–1900]

LOVE

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
  And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
    Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leaned against the armèd man,
The statue of the armèd Knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air;
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight!

And that, unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land;—

And how she wept and clasped his knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin-shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stepped—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

NESTED

ON THE SUSSEX DOWNS

"Lured," little one? Nay, you've but heard
Love o'er your wild downs roaming;
Not lured, my bird, my light, swift bird,
But homing—homing.

"Caught," does she feel? Nay, no net stirred
To catch the heart fore-fated;
Not caught, my bird, my bright, wild bird,
But mated—mated.

And "caged," she fears? Nay, never that word
Of where your brown head rested;
Not caged, my bird, my shy, sweet bird,
But nested—nested!

Habberton Lulham [18 –

THE LETTERS

Still on the tower stood the vane,
A black yew gloomed the stagnant air;
I peered athwart the chancel pane,
And saw the altar cold and bare.
A clog of lead was round my feet,
A band of pain across my brow;
"Cold altar, heaven and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow."

I turned and hummed a bitter song
That mocked the wholesome human heart,
And then we met in wrath and wrong,
We met, but only meant to part.
Full cold my greeting was and dry;
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;
I saw, with half-unconscious eye,
She wore the colors I approved.

She took the little ivory chest,
With half a sigh she turned the key,
Then raised her head with lips compressed,
And gave my letters back to me;
And gave the trinkets and the rings,
My gifts, when gifts of mine could please.
As looks a father on the things
Of his dead son, I looked on these.

She told me all her friends had said;
I raged against the public liar.
She talked as if her love were dead;
But in my words were seeds of fire.
"No more of love, your sex is known;
I never will be twice deceived.
Henceforth I trust the man alone;
The woman cannot be believed.

"Through slander, meanest spawn of hell,—
And woman's slander is the worst,—
And you, whom once I loved so well,
Through you my life will be accursed."
I spoke with heart and heat and force,
I shook her breast with vague alarms—
Like torrents from a mountain source
We rushed into each other's arms.

We parted; sweetly gleamed the stars,
And sweet the vapor-braided blue;
Low breezes fanned the belfry bars,
As homeward by the church I drew.
The very graves appeared to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadowed swells;
"Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells."

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

PROTHALAMION

Calm was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
When I (whom sullen care,
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In Prince's Court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away,
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain),
Walked forth to ease my pain

Along the shore of silver streaming Thames;
Whose rutty bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorned with dainty gems,
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

There, in a meadow, by the river's side,
A flock of nymphs I chancèd to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks, all loose untied,
As each had been a bride:
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entrailèd curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
And, with fine fingers, cropped full feateously
The tender stalks on high.
Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
They gathered some; the violet, pallid blue,
The little daisy, that at evening closes,
The virgin lily, and the primrose true,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegroom's posies
Against the bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two swans of goodly hue
Come softly swimming down along the Lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
The snow, which doth the top of Pindus strew,
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,

Seemed foul to them, and bade his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair,
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as heaven's light,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoons the nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,
As they came floating on the crystal flood;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazèd still,
Their wondering eyes to fill;
Them seemed they never saw a sight so fair
Of fowls so lovely, that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather angels, or of angels' breed;
Yet were they bred of summer's heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array;
So fresh they seemed as day,
Even as their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honor of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odors yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
Scattered with flowers, through Thessaly they stream,
That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber floor:
Two of those nymphs, meanwhile, two garlands bound
Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,

The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crowned,
Whilst one did sing this lay,
Prepared against that day,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

"Ye gentle birds! the world's fair ornament,
And heaven's glory whom this happy hour
Doth lead unto your lover's blissful bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle hearts' content
Of your love's couplement;
And let fair Venus, that is queen of love,
With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
For ever to assoil;
Let endless peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessèd plenty wait upon your board;
And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
That fruitful issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your bridal day, which is not long":
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

So ended she: and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said their bridal day should not be long:
And gentle Echo from the neighbor-ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birds did pass along,
Adown the Lee, that to them murmured low,
As he would speak, but that he lacked a tongue,
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
Making his stream run slow.
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enrangèd well,

Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source;
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame:
There when they came, whereas those bricky towers
The which on Thames' broad, aged back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride:
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gainèd gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case;
But ah! here fits not well
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear:
Fair branch of honor, flower of chivalry!
That fillest England with thy triumph's fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name,
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowess, and victorious arms,
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms;
And great Elisa's glorious name may ring
Through all the world, filled with thy wide alarms,
Which some brave muse may sing
To ages following,

Upon the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
In the ocean billows he hath bathèd fair,
Descended to the river's open viewing,
With a great train ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to be seen
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature
Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
With gifts of wit, and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Jove they seemed in sight,
Which deck the baldrick of the heavens bright;
They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
Received those two fair brides, their love's delight;
Which, at the appointed tide,
Each one did make his bride
Against their bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Edmund Spenser [1552?–1599]

EPITHALAMION

Ye learnèd sisters, which have oftentimes
Been to me aiding, others to adorn,
Whom ye thought worthy of your graceful rhymes,
That even the greatest did not greatly scorn
To hear their names sung in your simple lays,
But joyèd in their praise;
And when ye list your own mishaps to mourn,
Which death, or love, or fortune's wreck did raise,
Your string could soon to sadder tenor turn,
And teach the woods and waters to lament
Your doleful dreariment:
Now lay those sorrowful complaints aside;
And, having all your heads with garlands crowned,
Help me mine own love's praises to resound;
Nor let the same of any be envide:
So Orpheus did for his own bride!

So I unto myself alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my echo ring.

Early, before the world's light-giving lamp
His golden beam upon the hills doth spread,
Having dispersed the night's uncheerful damp,
Do ye awake; and, with fresh lusty-hed,
Go to the bower of my belovèd love,
My truest turtle dove;
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready forth his mask to move,
With his bright Tead that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to wait on him,
In their fresh garments trim.
Bid her awake therefore, and soon her dight,
For lo! the wishèd day is come at last,
That shall, for all the pains and sorrows past,
Pay to her usury of long delight:
And, whilst she doth her dight,
Do ye to her of joy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Bring with you all the Nymphs that you can hear,
Both of the rivers and the forests green,
And of the sea that neighbors to her near,
All with gay garlands goodly well beseen.
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay garland,
For my fair love, of lilies and of roses,
Bound truelove wise with a blue silk riband;
And let them make great store of bridal posies,
And let them eke bring store of other flowers,
To deck the bridal bowers.
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For fear the stones her tender foot should wrong,
Be strewed with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapered like the discolored mead;
Which done, do at her chamber door await,
For she will waken straight;

The whiles do ye this song unto her sing,
The woods shall to you answer, and your echo ring.

Ye Nymphs of Mulla, which with careful heed
The silver scaly trouts do tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed
(Those trouts and pikes all others do excel);
And ye likewise, which keep the rushy lake,
Where none do fishes take;
Bind up the locks the which hang scattered light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the crystal bright,
That when you come whereas my love doth lie,
No blemish she may spy.
And eke, ye lightfoot maids, which keep the deer,
That on the hoary mountain used to tower;
And the wild wolves, which seek them to devour,
With your steel darts do chase from coming near;
Be also present here,
To help to deck her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Wake, now, my love, awake! for it is time;
The rosy morn long since left Tithon's bed,
All ready to her silver coach to climb;
And Phœbus 'gins to show his glorious head.
Hark, how the cheerful birds do chant their lays
And carol of love's praise.
The merry lark her matins sings aloft;
The thrush replies; the mavis descant plays;
The ouzel shrills; the ruddock warbles soft;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this day's merriment.
Ah! my dear love, why do ye sleep thus long,
When meeter were that ye should now awake,
To await the coming of your joyous mate,
And hearken to the birds' love-learnèd song,
The dewy leaves among!
For they of joy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

My love is now awake out of her dreams,
And her fair eyes, like stars that dimmèd were
With darksome cloud, now show their goodly beams
More bright than Hesperus his head doth rear.
Come now, ye damsels, daughters of delight,
Help quickly her to dight:
But first come, ye fair hours, which were begot
In Jove's sweet paradise of Day and Night;
Which do the seasons of the year allot,
And all that ever in this world is fair,
Do make and still repair:
And ye three handmaids of the Cyprian queen,
The which do still adorn her beauty's pride,
Help to adorn my beautifulest bride;
And as ye her array, still throw between
Some graces to be seen,
And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
The whiles the woods shall answer, and your echo ring.

Now is my love all ready forth to come:
Let all the virgins therefore well await:
And ye fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
Prepare yourselves; for he is coming straight;
Set all your things in seemly good array,
Fit for so joyful day:
The joyfulest day that ever sun did see.
Fair Sun! show forth thy favorable ray,
And let thy life-full heat not fervent be,
For fear of burning her sunshiny face,
Her beauty to disgrace.
O fairest Phœbus! father of the Muse!
If ever I did honor thee aright,
Or sing the thing that might thy mind delight,
Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse;
But let this day, let this one day, be mine;
Let all the rest be thine.
Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
That all the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

Hark! how the Minstrels 'gin to shrill aloud
Their merry music that resounds from far,

The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling croud,
That well agree withouten breach or jar.
But, most of all, the Damsels do delight
When they their timbrels smite,
And thereunto do dance and carol sweet,
That all the senses they do ravish quite;
The whiles the boys run up and down the street,
Crying aloud with strong confusèd noise,
As if it were one voice,
Hymen, iö Hymen, Hymen, they do shout;
That even to the heavens their shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill;
To which the people standing all about,
As in approvance, do thereto applaud,
And loud advance her laud;
And evermore they Hymen, Hymen sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

Lo! where she comes along with portly pace,
Like Phœbe, from her chamber of the East,
Arising forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
So well it her beseems, that ye would ween
Some angel she had been.
Her long loose yellow locks like golden wire,
Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers atween,
Do like a golden mantle her attire;
And, being crownèd with a garland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.
Her modest eyes, abashèd to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixèd are;
Nor dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathless do ye still loud her praises sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Tell me, ye merchants' daughters, did ye see
So fair a creature in your town before;

So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
Adorned with beauty's grace and virtue's store?
Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
Her forehead ivory white,
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath ruddied,
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,
Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncrudded,
Her paps like lilies budded,
Her snowy neck like to a marble tower;
And all her body like a palace fair,
Ascending up, with many a stately stair,
To honor's seat and chastity's sweet bower.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins, in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your echo ring?

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnished with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonished like to those which read
Medusa's mazeful head.
There dwells sweet love, and constant chastity,
Unspotted faith, and comely womanhood,
Regard of honor, and mild modesty;
There virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone,
The which the base affections do obey,
And yield their services unto her will;
Nor thought of thing uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures,
And unrevealèd pleasures,
Then would ye wonder, and her praises sing,
That all the woods should answer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the posts adorn as doth behove,
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,

For to receive this Saint with honor due,
That cometh in to you.
With trembling steps, and humble reverence,
She cometh in, before the Almighty's view;
Of her ye virgins learn obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces:
Bring her up to the high altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endless matrimony make;
And let the roaring organs loudly play
The praises of the Lord in lively notes;
The whiles, with hollow throats,
The Choristers the joyous Anthems sing,
That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring.

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,
And the pure snow, with goodly vermill stain
Like crimson dyed in grain:
That even the Angels, which continually
About the sacred altar do remain,
Forget their service and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair,
The more they on it stare.
But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,
Are governèd with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one look to glance awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsound.
Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band?
Sing, ye sweet Angels, Alleluja sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Now all is done: bring home the bride again;
Bring home the triumph of our victory:
Bring home with you the glory of her gain;
With joyance bring her and with jollity.

Never had man more joyful day than this,
Whom heaven would heap with bliss.
Make feast therefore now all this live-long day;
This day for ever to me holy is.
Pour out the wine without restraint or stay,
Pour not by cups, but by the belly full,
Pour out to all that will,
And sprinkle all the posts and walls with wine,
That they may sweat, and drunken be withal.
Crown ye God Bacchus with a coronal,
And Hymen also crown with wreaths of vine;
And let the Graces dance unto the rest,
For they can do it best:
The whiles the maidens do their carol sing,
To which the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town,
And leave your wonted labors for this day:
This day is holy; do ye write it down,
That ye for ever it remember may.
This day the sun is in his chiefest height,
With Barnaby the bright,
From whence declining daily by degrees,
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
But for this time it ill ordainèd was,
To choose the longest day in all the year,
And shortest night, when longest fitter were:
Yet never day so long, but late would pass.
Ring ye the bells, to make it wear away,
And bonfires make all day;
And dance about them, and about them sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
And lend me leave to come unto my love?
How slowly do the hours their numbers spend?
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move?
Haste thee, O fairest Planet, to thy home,
Within the Western foam:

Thy tirèd steeds long since have need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloom,
And the bright evening-star with golden crest
Appear out of the East.
Fair child of beauty! glorious lamp of love!
That all the host of heaven in ranks dost lead,
And guidest lovers through the night's sad dread,
How cheerfully thou lookest from above,
And seems to laugh atween thy twinkling light,
As joying in the sight
Of these glad many, which for joy do sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring!

Now, cease, ye damsels, your delights fore-past;
Enough is it that all the day was yours:
Now day is done, and night is nighing fast,
Now bring the bride into the bridal bowers.
The night is come, now soon her disarray,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lilies and in violets,
And silken curtains over her display,
And odored sheets, and Arras coverlets.
Behold how goodly my fair love does lie,
In proud humility!
Like unto Maia, when as Jove her took
In Tempe, lying on the flowery grass,
'Twixt sleep and wake, after she weary was,
With bathing in the Acidalian brook.
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,
And leave my love alone,
And leave likewise your former lay to sing:
The woods no more shall answer, nor your echo ring.

Now welcome, night! thou night so long expected,
That long day's labor dost at last defray,
And all my cares, which cruel Love collected,
Hast summed in one, and cancellèd for aye:
Spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
That no man may us see;
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From fear of peril and foul horror free.

Let no false treason seek us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy;
But let the night be calm, and quietsome,
Without tempestuous storms or sad affray:
Like as when Jove with fair Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groom:
Or like as when he with thyself did lie
And begot Majesty.
And let the maids and young men cease to sing;
Nor let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

Let no lamenting cries, nor doleful tears,
Be heard all night within, nor yet without:
Nor let false whispers, breeding hidden fears,
Break gentle sleep with misconceivèd doubt.
Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful sights,
Make sudden sad affrights;
Nor let house-fires, nor lightning's helpless harms,
Nor let the Puck, nor other evil sprites,
Nor let mischievous witches with their charms,
Nor let hobgoblins, names whose sense we see not,
Fray us with things that be not:
Let not the screech-owl nor the stork be heard,
Nor the night raven, that still deadly yells;
Nor damnèd ghosts, called up with mighty spells,
Nor grizzly vultures, make us once afraid:
Nor let the unpleasant choir of frogs still croaking
Make us to wish their choking.
Let none of these their dreary accents sing;
Nor let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

But let still Silence true night-watches keep,
That sacred Peace may in assurance reign,
And timely Sleep, when it is time to sleep,
May pour his limbs forth on your pleasant plain;
The whiles an hundred little wingèd loves,
Like divers-feathered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed,
And in the secret dark, that none reproves,
Their pretty stealths shall work, and snares shall spread

To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Concealed through covert night.
Ye sons of Venus, play your sports at will!
For greedy pleasure, careless of your toys,
Thinks more upon her paradise of joys,
Then what ye do, albeit good or ill.
All night therefore attend your merry play,
For it will soon be day:
Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing;
Nor will the woods now answer, nor your echo ring.

Who is the same, which at my window peeps?
Or whose is that fair face that shines so bright?
Is it not Cynthia, she that never sleeps,
But walks about high heaven all the night?
O! fairest goddess, do thou not envy
My love with me to spy:
For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wool, which privily
The Latmian shepherd once unto thee brought,
His pleasures with thee wrought.
Therefore to us be favorable now;
And since of women's labors thou hast charge,
And generation goodly dost enlarge,
Incline thy will to effect our wishful vow,
And the chaste womb inform with timely seed,
That may our comfort breed:
Till which we cease our hopeful hap to sing;
Nor let the woods us answer, nor our echo ring.

And thou, great Juno! which with awful might
The laws of wedlock still dost patronize,
And the religion of the faith first plight
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnize;
And eke for comfort often callèd art
Of women in their smart;
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy blessings unto us impart.
And thou, glad Genius! in whose gentle hand
The bridal bower and genial bed remain,
Without blemish or stain;

And the sweet pleasures of their love's delight
With secret aid dost succor and supply,
Till they bring forth the fruitful progeny;
Send us the timely fruit of this same night.
And thou, fair Hebe! and thou, Hymen free!
Grant that it may so be.
Till which we cease your further praise to sing;
Nor any woods shall answer, nor your echo ring.

And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods,
In which a thousand torches flaming bright
Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods
In dreadful darkness lend desirèd light;
And all ye powers which in the same remain,
More than we men can feign,
Pour out your blessing on us plenteously,
And happy influence upon us rain,
That we may raise a large posterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long possess
With lasting happiness,
Up to your haughty palaces may mount;
And, for the guerdon of their glorious merit,
May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
Of blessèd Saints for to increase the count.
So let us rest, sweet love, in hope of this,
And cease till then our timely joys to sing:
The woods no more us answer, nor our echo ring!

Song! made in lieu of many ornaments,
With which my love should duly have been decked,
Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
Ye would not stay your due time to expect,
But promised both to recompense;
Be unto her a goodly ornament,
And for short time an endless monument.

Edmund Spenser [1552?–1599]

THE KISS

Before you kissed me only winds of heaven
Had kissed me, and the tenderness of rain—
Now you have come, how can I care for kisses
Like theirs again?

I sought the sea, she sent her winds to meet me,
They surged about me singing of the south—
I turned my head away to keep still holy
Your kiss upon my mouth.

And swift sweet rains of shining April weather
Found not my lips where living kisses are;
I bowed my head lest they put out my glory
As rain puts out a star.

I am my love's and he is mine forever,
Sealed with a seal and safe forevermore—
Think you that I could let a beggar enter
Where a king stood before?

Sara Teasdale [1884–

MARRIAGE

Going my way of old
Contented more or less
I dreamt not life could hold
Such happiness.

I dreamt not that love's way
Could keep the golden height
Day after happy day,
Night after night.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson [1878–

THE NEWLY-WEDDED

Now the rite is duly done,
Now the word is spoken,
And the spell has made us one
Which may ne'er be broken;
Rest we, dearest, in our home,
Roam we o'er the heather:
We shall rest, and we shall roam,
Shall we not? together.

From this hour the summer rose
Sweeter breathes to charm us;
From this hour the winter snows
Lighter fall to harm us:

Fair or foul—on land or sea—
Come the wind or weather,
Best and worst, whate'er they be,
We shall share together.

Death, who friend from friend can part,
Brother rend from brother,
Shall but link us, heart and heart,
Closer to each other:
We will call his anger play,
Deem his dart a feather,
When we meet him on our way
Hand in hand together.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802–1839]

"I SAW TWO CLOUDS AT MORNING"

I saw two clouds at morning,
Tinged by the rising sun,
And in the dawn they floated on,
And mingled into one;
I thought that morning cloud was blest,
It moved so sweetly to the west.

I saw two summer currents
Flow smoothly to their meeting,
And join their course, with silent force,
In peace each other greeting;
Calm was their course through banks of green,
While dimpling eddies played between.

Such be your gentle motion,
Till life's last pulse shall beat;
Like summer's beam, and summer's stream,
Float on, in joy, to meet
A calmer sea, where storms shall cease,
A purer sky, where all is peace.

John Gardiner Calkins Brainard [1796–1828]

HOLY MATRIMONY

THE voice that breathed o'er Eden,
That earliest wedding-day,
The primal marriage blessing,
It hath not passed away.

Still in the pure espousal
Of Christian man and maid,
The holy Three are with us,
The threefold grace is said.

For dower of blessèd children,
For love and faith's sweet sake,
For high mysterious union,
Which naught on earth may break.

Be present, awful Father,
To give away this bride,
As Eve thou gav'st to Adam
Out of his own pierced side:

Be present, Son of Mary,
To join their loving hands,
As thou didst bind two natures
In thine eternal bands:

Be present, Holiest Spirit,
To bless them as they kneel,
As thou for Christ, the Bridegroom,
The heavenly Spouse dost seal.

Oh, spread thy pure wing o'er them,
Let no ill power find place,
When onward to thine altar
The hallowed path they trace,

To cast their crowns before thee
In perfect sacrifice,
Till to the home of gladness
With Christ's own Bride they rise. AMEN.

John Keble [1792–1866]

THE BRIDE

Beat on the Tom-toms, and scatter the flowers,
Jasmine, hibiscus, vermilion and white,
This is the day, and the Hour of Hours,
Bring forth the Bride for her Lover's delight.
Maidens no more as a maiden shall claim her,
Near, in his Mystery, draweth Desire.
Who, if she waver a moment, shall blame her?
She is a flower, and love is a fire.

Give her the anklets, the ring, and the necklace,
Darken her eyelids with delicate art,
Heighten the beauty, so youthful and fleckless,
By the Gods favored, oh, Bridegroom, thou art!
Twine in thy fingers her fingers so slender,
Circle together the Mystical Fire,
Bridegroom,—a whisper,—be gentle and tender,
Choti Tinchaurya knows not desire.

Bring forth the silks and the veil that shall cover
Beauty, till yesterday careless and wild;
Red are her lips for the kiss of a lover,
Ripe are her breasts for the lips of a child.
Center and Shrine of Mysterious Power,
Chalice of Pleasure and Rose of Delight,
Shyly aware of the swift-coming hour,
Waiting the shade and the silence of night.

Still must the Bridegroom his longing dissemble,
Longing to loosen the silk-woven cord,
Ah, how his fingers will flutter and tremble,
Fingers well skilled with the bridle and sword.
Thine is his valor, oh Bride, and his beauty,
Thine to possess and re-issue again,
Such is thy tender and passionate duty,
Licit thy pleasure and honored thy pain.

Choti Tinchaurya, lovely and tender,
Still all unbroken to sorrow and strife,
Come to the Bridegroom who, silk-clad and slender,
Brings thee the Honor and Burden of Life.
Bidding farewell to thy light-hearted playtime,
Worship thy Lover with fear and delight;
Art thou not ever, though slave of his daytime,
Choti Tinchaurya, queen of his night?

Laurence Hope [1865–1904]

A MARRIAGE CHARM

I SET a charm upon your hurrying breath,
I set a charm upon your wandering feet,
You shall not leave me—not for life, nor death,
Not even though you cease to love me, Sweet.

A woman's love nine Angels cannot bind,
Nor any rune that wind or water knows,
My heart were all as well set on the wind,
Or bound, to live or die, upon a rose.

I set a charm upon you, foot and hand,
That you and Knowledge, love, may never meet,
That you may never chance to understand
How strong you are, how weak your lover, Sweet.

I set my charm upon your kindly arm,
I set it as a seal upon your breast;
That you may never hear another's charm,
Nor guess another's gift outruns my best.

I bid your wandering footsteps me to follow,
Your thoughts to travel after in my track,
I am the sky that waits you, dear gray swallow,
No wind of mine shall ever blow you back.

I am your dream, Sweet; so no more of dreaming,
Your lips to mine must end this chanted charm,
Your heart to mine, 'neath nut-brown tresses streaming,
I set my love a seal upon your arm.

Nora Hopper [1871–

"LIKE A LAVEROCK IN THE LIFT"

It's we two, it's we two, it's we two for aye,
All the world, and we two, and Heaven be our stay!
Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!
All the world was Adam once, with Eve by his side.

What's the world, my lass, my love!—what can it do?
I am thine, and thou art mine; life is sweet and new.
If the world have missed the mark, let it stand by;
For we two have gotten leave, and once more we'll try.

Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!
It's we two, it's we two, happy side by side.
Take a kiss from me, thy man; now the song begins:
"All is made afresh for us, and the brave heart wins."

When the darker days come, and no sun will shine,
Thou shalt dry my tears, lass, and I'll dry thine.
It's we two, it's we two, while the world's away,
Sitting by the golden sheaves on our wedding-day.

Jean Ingelow [1820–1897]

MY OWEN

Proud of you, fond of you, clinging so near to you,
Light is my heart now I know I am dear to you!
Glad is my voice now, so free it may sing for you
All the wild love that is burning within for you!
Tell me once more, tell it over and over,
The tale of that eve which first saw you my lover.
Now I need never blush
At my heart's hottest gush—
The wife of my Owen her heart may discover!

Proud of you, fond of you, having all right in you,
Quitting all else through my love and delight in you!
Glad is my heart since 'tis beating so nigh to you!
Light is my step for it always may fly to you!

Clasped in your arms where no sorrow can reach to me,
Reading your eyes till new love they shall teach to me.
Though wild and weak till now,
By that blest marriage vow,
More than the wisest know your heart shall preach to me.

Ellen Mary Patrick Downing [1828–1869]

DORIS: A PASTORAL

I SAT with Doris, the shepherd maiden;
Her crook was laden with wreathèd flowers.
I sat and wooed her through sunlight wheeling,
And shadows stealing for hours and hours.

And she, my Doris, whose lap incloses
Wild summer roses of faint perfume,
The while I sued her, kept hushed and harkened
Till shades had darkened from gloss to gloom.

She touched my shoulder with fearful finger;
She said, "We linger, we must not stay;
My flock's in danger, my sheep will wander;
Behold them yonder, how far they stray!"

I answered bolder, "Nay, let me hear you,
And still be near you, and still adore!
No wolf nor stranger will touch one yearling—
Ah! stay my darling a moment more!"

She whispered, sighing, "There will be sorrow
Beyond to-morrow, if I lose to-day;
My fold unguarded, my flock unfolded—
I shall be scolded and sent away!"

Said I, denying, "If they do miss you,
They ought to kiss you when you get home;
And well rewarded by friend and neighbor
Should be the labor from which you come."

"They might remember," she answered meekly,
"That lambs are weakly and sheep are wild;
But if they love me it's none so fervent—
I am a servant and not a child."

Then each hot ember glowed quick within me,
And love did win me to swift reply:
"Ah! do but prove me, and none shall bind you,
Nor fray nor find you until I die!"

She blushed and started, and stood awaiting,
As if debating in dreams divine;
But I did brave them—I told her plainly,
She doubted vainly, she must be mine.

So we, twin-hearted, from all the valley
Did rouse and rally her nibbling ewes;
And homeward drove them, we two together,
Through blooming heather and gleaming dews.

That simple duty such grace did lend her,
My Doris tender, my Doris true,
That I her warder did always bless her,
And often press her to take her due.

And now in beauty she fills my dwelling
With love excelling, and undefiled;
And love doth guard her, both fast and fervent,
No more a servant, nor yet a child.

Arthur Joseph Munby [1828–1910]

"HE'D NOTHING BUT HIS VIOLIN"

He'd nothing but his violin,
I'd nothing but my song,
But we were wed when skies were blue
And summer days were long;
And when we rested by the hedge,
The robins came and told
How they had dared to woo and win,
When early Spring was cold.

We sometimes supped on dew-berries,
Or slept among the hay,
But oft the farmers' wives at eve
Came out to hear us play;
The rare old songs, the dear old tunes,—
We could not starve for long
While my man had his violin,
And I my sweet love-song.

The world has aye gone well with us
Old man since we were one,—
Our homeless wandering down the lanes
It long ago was done.
But those who wait for gold or gear,
For houses or for kine,
Till youth's sweet spring grows brown and sere,
And love and beauty tine,
Will never know the joy of hearts
That met without a fear,
When you had but your violin
And I a song, my dear.

Mary Kyle Dallas [1830–1897]

LOVE'S CALENDAR

That gusty spring, each afternoon
By the ivied cot I passed,
And noted at that lattice soon
Her fair face downward cast;
Still in the same place seated there,
So diligent, so very fair.

Oft-times I said I knew her not,
Yet that way round would go,
Until, when evenings lengthened out,
And bloomed the may-hedge row,
I met her by the wayside well,
Whose waters, maybe, broke the spell.

For, leaning on her pail, she prayed,
I'd lift it to her head.
So did I; but I'm much afraid
Some wasteful drops were shed,
And that we blushed, as face to face
Needs must we stand the shortest space.

Then when the sunset mellowed through
The ears of rustling grain,
When lattices wide open flew,
When ash-leaves fell like rain,
As well as I she knew the hour
At morn or eve I neared her bower.

And now that snow o'erlays the thatch,
Each starlit eve within
The door she waits, I raise the latch,
And kiss her lifted chin;
Nor do I think we've blushed again,
For Love hath made but one of twain.

William Bell Scott [1811–1890]

HOME

Two birds within one nest;
Two hearts within one breast;
Two spirits in one fair,
Firm league of love and prayer,
Together bound for aye, together blest.

An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch;
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win;
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in.

Dora Greenwell [1821–1882]

TWO LOVERS

Two lovers by a moss-grown spring:
They leaned soft cheeks together there,
Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
And heard the wooing thrushes sing.

O budding time!
O love's blest prime!

Two wedded from the portal stept:
The bells made happy carolings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
White petals on the pathway slept.
O pure-eyed bride!
O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent:
Two hands above the head were locked:
These pressed each other while they rocked,
Those watched a life that love had sent.
O solemn hour!
O hidden power!

Two parents by the evening fire:
The red light fell about their knees
On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily spire.
O patient life!
O tender strife!

The two still sat together there,
The red light shone about their knees;
But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
O voyage fast!
O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor
And made the space between them wide;
They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said, "Once more!"
O memories!
O past that is!

George Eliot [1819–1880]

THE LAND OF HEART'S DESIRE

"SOMEWHERE," he mused, "its dear enchantments wait,
That land, so heavenly sweet;
Yet all the paths we follow, soon or late,
End in the desert's heat.

"And still it lures us to the eager quest,
And calls us day by day"—
"But I," she said, her babe upon her breast,
"*But I have found the way.*"

"Some time," he sighed, "when youth and joy are spent,
Our feet the gates may win"—
"But I," she smiled, with eyes of deep content,
"*But I have entered in.*"

Emily Huntington Miller [1833–1913]

MY AIN WIFE

I WADNA gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see;
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see;
A bonnier yet I've never seen,
A better canna be—
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see!

O couthie is my ingle-cheek,
An' cheerie is my Jean;
I never see her angry look,
Nor hear her word on ane.
She's gude wi' a' the neebors roun'
An' aye gude wi' me—
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see.

An' O her looks sae kindlie,
They melt my heart outright,
When o'er the baby at her breast
She hangs wi' fond delight;

She looks intill its bonnie face,
An' syne looks to me—
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see.

Alexander Laing [1787–1857]

THE IRISH WIFE

I WOULD not give my Irish wife
For all the dames of the Saxon land;
I would not give my Irish wife
For the Queen of France's hand;
For she to me is dearer
Than castles strong, or lands, or life.
An outlaw—so I'm near her
To love till death my Irish wife.

O what would be this home of mine,
A ruined, hermit-haunted place,
But for the light that nightly shines
Upon its walls from Kathleen's face!
What comfort in a mine of gold,
What pleasure in a royal life,
If the heart within lay dead and cold,
If I could not wed my Irish wife?

I knew the law forbade the banns;
I knew my king abhorred her race;
Who never bent before their clans
Must bow before their ladies' grace.
Take all my forfeited domain,
I cannot wage with kinsmen strife:
Take knightly gear and noble name,
And I will keep my Irish wife.

My Irish wife has clear blue eyes,
My heaven by day, my stars by night;
And twin-like truth and fondness lies
Within her swelling bosom white.

My Irish wife has golden hair,
Apollo's harp had once such strings,
Apollo's self might pause to hear
Her bird-like carol when she sings.

I would not give my Irish wife
For all the dames of the Saxon land;
I would not give my Irish wife
For the Queen of France's hand;
For she to me is dearer
Than castles strong, or lands, or life:
In death I would be near her,
And rise beside my Irish wife.

Thomas D'Arcy McGee [1825–1868]

MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And niest my heart I'll wear her,
For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

The warld's wrack we share o't,
The warsle and the care o't:
Wi' her I'll blithely bear it,
And think my lot divine.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

LETTICE

I said to Lettice, our sister Lettice,
While drooped and glistened her eyelash brown,
"Your man's a poor man, a cold and dour man,
There's many a better about our town."

She smiled securely—"He loves me purely:
A true heart's safe, both in smile or frown;
And nothing harms me while his love warms me,
Whether the world go up or down."

"He comes of strangers, and they are rangers,
And ill to trust, girl, when out of sight:
Fremd folk may blame ye, and e'en defame ye,—
A gown oft handled looks seldom white."
She raised serenely her eyelids queenly,—
"My innocence is my whitest gown;
No harsh tongue grieves me while he believes me,
Whether the world go up or down."

"Your man's a frail man, was ne'er a hale man,
And sickness knocketh at every door,
And death comes making bold hearts cower, breaking—"
Our Lettice trembled;—but once, no more.
"If death should enter, smite to the center
Our poor home palace, all crumbling down,
He cannot fright us, nor disunite us,
Life bears Love's cross, death brings Love's crown."

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

"IF THOU WERT BY MY SIDE, MY LOVE"

If thou wert by my side, my love,
How fast would evening fail
In green Bengala's palmy grove,
Listening the nightingale!

If thou, my love, wert by my side,
My babies at my knee,
How gayly would our pinnace glide
O'er Gunga's mimic sea!

I miss thee at the dawning gray,
When, on our deck reclined,
In careless ease my limbs I lay
And woo the cooler wind.

I miss thee when by Gunga's stream
My twilight steps I guide,
But most beneath the lamp's pale beam
I miss thee from my side.

I spread my books, my pencil try,
The lingering noon to cheer,
But miss thy kind, approving eye,
Thy meek, attentive ear.

But when at morn and eve the star
Beholds me on my knee,
I feel, though thou art distant far,
Thy prayers ascend for me.

Then on! then on! where duty leads,
My course be onward still,
O'er broad Hindostan's sultry meads,
O'er bleak Almorah's hill.

That course nor Delhi's kingly gates,
Nor mild Malwah detain;
For sweet the bliss us both awaits
By yonder western main.

Thy towers, Bombay, gleam bright, they say,
Across the dark blue sea;
But ne'er were hearts so light and gay
As then shall meet in thee!

Reginald Heber [1783–1826]

THE SHEPHERD'S WIFE'S SONG

From "The Mourning Garment"

Ah, what is love? It is a pretty thing,
As sweet unto a shepherd as a king,
And sweeter, too:

For kings have cares that wait upon a crown,
And cares can make the sweetest love to frown:
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

His flocks are folded; he comes home at night
As merry as a king in his delight,
And merrier, too:
For kings bethink them what the state require,
Where shepherds, careless, carol by the fire:

He kisseth first, then sits as blithe to eat
His cream and curds, as doth a king his meat,
And blither, too:
For kings have often fears when they do sup,
Where shepherds dread no poison in their cup:

To bed he goes, as wanton then, I ween,
As is a king in dalliance with a queen;
More wanton, too:
For kings have many griefs, affects to move,
Where shepherds have no greater grief than love:

Upon his couch of straw he sleeps as sound
As doth the king upon his bed of down;
More sounder, too:
For cares cause kings full oft their sleep to spill,
Where weary shepherds lie and snort their fill:

Thus, with his wife, he spends the year as blithe
As doth the king at every tide or sithe,
And blither, too:
For kings have wars and broils to take in hand,
Where shepherds laugh and love upon the land:
Ah then, ah then,
Since country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

Robert Greene [1560?–1592]

"TRUTH DOTH TRUTH DESERVE"

From the "Arcadia"

WHO doth desire that chaste his wife should be,
First be he true, for truth doth truth deserve:
Then such be he as she his worth may see,
And one man still credit with her preserve.
Not toying kind, nor causelessly unkind;
Not stirring thoughts, nor yet denying right;
Not spying faults, nor in plain errors blind;
Never hard hand, nor ever reins too light.
As far from want, as far from vain expense
(The one doth force, the latter doth entice);
Allow good company, but keep from thence
All filthy mouths that glory in their vice.
This done, thou hast no more, but leave the rest
To virtue, fortune, time, and woman's breast.

Philip Sidney [1554–1586]

THE MARRIED LOVER

From "The Angel in the House"

WHY, having won her, do I woo?
Because her spirit's vestal grace
Provokes me always to pursue,
But, spirit-like, eludes embrace;
Because her womanhood is such
That, as on court-days subjects kiss
The Queen's hand, yet so near a touch
Affirms no mean familiarness;
Nay, rather marks more fair the height
Which can with safety so neglect
To dread, as lower ladies might,
That grace could meet with disrespect;
Thus she with happy favor feeds
Allegiance from a love so high
That thence no false conceit proceeds
Of difference bridged, or state put by;

Because, although in act and word
As lowly as a wife can be,
Her manners, when they call me lord,
Remind me 'tis by courtesy;
Not with her least consent of will,
Which would my proud affection hurt,
But by the noble style that still
Imputes an unattained desert;
Because her gay and lofty brows,
When all is won which hope can ask,
Reflect a light of hopeless snows
That bright in virgin ether bask;
Because, though free of the outer court
I am, this Temple keeps its shrine
Sacred to heaven; because, in short,
She's not and never can be mine.

Coventry Patmore [1823–1896]

MY LOVE

Not as all other women are
Is she that to my soul is dear;
Her glorious fancies come from far,
Beneath the silver evening-star,
And yet her heart is ever near.

Great feelings hath she of her own,
Which lesser souls may never know;
God giveth them to her alone,
And sweet they are as any tone
Wherewith the wind may choose to blow.

Yet in herself she dwelleth not,
Although no home were half so fair;
No simplest duty is forgot,
Life hath no dim and lowly spot
That doth not in her sunshine share.

She doeth little kindnesses,
Which most leave undone, or despise:

For naught that sets one heart at ease,
And giveth happiness or peace,
Is low-esteemèd in her eyes.

She hath no scorn of common things,
And, though she seem of other birth,
Round us her heart intwines and clings,
And patiently she folds her wings
To tread the humble paths of earth.

Blessing she is: God made her so,
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her noiseless as the snow,
Nor hath she ever chanced to know
That aught were easier than to bless.

She is most fair, and thereunto
Her life doth rightly harmonize;
Feeling or thought that was not true
Ne'er made less beautiful the blue
Unclouded heaven of her eyes.

She is a woman: one in whom
The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
For many blights and many tears.

I love her with a love as still
As a broad river's peaceful might,
Which, by high tower and lowly mill,
Seems following its own wayward will,
And yet doth ever flow aright.

And, on its full, deep breast serene,
Like quiet isles my duties lie;
It flows around them and between,
And makes them fresh and fair and green,
Sweet homes wherein to live and die.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

MARGARET TO DOLCINO

Ask if I love thee? Oh, smiles cannot tell
Plainer what tears are now showing too well.
Had I not loved thee, my sky had been clear:
Had I not loved thee, I had not been here,
Weeping by thee.

Ask if I love thee? How else could I borrow
Pride from man's slander, and strength from my sorrow?
Laugh when they sneer at the fanatic's bride,
Knowing no bliss, save to toil and abide
Weeping by thee.

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

DOLCINO TO MARGARET

The world goes up and the world goes down,
And the sunshine follows the rain;
And yesterday's sneer, and yesterday's frown,
Can never come over again,
Sweet wife:
No, never come over again.

For woman is warm, though man be cold,
And the night will hallow the day;
Till the heart which at even was weary and old
Can rise in the morning gay,
Sweet wife;
To its work in the morning gay.

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

AT LAST

When first the bride and bridegroom wed,
They love their single selves the best;
A sword is in the marriage bed,
Their separate slumbers are not rest.
They quarrel, and make up again,
They give and suffer worlds of pain.

Both right and wrong,
They struggle long,
Till some good day, when they are old,
Some dark day, when the bells are tolled,
Death having taken their best of life,
They lose themselves, and find each other;
They know that they are husband, wife,
For, weeping, they are Father, Mother!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825–1903]

THE WIFE TO HER HUSBAND

Linger not long. Home is not home without thee:
Its dearest tokens do but make me mourn.
O, let its memory, like a chain about thee,
Gently compel and hasten thy return!

Linger not long. Though crowds should woo thy staying,
Bethink thee, can the mirth of thy friends, though dear,
Compensate for the grief thy long delaying
Costs the fond heart that sighs to have thee here?

Linger not long. How shall I watch thy coming,
As evening shadows stretch o'er moor and dell;
When the wild bee hath ceased her busy humming,
And silence hangs on all things like a spell!

How shall I watch for thee, when fears grow stronger,
As night grows dark and darker on the hill!
How shall I weep, when I can watch no longer!
Ah! art thou absent, art thou absent still?

Yet I shall grieve not, though the eye that seeth me
Gazeth through tears that make its splendor dull;
For oh! I sometimes fear when thou art with me,
My cup of happiness is all too full.

Haste, haste thee home unto thy mountain dwelling,
Haste, as a bird unto its peaceful nest!
Haste, as a skiff, through tempests wide and swelling,
Flies to its haven of securest rest!

Unknown

A WIFE'S SONG

O WELL I love the Spring,
When the sweet, sweet hawthorn blows;
And well I love the Summer,
And the coming of the rose;
But dearer are the changing leaf,
And the year upon the wane,
For O, they bring the blessed time
That brings him home again.

November may be dreary,
December's days may be
As full of gloom to others
As once they were to me;
But O, to hear the tempest
Beat loud against the pane!
For the roaring wind and the blessed time
That brings him home again.

William Cox Bennett [1820–1895]

THE SAILOR'S WIFE

AND are ye sure the news is true?
And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this a time to talk o' wark?
Ye jauds, fling by your wheel!
Is this a time to spin a thread,
When Colin's at the door?
Rax down my cloak—I'll to the quay,
And see him come ashore.
For there's nae luck aboot the house,
There's nae luck ava',
There's little pleasure in the house,
When our gudeman's awa'.

And gi'e to me my bigonet,
My bishop's satin gown;
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
That Colin's in the town.

My Turkey slippers maun gae on,
  My stockins pearly blue;
It's a' to pleasure our gudeman,
  For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass, and mak' a clean fireside,
  Put on the muckle pot;
Gi'e little Kate her button gown,
  And Jock his Sunday coat.
And mak' their shoon as black as slaes,
  Their hose as white as snaw;
It's a' to please my own gudeman,
  He likes to see them braw.

There's twa hens upon the bauk,
  Hae fed this month and mair;
Mak' haste and thraw their necks about
  That Colin weel may fare!
And spread the table neat and clean,
  Gar ilka thing look braw;
For wha can tell how Colin fared,
  When he was far awa'?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
  His breath like caller air;
His very foot has music in't
  As he comes up the stair.
And will I see his face again,
  And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
  In troth I'm like to greet!

If Colin's weel, and weel content,
  I ha'e nae mair to crave;
And gin I live to keep him sae,
  I'm blest abune the lave.
And will I see his face again,
  And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
  In troth I'm like to greet!

For there's nae luck aboot the house,
  There's nae luck ava';
There's little pleasure in the house
  When our gudeman's awa'.

William Julius Mickle [1735–1788]
(*or Jean Adam* (?) [1710–1765])

JERRY AN' ME

No matter how the chances are,
  Nor when the winds may blow,
My Jerry there has left the sea
  With all its luck an' woe:
For who would try the sea at all,
  Must try it luck or no.

They told him—Lor', men take no care
  How words they speak may fall—
They told him blunt, he was too old,
  Too slow with oar an' trawl,
An' this is how he left the sea
  An' luck an' woe an' all.

Take any man on sea or land
  Out of his beaten way,
If he is young 'twill do, but then,
  If he is old an' gray,
A month will be a year to him.
  Be all to him you may.

He sits by me, but most he walks
  The door-yard for a deck,
An' scans the boat a-goin' out
  Till she becomes a speck,
Then turns away, his face as wet
  As if she were a wreck.

I cannot bring him back again,
  The days when we were wed.
But he shall never know—my man—
  The lack o' love or bread,
While I can cast a stitch or fill
  A needleful o' thread.

God pity me, I'd most forgot
How many yet there be,
Whose goodmen full as old as mine
Are somewhere on the sea,
Who hear the breakin' bar an' think
O' Jerry home an'—me.

Hiram Rich [?]

"DON'T BE SORROWFUL, DARLING"

O DON'T be sorrowful, darling!
And don't be sorrowful, pray;
Taking the year together, my dear,
There isn't more night than day.

'Tis rainy weather, my darling;
Time's waves they heavily run;
But taking the year together, my dear,
There isn't more cloud than sun.

We are old folks now, my darling,
Our heads are growing gray;
But taking the year all round, my dear,
You will always find the May.

We have had our May, my darling,
And our roses long ago;
And the time of the year is coming, my dear,
For the silent night and the snow.

But God is God, my darling,
Of the night as well as the day;
And we feel and know that we can go
Wherever He leads the way.

A God of the night, my darling,
Of the night of death so grim;
The gate that leads out of life, good wife,
Is the gate that leads to Him.

Rembrandt Peale [1778–1860]

WINIFREDA

Away! let naught to love displeasing,
My Winifreda, move your care;
Let naught delay the heavenly blessing,
Nor squeamish pride, nor gloomy fear.

What though no grants of royal donors
With pompous titles grace our blood,
We'll shine in more substantial honors,
And, to be noble, we'll be good.

Our name, while virtue thus we tender,
Will sweetly sound where'er 'tis spoke;
And all the great ones, they shall wonder
How they respect such little folk.

What though, from fortune's lavish bounty,
No mighty treasures we possess;
We'll find, within our pittance, plenty,
And be content without excess.

Still shall each kind returning season
Sufficient for our wishes give;
For we will live a life of reason,
And that's the only life to live.

Through youth and age, in love excelling,
We'll hand in hand together tread;
Sweet-smiling peace shall crown our dwelling,
And babes, sweet-smiling babes, our bed.

How should I love the pretty creatures,
While round my knees they fondly clung!
To see them look their mother's features,
To hear them lisp their mother's tongue!

And when with envy time transported
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
And I'll go wooing in my boys.

Unknown

AN OLD MAN'S IDYL

By the waters of Life we sat together,
Hand in hand, in the golden days
Of the beautiful early summer weather,
When skies were purple and breath was praise,
When the heart kept tune to the carol of birds,
And the birds kept tune to the songs which ran
Through shimmer of flowers on grassy swards,
And trees with voices æolian.

By the rivers of Life we walked together,
I and my darling, unafraid;
And lighter than any linnet's feather
The burdens of being on us weighed;
And Love's sweet miracles o'er us threw
Mantles of joy outlasting Time,
And up from the rosy morrows grew
A sound that seemed like a marriage chime.

In the gardens of Life we strayed together,
And the luscious apples were ripe and red,
And the languid lilac, and honeyed heather
Swooned with the fragrance which they shed;
And under the trees the angels walked,
And up in the air a sense of wings
Awed us tenderly while we talked
Softly in sacred communings.

In the meadows of Life we strayed together,
Watching the waving harvests grow,
And under the benison of the Father
Our hearts, like the lambs, skipped to and fro;
And the cowslip, hearing our low replies,
Broidered fairer the emerald banks,
And glad tears shone in the daisy's eyes,
And the timid violet glistened thanks.

Who was with us, and what was round us,
Neither myself nor my darling guessed;
Only we knew that something crowned us
Out from the heavens with crowns of rest;

Only we knew that something bright
  Lingered lovingly where we stood,
Clothed with the incandescent light
  Of something higher than humanhood.

Oh, the riches Love doth inherit!
  Oh, the alchemy which doth change
Dross of body and dregs of spirit
  Into sanctities rare and strange!
My flesh is feeble, and dry, and old,
  My darling's beautiful hair is gray;
But our elixir and precious gold
  Laugh at the footsteps of decay.

Harms of the world have come unto us,
  Cups of sorrow we yet shall drain;
But we have a secret which doth show us
  Wonderful rainbows in the rain.
And we hear the tread of the years move by,
  And the sun is setting behind the hills;
But my darling does not fear to die,
  And I am happy in what God wills.

So we sit by our household fires together,
  Dreaming the dreams of long ago;
Then it was balmy, sunny weather,
  And now the valleys are laid in snow;
Icicles hang from the slippery eaves,
  The wind blows cold,—'tis growing late;
Well, well! we have garnered all our sheaves,
  I and my darling, and we wait.

Richard Realf [1834–1878]

THE POET'S SONG TO HIS WIFE

How many summers, love,
  Have I been thine?
How many days, thou dove,
  Hast thou been mine?

Time, like the wingèd wind
When it bends the flowers,
Hath left no mark behind,
To count the hours.

Some weight of thought, though loth,
On thee he leaves;
Some lines of care round both
Perhaps he weaves;
Some fears,—a soft regret
For joys scarce known;
Sweet looks we half forget;—
All else is flown!

Ah!—With what thankless heart
I mourn and sing!
Look, where our children start,
Like sudden Spring!
With tongues all sweet and low,
Like a pleasant rhyme,
They tell how much I owe
To thee and Time!

Bryan Waller Procter [1787–1874]

JOHN ANDERSON

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquent
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is bald, John,
Your locks are like the snow;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:

Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

TO MARY

"THEE, Mary, with this ring I wed,
So, fourteen years ago, I said—
Behold another ring!—"For what?
To wed thee o'er again—why not?"

With that first ring I married Youth,
Grace, Beauty, Innocence, and Truth;
Taste long admired, sense long revered,
And all my Molly then appeared.
If she, by merit since disclosed,
Prove twice the woman I supposed,
I plead that double merit now,
To justify a double vow.

Here then, to-day, (with faith as sure,
With ardor as intense and pure,
As when, amidst the rites divine,
I took thy troth, and plighted mine),
To thee, sweet girl, my second ring
A token, and a pledge, I bring;
With this I wed, till death us part,
Thy riper virtues to my heart;
Those virtues, which, before untried,
The wife has added to the bride;
Those virtues, whose progressive claim,
Endearing wedlock's very name,
My soul enjoys, my song approves,
For Conscience' sake, as well as Love's.

For why?—They show me every hour,
Honor's high thought, Affection's power,
Discretion's deed, sound Judgment's sentence,
And teach me all things—but Repentance.

Samuel Bishop [1731–1795]

THE GOLDEN WEDDING

O Love, whose patient pilgrim feet
  Life's longest path have trod;
Whose ministry hath symbolled sweet
  The dearer love of God;
The sacred myrtle wreathes again
  Thine altar, as of old;
And what was green with summer then,
  Is mellowed now to gold.

Not now, as then, the future's face
  Is flushed with fancy's light;
But memory, with a milder grace,
  Shall rule the feast to-night.
Blest was the sun of joy that shone,
  Nor less the blinding shower;
The bud of fifty years agone
  Is love's perfected flower.

O memory, ope thy mystic door;
  O dream of youth, return;
And let the light that gleamed of yore
  Beside this altar burn.
The past is plain; 'twas love designed
  E'en sorrow's iron chain;
And mercy's shining thread has twined
  With the dark warp of pain.

So be it still. O Thou who hast
  That younger bridal blest,
Till the May-morn of love has passed
  To evening's golden west;
Come to this later Cana, Lord,
  And, at thy touch divine,
The water of that earlier board
  To-night shall turn to wine.

David Gray [1837–1888]

MOGGY AND ME

Oh wha are sae happy as me an' my Moggy?
Oh wha are sae happy as Moggy an' me?
We're baith turnin' auld, an' our walth is soon tauld,
But contentment bides aye in our cottage sae wee.
She toils a' the day when I'm out wi' the hirsel,
An' chants to the bairns while I sing on the brae;
An' aye her blithe smile welcomes me frae my toil,
When down the glen I come weary an' wae.

Aboon our auld heads we've a nice little biggin,
That keeps out the cauld when the simmer's awa;
We've twa webs o' linen o' Moggy's ain spinnin',
As thick as silk velvet and white as the snaw;
We've kye in the byre, an' yauds in the stable,
A grumphie sae fat that she hardly can stand;
An' something, I guess, in yon auld painted press
To cheer up the speerits an' steady the hand.

'Tis true we hae had mony sorrows an' crosses,
Our pouches oft toom, an' our hearts fu' o' care;
But wi' a' our crosses, our sorrows an' losses,
Contentment, thank heaven! has aye been our share.
I've an auld roostit sword that was left by my father,
Whilk aye has been drawn when my king had a fae;
We hae friends ane or twa that aft gie us a ca',
To laugh when we're happy or grieve when we're wae.

Our duke may hae gowd mair than schoolmen can reckon,
An' flunkies to watch ilka glance o' his e'e,
His lady aye braw sittin' prim in her ha';
But are they sae happy as Moggy an' me?
A' ye wha ne'er fand the straight road to be happy,
Wha are nae content wi' the lot that ye dree,
Come down to the dwellin' o' whilk I've been tellin',
You'll learn it by lookin' at Moggy an' me.

James Hogg [1770–1835]

"O, LAY THY HAND IN MINE, DEAR!"

O, LAY thy hand in mine, dear!
We're growing old;
But Time hath brought no sign, dear,
That hearts grow cold.
'Tis long, long since our new love
Made life divine;
But age enricheth true love,
Like noble wine.

And lay thy cheek to mine, dear,
And take thy rest;
Mine arms around thee twine, dear,
And make thy nest.
A many cares are pressing
On this dear head;
But Sorrow's hands in blessing
Are surely laid.

O, lean thy life on mine, dear!
'Twill shelter thee.
Thou wert a winsome vine, dear,
On my young tree:
And so, till boughs are leafless,
And songbirds flown,
We'll twine, then lay us, griefless,
Together down.

Gerald Massey [1828–1907]

THE EXEQUY

ACCEPT, thou shrine of my dead saint,
Instead of dirges this complaint;
And for sweet flowers to crown thy hearse,
Receive a strew of weeping verse
From thy grieved friend, whom thou might'st see
Quite melted into tears for thee.

Dear loss! since thy untimely fate,
My task hath been to meditate
On thee, on thee: thou art the book,—
The library whereon I look,
Though almost blind. For thee (loved clay)
I languish out, not live, the day,
Using no other exercise
But which I practise with mine eyes:
By which wet glasses I find out
How lazily time creeps about
To one that mourns: this, only this,
My exercise and business is:
So I compute the weary hours
With sighs dissolvèd into showers.

Nor wonder if my time go thus
Backward and most preposterous;
Thou hast benighted me; thy set
This eve of blackness did beget,
Who wast my day (though overcast
Before thou hadst thy noontide passed):
And I remember must in tears
Thou scarce hadst seen so many years
As day tells hours. By thy clear sun
My love and fortune first did run;
But thou wilt never more appear
Folded within my hemisphere,
Since both thy light and motion,
Like a fled star, is fallen and gone,
And 'twixt me and my soul's dear wish
The earth now interposèd is,
Which such a strange eclipse doth make
As ne'er was read in almanac.

I could allow thee for a time
To darken me and my sad clime;
Were it a month, a year, or ten,
I would thy exile live till then,
And all that space my mirth adjourn,
So thou wouldst promise to return,

And putting off thy ashy shroud
At length disperse this sorrow's cloud.
But woe is me! the longest date
Too narrow is to calculate
These empty hopes: never shall I
Be so much blest as to descry
A glimpse of thee, till that day come
Which shall the earth to cinders doom,
And a fierce fever must calcine
The body of this world—like thine,
(My little world!) That fit of fire
Once off, our bodies shall aspire
To our souls' bliss: then we shall rise
And view ourselves with clearer eyes
In that calm region where no night
Can hide us from each other's sight.

Meantime thou hast her, earth: much good
May my harm do thee! Since it stood
With Heaven's will I might not call
Her longer mine, I give thee all
My short-lived right and interest
In her whom living I loved best:
With a most free and bounteous grief
I give thee what I could not keep.
Be kind to her, and prithee look
Thou write into thy Doomsday book
Each parcel of this rarity
Which in thy casket shrined doth lie,
See that thou make thy reckoning straight,
And yield her back again by weight;
For thou must audit on thy trust
Each grain and atom of this dust,
As thou wilt answer Him that lent—
Not gave—thee my dear monument.
So close the ground, and 'bout her shade
Black curtains draw: my bride is laid.

Sleep on, my Love, in thy cold bed
Never to be disquieted!

My last good-night! Thou wilt not wake
Till I thy fate shall overtake:
Till age, or grief, or sickness must
Marry my body to that dust
It so much loves; and fill the room
My heart keeps empty in thy tomb.
Stay for me there: I will not fail
To meet thee in that hollow vale.
And think not much of my delay:
I am already on the way,
And follow thee with all the speed
Desire can make, or sorrows breed.
Each minute is a short degree
And every hour a step towards thee.
At night when I betake to rest,
Next morn I rise nearer my west
Of life, almost by eight hours' sail,
Than when sleep breathed his drowsy gale.

Thus from the Sun my bottom steers,
And my day's compass downward bears:
Nor labor I to stem the tide
Through which to thee I swiftly glide.
'Tis true, with shame and grief I yield,
Thou, like the van, first took'st the field;
And gotten hast the victory
In thus adventuring to die
Before me, whose more years might crave
A just precedence in the grave.
But hark! my pulse, like a soft drum,
Beats my approach, tells thee I come:
And slow howe'er my marches be
I shall at last sit down by thee.

The thought of this bids me go on
And wait my dissolution
With hope and comfort. Dear (forgive
The crime), I am content to live
Divided, with but half a heart,
Till we shall meet and never part.

Henry King [1592–1669]

LOVE SONNETS

SONNETS

From "Amoretti"

III

THE sovereign beauty which I do admire,
Witness the world how worthy to be praised!
The light whereof hath kindled heavenly fire
In my frail spirit, by her from baseness raised;
That being now with her huge brightness dazed,
Base thing I can no more endure to view:
But, looking still on her, I stand amazed
At wondrous sight of so celestial hue.
So when my tongue would speak her praises due,
It stoppèd is with thought's astonishment;
And when my pen would write her titles true,
It ravished is with fancy's wonderment:
Yet in my heart I then both speak and write
The wonder that my wit cannot indite.

VIII

More than most fair, full of the living fire
Kindled above unto the Maker near;
No eyes but joys, in which all powers conspire
That to the world naught else be counted dear;
Through your bright beams doth not the blinded guest
Shoot out his darts to base affections wound;
But angels come to lead frail minds to rest
In chaste desires, on heavenly beauty bound.
You frame my thoughts, and fashion me within;
You stop my tongue, and teach my heart to speak;
You calm the storm that passion did begin,
Strong through your cause, but by your virtue weak.
Dark is the world, where your light shinèd never;
Well is he born that may behold you ever.

XXIV

When I behold that beauty's wonderment,
And rare perfection of each goodly part,
Of Nature's still the only complement,
I honor and admire the Maker's art.
But when I feel the bitter baleful smart
Which her fair eyes un'wares do work in me,
That death out of their shiny beams do dart,
I think that I a new Pandora see,
Whom all the gods in council did agree
Into this sinful world from heaven to send,
That she to wicked men a scourge should be,
For all their faults with which they did offend.
But since ye are my scourge, I will entreat
That for my faults ye will me gently beat.

XXXIV

Like as a ship, that through the ocean wide,
By conduct of some star doth make her way,
Whenas a storm hath dimmed her trusty guide,
Out of her course doth wander far astray;
So I, whose star, that wont with her bright ray
Me to direct, with clouds is overcast,
Do wander now, in darkness and dismay,
Through hidden perils round about me placed;
Yet hope I well that, when this storm is past,
My Helicè, the lodestar of my life,
Will shine again, and look on me at last,
With lovely light to clear my cloudy grief:
Till then I wander care-full, comfortless,
In secret sorrow, and sad pensiveness.

LV

So oft as I her beauty do behold,
And therewith do her cruelty compare,
I marvel of what substance was the mould,
The which her made at once so cruel fair;
Not earth, for her high thoughts more heavenly are;
Not water, for her love doth burn like fire;

Not air, for she is not so light or rare;
Not fire, for she doth freeze with faint desire.
Then needs another element inquire
Whereof she might be made—that is, the sky;
For to the heaven her haughty looks aspire,
And eke her mind is pure immortal high.
Then, since to heaven ye likened are the best,
Be like in mercy as in all the rest.

LXVIII

Most glorious Lord of Life! that on this day
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin,
And, having harrowed hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win,
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin;
And grant that we, for whom thou diddest die,
Being with thy dear blood clean washed from sin,
May live forever in felicity;
And that thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love thee for the same again,
And for thy sake, that all 'like dear didst buy,
With love may one another entertain!
So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought:
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

LXX

Fresh Spring, the herald of love's mighty king,
In whose coat-armor richly are displayed
All sorts of flowers the which on earth do spring
In goodly colors gloriously arrayed;
Go to my love, where she is careless laid,
Yet in her winter's bower not well awake;
Tell her the joyous time will not be stayed,
Unless she do him by the forelock take;
Bid her therefore herself soon ready make
To wait on Love amongst his lovely crew;
Where everyone that misseth then her mate
Shall be by him amerced with penance due.
Make haste, therefore, sweet love, whilst it is prime;
For none can call again the passèd time.

LXXV

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washèd it away:
Again I wrote it with a second hand,
But came the tide and made my pains his prey.
"Vain man," said she, "that dost in vain essay
A mortal thing so to immortalize;
For I myself shall like to this decay,
And eke my name be wipèd out likewise."
"Not so," quoth I; "let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame;
My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens write your glorious name:
Where, whenas Death shall all the world subdue,
Our love shall live, and later life renew."

LXXIX

Men call you fair, and you do credit it,
For that yourself ye daily such do see:
But the true fair, that is the gentle wit
And virtuous mind, is much more praised of me:
For all the rest, however fair it be,
Shall turn to naught and lose that glorious hue;
But only that is permanent and free
From frail corruption that doth flesh ensue.
That is true beauty; that doth argue you
To be divine, and born of heavenly seed;
Derived from that fair Spirit from whom all true
And perfect beauty did at first proceed:
He only fair, and what he fair hath made;
All other fair, like flowers, untimely fade.

Edmund Spenser [1552?–1599]

SONNETS

From "Astrophel and Stella"

I

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That She, dear She! might take some pleasure of my pain;
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain:

I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe,
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain;
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburnt brain:
But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay.
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows;
And others' feet still seemed but strangers in my way.
Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite:
"Fool!" said my Muse to me, "look in thy heart, and write!"

XXXI

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What! may it be that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks. Thy languished grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there, ungratefulness?

XXXIX

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low!
With shield of proof, shield me from out the press
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease!
I will good tribute pay if thou do so.
Take thou of me, smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland, and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine in right,

Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

LXII

Late tired with woe, even ready for to pine
With rage of love, I called my Love unkind;
She in whose eyes love, though unfelt, doth shine,
Sweet said that I true love in her should find.
I joyed; but straight thus watered was my wine,
That love she did, but loved a love not blind;
Which would not let me, whom she loved, decline
From nobler cause, fit for my birth and mind:
And therefore, by her love's authority,
Willed me these tempests of vain love to fly,
And anchor fast myself on Virtue's shore.
Alas, if this the only metal be
Of love new-coined to help my beggary,
Dear! love me not, that ye may love me more!

LXIV

No more, my Dear, no more these counsels try;
O give my passions leave to run their race!
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'ercharged with brain, against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labor trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case;
But do not will me from my love to fly!
I do not envy Aristotle's wit;
Nor do aspire to Caesar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care, though some above me sit;
Nor hope, nor wish another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my Wit, and thou my Virtue art.

LXXIII

Love still a boy and oft a wanton is,
Schooled only by his mother's tender eye;
What wonder, then, if he his lesson miss,
When for so soft a rod dear play he try?

And yet my Star, because a sugared kiss
In sport I sucked while she asleep did lie,
Doth lower, nay chide, nay threat, for only this.—
Sweet, it was saucy Love, not humble I!
But no 'scuse serves; she makes her wrath appear
In Beauty's throne; see now, who dares come near
Those scarlet judges, threatening bloody pain!
O heavenly fool, thy most kiss-worthy face
Anger invests with such a lovely grace,
That Anger's self I needs must kiss again.

CIII

O happy Thames that didst my Stella bear!
I saw thee with full many a smiling line
Upon thy cheerful face, Joy's livery wear,
While those fair planets on thy streams did shine.
The boat for joy could not to dance forbear;
While wanton winds, with beauties so divine,
Ravished, stayed not, till in her golden hair
They did themselves, (O sweetest prison!) twine.
And fain those Æol's youths there would their stay
Have made, but forced by Nature still to fly,
First did with puffing kiss those locks display.
She so dishevelled, blushed. From window, I,
With sight thereof, cried out, "O fair disgrace!
Let Honor's self to thee grant highest place!"

CVII

Stella! since thou so right a Princess art
Of all the powers which life bestows on me,
That ere by them aught undertaken be,
They first resort unto that sovereign part;
Sweet! for a while give respite to my heart,
Which pants as though it still should leap to thee;
And on my thoughts give thy lieutenancy
To this great cause, which needs both use and art.
And as a Queen, who from her presence sends
Whom she employs, dismiss from thee my wit,
Till it have wrought what thy own will attends:
On servants' shame oft master's blame doth sit.

O, let not fools in me thy works reprove,
And scorning, say, "See what it is to love!"

Philip Sidney [1554–1586]

SONNETS

From "To Delia"

VI

Fair is my Love, and cruel as she's fair:
Her brow shades frowns, although her eyes are sunny;
Her smiles are lightning, though her pride despair,
And her disdains are gall, her favors honey.
A modest maid, decked with a blush of honor,
Whose feet do tread green paths of youth and love;
The wonder of all eyes that look upon her,
Sacred on earth, designed a Saint above.
Chastity and Beauty, which were deadly foes,
Live reconcilèd friends within her brow;
And had she Pity to conjoin with those,
Then who had heard the plaints I utter now?
O had she not been fair, and thus unkind,
My Muse had slept, and none had known my mind.

XII

My spotless love hovers, with purest wings,
About the temple of the proudest frame,
Where blaze those lights, fairest of earthly things,
Which clear our clouded world with brightest flame.
My ambitious thoughts, confinèd in her face,
Affect no honor but what she can give;
My hopes do rest in limits of her grace;
I weigh no comfort, unless she relieve.
For she, that can my heart imparadise,
Holds in her fairest hand what dearest is.
My Fortune's Wheel's the Circle of her Eyes,
Whose rolling grace deign once a turn of bliss!
All my life's sweet consists in her alone;
So much I love the most unloving one.

XXX

And yet I cannot reprehend the flight
Or blame the attempt, presuming so to soar;
The mounting venture, for a high delight,
Did make the honor of the fall the more.
For who gets wealth, that puts not from the shore?
Danger hath honor; great designs, their fame;
Glory doth follow, courage goes before;
And though the event oft answers not the same,
Suffice that high attempts have never shame.
The Mean-observer (whom base safety keeps)
Lives without honor, dies without a name,
And in eternal darkness ever sleeps.
And therefore, Delia! 'tis to me no blot
To have attempted, though attained thee not.

XXXVI

When men shall find thy flower, thy glory pass,
And thou, with careful brow, sitting alone,
Receivèd hast this message from thy glass,
That tells the truth, and says that *All is gone;*
Fresh shalt thou see in me the wounds thou madest,
Though spent thy flame, in me the heat remaining:
I that have loved thee thus before thou fadest,
My faith shall wax, when thou art in thy waning!
The world shall find this miracle in me,
That fire can burn when all the matter's spent:
Then what my faith hath been, thyself shalt see,
And that thou wast unkind, thou may'st repent!
Thou may'st repent that thou hast scorned my tears,
When Winter snows upon thy golden hairs.

XXXIX

Look, Delia, how we esteem the half-blown rose
The image of thy blush, and Summer's honor!
Whilst yet her tender bud doth undisclose
That full of beauty Time bestows upon her.
No sooner spreads her glory in the air
But straight her wide-blown pomp comes to decline;

She then is scorned that late adorned the fair;
So fade the roses of those cheeks of thine.
No April can revive thy withered flowers
Whose springing grace adorns thy glory now;
Swift, speedy Time, feathered with flying hours,
Dissolves the beauty of the fairest brow.
Then do not thou such treasure waste in vain,
But love now, whilst thou may'st be loved again.

XLV

Beauty, sweet Love, is like the morning dew,
Whose short refresh upon the tender green
Cheers for a time, but till the sun doth show:
And straight 'tis gone, as it had never been.
Soon doth it fade, that makes the fairest flourish;
Short is the glory of the blushing rose:
The hue which thou so carefully dost nourish,
Yet which, at length, thou must be forced to lose.
When thou, surcharged with burthen of thy years,
Shalt bend thy wrinkles homeward to the earth;
When Time hath made a passport for thy fears,
Dated in Age, the Calends of our Death:
But ah, no more! This hath been often told;
And women grieve to think they must be old.

XLVI

I must not grieve my Love, whose eyes would read
Lines of delight, whereon her youth might smile!
Flowers have a time, before they come to seed;
And she is young, and now must sport the while.
And sport, Sweet Maid, in season of these years,
And learn to gather flowers before they wither!
And where the sweetest blossom first appears,
Let Love and Youth conduct thy pleasures thither!
Lighten forth smiles to clear the clouded air,
And calm the tempest which my sighs do raise!
Pity and smiles do best become the fair;
Pity and smiles shall yield thee lasting praise.
I hope to say, when all my griefs are gone,
"Happy the heart that sighed for such a one!"

L

Let others sing of Knights and Paladines
In agèd accents and untimely words,
Paint shadows in imaginary lines,
Which well the reach of their high wit records:
But I must sing of Thee, and those fair eyes!
Authentic shall my verse in time to come,
When the yet unborn shall say, *Lo, where she lies!*
Whose beauty made him speak, that else was dumb!
These are the arks, the trophies I erect,
That fortify thy name against old age;
And these thy sacred virtues must protect
Against the Dark, and Time's consuming rage.
Though the error of my youth in them appear,
Suffice, they showed I lived, and loved thee dear.

LI

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night,
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born:
Relieve my languish, and restore the light;
With dark forgetting of my care, return!
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth:
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow;
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain;
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

Samuel Daniel [1562–1619]

SONNETS

From "Idea"

TO THE READER OF THESE SONNETS

Into these Loves, who but for Passion looks,
At this first sight, here let him lay them by,
And seek elsewhere in turning other books,
Which better may his labor satisfy.

No far-fetched sigh shall ever wound my breast;
Love from mine eye a tear shall never wring;
Nor in "Ah me's!" my whining sonnets dressed!
A libertine, fantasticly I sing!
My verse is the true image of my mind,
Ever in motion, still desiring change;
And as thus, to variety inclined,
So in all humors sportively I range!
My Muse is rightly of the English strain,
That cannot long one fashion entertain.

IV

Bright Star of Beauty! on whose eyelids sit
A thousand nymph-like and enamored Graces,
The Goddesses of Memory and Wit,
Which there in order take their several places;
In whose dear bosom, sweet delicious Love
Lays down his quiver, which he once did bear,
Since he that blessèd paradise did prove;
And leaves his mother's lap, to sport him there.
Let others strive to entertain with words!
My soul is of a braver mettle made:
I hold that vile, which vulgar wit affords,
In me's that faith which Time cannot invade!
Let what I praise be still made good by you!
Be you most worthy, whilst I am most true!

XX

An evil Spirit (your Beauty) haunts me still,
Wherewith, alas, I have been long possessed;
Which ceaseth not to attempt me to each ill,
Nor give me once, but one poor minute's rest.
In me it speaks, whether I sleep or wake;
And when by means to drive it out I try,
With greater torments then it me doth take,
And tortures me in most extremity.
Before my face, it lays down my despairs,
And hastes me on unto a sudden death;
Now tempting me, to drown myself in tears,
And then in sighing to give up my breath.

Thus am I still provoked to every evil,
By this good-wicked Spirit, sweet Angel-Devil.

XXXVII

Dear! why should you command me to my rest,
When now the night doth summon all to sleep?
Methinks this time becometh lovers best!
Night was ordained together friends to keep.
How happy are all other living things,
Which, through the day, disjoined by several flight,
The quiet evening yet together brings,
And each returns unto his Love at night!
O thou that art so courteous else to all,
Why shouldst thou, Night, abuse me only thus!
That every creature to his kind doth call,
And yet 'tis thou dost only sever us?
Well could I wish it would be ever day,
If, when night comes, you bid me go away!

XL

My heart the Anvil where my thoughts do beat;
My words the Hammers fashioning my Desire;
My breast the Forge including all the heat,
Love is the Fuel which maintains the fire.
My sighs the Bellows which the flame increaseth,
Filling mine ears with noise and nightly groaning.
Toiling with pain, my labor never ceaseth;
In grievous Passions, my woes still bemoaning.
My eyes with tears against the fire striving,
Whose scorching glede my heart to cinders turneth:
But with those drops, the flame again reviving
Still more and more it to my torment burneth.
With Sisyphus thus do I roll the stone,
And turn the wheel with damnèd Ixion.

XLII

How many paltry, foolish, painted things,
That now in coaches trouble every street,
Shall be forgotten, whom no poet sings,
Ere they be well wrapped in their winding-sheet?

Where I to thee eternity shall give,
When nothing else remaineth of these days,
And queens hereafter shall be glad to live
Upon the alms of thy superfluous praise;
Virgins and matrons reading these my rhymes,
Shall be so much delighted with thy story,
That they shall grieve they lived not in these times,
To have seen thee, their sex's only glory:
So shalt thou fly above the vulgar throng,
Still to survive in my immortal song.

LXI

Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part!
Nay, I have done. You get no more of me!
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever! Cancel all our vows!
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes:
Now, if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

Michael Drayton [1563–1631]

SONNETS

From "Diana"

IX

My Lady's presence makes the Roses red,
Because to see her lips they blush for shame.
The Lily's leaves, for envy, pale became;
And her white hands in them this envy bred.
The Marigold the leaves abroad doth spread,
Because the sun's and her power is the same.
The Violet of purple color came,
Dyed in the blood she made my heart to shed.

In brief, all flowers from her their virtue take;
From her sweet breath, their sweet smells do proceed;
The living heat which her eyebeams doth make
Warmeth the ground, and quickeneth the seed.
The rain, wherewith she watereth the flowers,
Falls from mine eyes, which she dissolves in showers.

LXII

To live in hell, and heaven to behold;
To welcome life, and die a living death;
To sweat with heat, and yet be freezing cold;
To grasp at stars, and lie the earth beneath;
To tread a maze that never shall have end;
To burn in sighs, and starve in daily tears;
To climb a hill, and never to descend;
Giants to kill, and quake at childish fears;
To pine for food, and watch the Hesperian tree;
To thirst for drink, and nectar still to draw;
To live accurst, whom men hold blest to be;
And weep those wrongs which never creature saw;
If this be love, if love in these be founded,
My heart is love, for these in it are grounded.

Henry Constable (?) [1562–1613]

SONNETS

XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And Summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed:
But thy eternal Summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

XXIII

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burden of mine own love's might.
O, let my books be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast;
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more expressed.
O, learn to read what silent love hath writ:
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

XXIX

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee: and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate:
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:

Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long-since cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before:
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

XXXII

If thou survive my well-contented day
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover,
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
These poor rude lines of thy deceasèd lover,
Compare them with the bettering of the time,
And though they be outstripped by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
"Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
To march in ranks of better equipage:
But since he died, and poets better prove,
Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love."

XXXIII

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendor on my brow;
But out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.

Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

LX

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow;
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

LXXI

No longer mourn for me when I am dead,
Than you shall hear the surly, sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O, if (I say) you look upon this verse,
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

LXXIII

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

CIV

To me, fair friend, you never can be old;
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three Winters cold
Have from the forests shook three Summers' pride;
Three beauteous Springs to yellow Autumn turned
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred:
Ere you were born was beauty's Summer dead.

CVI

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead, and lovely knights;
Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have expressed
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all, you prefiguring;
And, for they looked but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:

For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

CIX

O, never say that I was false of heart
Though absence seemed my flame to qualify:
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie;
That is my home of love; if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reigned
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stained
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good!
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose: in it thou art my all.

CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixèd mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

CXXX

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.

I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak,—yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go,—
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

CXLVI

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Pressed by these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men;
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

"ALEXIS, HERE SHE STAYED"

Alexis, here she stayed; among these pines,
Sweet hermitress, she did alone repair;
Here did she spread the treasure of her hair,
More rich than that brought from the Colchian mines.
She set her by these muskèd eglantines,
The happy place the print seems yet to bear;
Her voice did sweeten here thy sugared lines,
To which winds, trees, beasts, birds, did lend their ear.

Me here she first perceived, and here a morn
Of bright carnations did o'erspread her face;
Here did she sigh, here first my hopes were born,
And I first got a pledge of promised grace:
But, ah! what served it to be happy so,
Since passèd pleasures double but new woe?

William Drummond [1585–1649]

"WERE I AS BASE AS IS THE LOWLY PLAIN"

Were I as base as is the lowly plain,
And you, my love, as high as heaven above,
Yet should the thoughts of me, your humble swain,
Ascend to heaven in honor of my love.
Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
And you, my love, as humble and as low
As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
Wheresoe'er you were, with you my love should go.
Were you the earth, dear love, and I the skies,
My love should shine on you, like to the sun,
And look upon you with ten thousand eyes,
Till heaven waxed blind and till the world were done.
Wheresoe'er I am,—below, or else above you,—
Wheresoe'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

Joshua Sylvester [1563–1618]

A SONNET OF THE MOON

Look how the pale Queen of the silent night
Doth cause the ocean to attend upon her,
And he, as long as she is in his sight,
With his full tide is ready her to honor:
But when the silver wagon of the Moon
Is mounted up so high he cannot follow,
The sea calls home his crystal waves to moan,
And with low ebb doth manifest his sorrow.
So you that are the sovereign of my heart,
Have all my joys attending on your will,
My joys low-ebbing when you do depart,
When you return, their tide my heart doth fill.

So as you come, and as you do depart,
Joys ebb and flow within my tender heart.

Charles Best [fl. 1602]

TO MARY UNWIN

Mary! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from Heaven as some have feigned they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things;
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honor due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings:
But thou hast little need. There is a Book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright:
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine;
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

"WHY ART THOU SILENT"

Why art thou silent? Is thy love a plant
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
Of absence withers what was once so fair?
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant,
Bound to thy service with unceasing care—
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
For naught but what thy happiness could spare.
Speak!—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

SONNETS

From "The House of Life"

IV

LOVESIGHT

When do I see thee most, belovèd one?
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
The worship of that Love through thee made known?
Or when in the dusk hours, (we two alone,)
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,
And my soul only sees thy soul its own?
O love, my love! if I no more should see
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

V

HEART'S HOPE

By what word's power, the key of paths untrod,
Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,
Till parted waves of Song yield up the shore
Even as that sea which Israel crossed dryshod?
For lo! in some poor rhythmic period,
Lady, I fain would tell how evermore
Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor
Thee from myself, neither our love from God.
Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and thine, would I
Draw from one loving heart such evidence
As to all hearts all things shall signify;
Tender as dawn's first lull-fire, and intense
As instantaneous penetrating sense,
In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs gone by.

XV

THE BIRTH-BOND

HAVE you not noted, in some family
Where two were born of a first marriage-bed,
How still they own their gracious bond, though fed
And nursed on the forgotten breast and knee?—
How to their father's children they shall be
In act and thought of one goodwill; but each
Shall for the other have, in silence speech,
And in a word complete community?
Even so, when first I saw you, seemed it, love,
That among souls allied to mine was yet
One nearer kindred than life hinted of.
O born with me somewhere that men forget,
And though in years of sight and sound unmet,
Known for my soul's birth-partner well enough!

XIX

SILENT NOON

YOUR hands lie open in the long fresh grass,—
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.
Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky:—
So this winged hour is dropped to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour
When twofold silence was the song of love.

XXVI

MID-RAPTURE

THOU lovely and beloved, thou my love;
Whose kiss seems still the first; whose summoning eyes,
Even now, as for our love-world's new sunrise,
Shed very dawn; whose voice, attuned above

All modulation of the deep-bowered dove,
Is like a hand laid softly on the soul;
Whose hand is like a sweet voice to control
Those worn tired brows it hath the keeping of:—
What word can answer to thy word,—what gaze
To thine, which now absorbs within its sphere
My worshipping face, till I am mirrored there
Light-circled in a heaven of deep-drawn rays?
What clasp, what kiss mine inmost heart can prove,
O lovely and belovèd, O my love?

XXXI

HER GIFTS

High grace, the dower of queens; and therewithal
Some wood-born wonder's sweet simplicity;
A glance like water brimming with the sky
Or hyacinth-light where forest-shadows fall;
Such thrilling pallor of cheek as doth enthrall
The heart; a mouth whose passionate forms imply
All music and all silence held thereby;
Deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal;
A round reared neck, meet column of Love's shrine
To cling to when the heart takes sanctuary;
Hands which for ever at Love's bidding be,
And soft-stirred feet still answering to his sign:—
These are her gifts, as tongue may tell them o'er.
Breathe low her name, my soul; for that means more.

XXXIV

THE DARK GLASS

Not I myself know all my love for thee:
How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh
To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?
Shall birth and death, and all dark names that be
As doors and windows bared to some loud sea,
Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face with spray;
And shall my sense pierce love,—the last relay
And ultimate outpost of eternity?

Lo! what am I to Love, the lord of all?
One murmuring shell he gathers from the sand,—
One little heart-flame sheltered in his hand.
Yet through thine eyes he grants me clearest call
And veriest touch of powers primordial
That any hour-girt life may understand.

XLIX

WILLOWWOOD

I SAT with Love upon a woodside well,
Leaning across the water, I and he;
Nor ever did he speak nor looked at me,
But touched his lute wherein was audible
The certain secret thing he had to tell:
Only our mirrored eyes met silently
In the low wave; and that sound came to be
The passionate voice I knew; and my tears fell.
And at their fall, his eyes beneath grew hers;
And with his foot and with his wing-feathers
He swept the spring that watered my heart's drouth.
Then the dark ripples spread to waving hair,
And as I stooped, her own lips rising there
Bubbled with brimming kisses at my mouth.

LXXVIII

BODY'S BEAUTY

OF Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told
(The witch he loved before the gift of Eve,)
That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue could deceive,
And her enchanted hair was the first gold.
And still she sits, young while the earth is old,
And, subtly of herself contemplative,
Draws men to watch the bright web she can weave,
Till heart and body and life are in its hold.
The rose and poppy are her flowers: for where
Is he not found, O Lilith! whom shed scent
And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall snare?
Lo! as that youth's eyes burned at thine, so went

Thy spell through him, and left his straight neck bent,
And round his heart one strangling golden hair.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

SONNETS

MEETING

They made the chamber sweet with flowers and leaves,
And the bed sweet with flowers on which I lay;
While my soul, love-bound, loitered on its way.
I did not hear the birds about the eaves,
Nor hear the reapers talk among the sheaves:
Only my soul kept watch from day to day,
My thirsty soul kept watch for one away:—
Perhaps he loves, I thought, remembers, grieves.
At length there came the step upon the stair,
Upon the lock the old familiar hand:
Then first my spirit seemed to scent the air
Of Paradise; then first the tardy sand
Of time ran golden; and I felt my hair
Put on a glory, and my soul expand.

THE FIRST DAY

I wish I could remember the first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
Summer or Winter for aught I can say;
So unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
That would not blossom yet for many a May.
If only I could recollect it, such
A day of days! I let it come and go
As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;
It seemed to mean so little, meant so much;
If only now I could recall that touch,
First touch of hand in hand—Did one but know!

REMEMBER

REMEMBER me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go, yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more, day by day,
You tell me of our future that you planned:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

REST

O EARTH, lie heavily upon her eyes;
Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching, Earth;
Lie close around her; leave no room for mirth
With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs.
She hath no questions, she hath no replies,
Hushed in and curtained with a blessèd dearth
Of all that irked her from the hour of birth;
With stillness that is almost Paradise.
Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
Silence more musical than any song;
Even her very heart has ceased to stir:
Until the morning of Eternity
Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be;
And when she wakes she will not think it long.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

HOW MY SONGS OF HER BEGAN

GOD made my lady lovely to behold;—
Above the painter's dream he set her face,
And wrought her body in divinest grace;
He touched the brown hair with a sense of gold,

And in the perfect form He did enfold
What was alone as perfect, the sweet heart;
Knowledge most rare to her He did impart,
And filled with love and worship all her days.
And then God thought Him how it would be well
To give her music, and to Love He said,
"Bring thou some minstrel now that he may tell
How fair and sweet a thing My hands have made."
Then at Love's call I came, bowed down my head,
And at His will my lyre grew audible.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850–1887]

AT THE LAST

Because the shadows deepened verily,—
Because the end of all seemed near, forsooth,—
Her gracious spirit, ever quick to ruth,
Had pity on her bond-slave, even on me.
She came in with the twilight noiselessly,
Fair as a rose, immaculate as Truth;
She leaned above my wrecked and wasted youth;
I felt her presence, which I could not see.
"God keep you, my poor friend," I heard her say;
And then she kissed my dry, hot lips and eyes.
Kiss *thou* the next kiss, quiet Death, I pray;
Be instant on this hour, and so surprise
My spirit while the vision seems to stay;
Take thou the heart with the heart's Paradise.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850–1887]

TO ONE WHO WOULD MAKE A CONFESSION

Oh! leave the past to bury its own dead.
The past is naught to us, the present all.
What need of last year's leaves to strew Love's bed?
What need of ghosts to grace a festival?
I would not, if I could, those days recall,
Those days not ours. For us the feast is spread,
The lamps are lit, and music plays withal.
Then let us love and leave the rest unsaid.

This island is our home. Around it roar
Great gulfs and oceans, channels, straits and seas.
What matter in what wreck we reached the shore,
So we both reached it? We can mock at these.
Oh! leave the past, if past indeed there be;
I would not know it; I would know but thee.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt [1840–

THE PLEASURES OF LOVE

I DO not care for kisses. 'Tis a debt
We paid for the first privilege of love.
These are the rains of April which have wet
Our fallow hearts and forced their germs to move.
Now the green corn has sprouted. Each new day
Brings better pleasures, a more dear surprise,
The blade, the ear, the harvest—and our way
Leads through a region wealthy grown and wise.
We now compare our fortunes. Each his store
Displays to kindred eyes of garnered grain,
Two happy farmers, learned in love's lore,
Who weigh and touch and argue and complain—
Dear endless argument! Yet sometimes we
Even as we argue kiss. There! Let it be.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt [1840–

"WERE BUT MY SPIRIT LOOSED UPON THE AIR"

WERE but my spirit loosed upon the air,—
By some High Power who could Life's chains unbind,
Set free to seek what most it longs to find,—
To no proud Court of Kings would I repair:
I would but climb, once more, a narrow stair,
When day was wearing late, and dusk was kind;
And one should greet me to my failings blind,
Content so I but shared his twilight there.
Nay! well I know he waits not as of old,—
I could not find him in the old-time place,—

I must pursue him, made by sorrow bold,
Through worlds unknown, in strange celestial race,
Whose mystic round no traveller has told,
From star to star, until I see his face.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835–1908]

RENOUNCEMENT

I MUST not think of thee; and, tired yet strong,
I shun the thought that lurks in all delight—
The thought of thee—and in the blue heaven's height,
And in the dearest passage of a song.
Oh, just beyond the fairest thoughts that throng
This breast, the thought of thee waits, hidden yet bright;
But it must never, never come in sight;
I must stop short of thee the whole day long.
But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,
When night gives pause to the long watch I keep,
And all my bonds I needs must loose apart,
Must doff my will as raiment laid away,—
With the first dream that comes with the first sleep
I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

Alice Meynell [1853–

"MY LOVE FOR THEE"

MY love for thee doth march like armèd men,
Against a queenly city they would take.
Along the army's front its banners shake;
Across the mountain and the sun-smit plain
It steadfast sweeps as sweeps the steadfast rain;
And now the trumpet makes the still air quake,
And now the thundering cannon doth awake
Echo on echo, echoing loud again.
But, lo! the conquest higher than bard e'er sung:
Instead of answering cannon, proud surrender!
Joyful the iron gates are open flung
And, for the conqueror, welcome gay and tender!
O, bright the invader's path with tribute flowers,
While comrade flags flame forth on wall and towers!

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

SONNETS

AFTER THE ITALIAN

I KNOW not if I love her overmuch;
But this I know, that when unto her face
She lifts her hand, which rests there, still, a space,
Then slowly falls—'tis I who feel that touch.
And when she sudden shakes her head, with such
A look, I soon her secret meaning trace.
So when she runs I think 'tis I who race.
Like a poor cripple who has lost his crutch
I am if she is gone; and when she goes,
I know not why, for that is a strange art—
As if myself should from myself depart.
I know not if I love her more than those
Who long her light have known; but for the rose
She covers in her hair, I'd give my heart.

I like her gentle hand that sometimes strays,
To find the place, through the same book with mine;
I like her feet; and O, those eyes divine!
And when we say farewell, perhaps she stays
Love-lingering—then hurries on her ways,
As if she thought, "To end my pain and thine."
I like her voice better than new-made wine;
I like the mandolin whereon she plays.
And I like, too, the cloak I saw her wear,
And the red scarf that her white neck doth cover,
And well I like the door that she comes through;
I like the ribbon that doth bind her hair—
But then, in truth, I am that lady's lover,
And every new day there is something new.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

STANZAS

From "Modern Love"

I

BY this he knew she wept with waking eyes:
That, at his hand's light quiver by her head,
The strange low sobs that shook their common bed
Were called into her with a sharp surprise,

And strangled mute, like little gaping snakes,
Dreadfully venomous to him. She lay
Stone-still, and the long darkness flowed away
With muffled pulses. Then as midnight makes
Her giant heart of Memory and Tears
Drink the pale drug of silence, and so beat
Sleep's heavy measure, they from head to feet
Were moveless, looking through their dead black years,
By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall.
Like sculptured effigies they might be seen
Upon their marriage-tomb, the sword between;
Each wishing for the sword that severs all.

II

It ended, and the morrow brought the task.
Her eyes were guilty gates, that let him in
By shutting all too zealous for their sin:
Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask.
But, oh, the bitter taste her beauty had!
He sickened as at breath of poison-flowers:
A languid humor stole among the hours,
And if their smiles encountered, he went mad,
And raged deep inward, till the light was brown
Before his vision, and the world forgot,
Looked wicked as some old dull murder-spot.
A star with lurid beams, she seemed to crown
The pit of infamy: and then again
He fainted on his vengefulness, and strove
To ape the magnanimity of love,
And smote himself, a shuddering heap of pain.

III

This was the woman; what now of the man?
But pass him. If he comes beneath a heel,
He shall be crushed until he cannot feel,
Or, being callous, haply till he can.
But he is nothing:—nothing? Only mark
The rich light striking out from her on him!
Ha! what a sense it is when her eyes swim
Across the man she singles, leaving dark

All else! Lord God, who mad'st the thing so fair,
See that I am drawn to her, even now!
It cannot be such harm on her cool brow
To plant a kiss? Yet if I meet him there!
But she is mine! Ah, no! I know too well
I claim a star whose light is overcast:
I claim a phantom-woman in the Past.
The hour has struck, though I heard not the bell!

XIV

What soul would bargain for a cure that brings
Contempt the nobler agony to kill?
Rather let me bear on the bitter ill,
And strike this rusty bosom with new stings!
It seems there is another veering fit,
Since on a gold-haired lady's eyeballs pure,
I looked with little prospect of a cure,
The while her mouth's red bow loosed shafts of wit.
Just heaven! can it be true that jealousy
Has decked the woman thus? and does her head
Swim somewhat for possessions forfeited?
Madam, you teach me many things that be.
I open an old book, and there I find,
That "Women still may love whom they deceive."
Such love I prize not, madam: by your leave,
The game you play at is not to my mind.

XVI

In our old shipwrecked days there was an hour
When in the firelight steadily aglow,
Joined slackly, we beheld the red chasm grow
Among the clicking coals. Our library-bower
That eve was left to us: and hushed we sat
As lovers to whom Time is whispering.
From sudden-opened doors we heard them sing:
The nodding elders mixed good wine with chat.
Well knew we that Life's greatest treasure lay
With us, and of it was our talk. "Ah, yes!
Love dies!" I said: I never thought it less.
She yearned to me that sentence to unsay.

Then when the fire domed blackening, I found
Her cheek was salt against my kiss, and swift
Up the sharp scale of sobs her breast did lift:—
Now am I haunted by that taste! that sound!

XXVI

Love ere he bleeds, an eagle in high skies,
Has earth beneath his wings: from reddened eve
He views the rosy dawn. In vain they weave
The fatal web below while far he flies.
But when the arrow strikes him, there's a change.
He moves but in the track of his spent pain,
Whose red drops are the links of a harsh chain,
Binding him to the ground, with narrow range.
A subtle serpent then has Love become.
I had the eagle in my bosom erst:
Henceforward with the serpent I am cursed.
I can interpret where the mouth is dumb.
Speak, and I see the side-lie of a truth.
Perchance my heart may pardon you this deed:
But be no coward:—you that made Love bleed,
You must bear all the venom of his tooth!

XLI

How many a thing which we cast to the ground,
When others pick it up becomes a gem!
We grasp at all the wealth it is to them;
And by reflected light its worth is found.
Yet for us still 'tis nothing! and that zeal
Of false appreciation quickly fades.
This truth is little known to human shades,
How rare from their own instinct 'tis to feel!
They waste the soul with spurious desire,
That is not the ripe flame upon the bough.
We two have taken up a lifeless vow
To rob a living passion: dust for fire!
Madam is grave, and eyes the clock that tells
Approaching midnight. We have struck despair
Into two hearts. O, look we like a pair
Who for fresh nuptials joyfully yield all else?

XLIII

Mark where the pressing wind shoots javelin-like,
Its skeleton shadow on the broad-backed wave!
Here is a fitting spot to dig Love's grave;
Here where the ponderous breakers plunge and strike,
And dart their hissing tongues high up the sand:
In hearing of the ocean, and in sight
Of those ribbed wind-streaks running into white.
If I the death of Love had deeply planned,
I never could have made it half so sure,
As by the unblest kisses which upbraid
The full-waked sense; or failing that, degrade!
'Tis morning: but no morning can restore
What we have forfeited. I see no sin:
The wrong is mixed. In tragic life, God wot,
No villain need be! Passions spin the plot:
We are betrayed by what is false within.

XLIX

He found her by the ocean's moaning verge,
Nor any wicked change in her discerned;
And she believed his old love had returned,
Which was her exultation, and her scourge.
She took his hand, and walked with him, and seemed
The wife he sought, though shadow-like and dry.
She had one terror, lest her heart should sigh,
And tell her loudly she no longer dreamed.
She dared not say, "This is my breast: look in."
But there's a strength to help the desperate weak.
That night he learned how silence best can speak
The awful things when Pity pleads for Sin.
About the middle of the night her call
Was heard, and he came wondering to the bed.
"Now kiss me, dear! it may be, now!" she said.
Lethe had passed those lips, and he knew all.

L

Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:
The union of this ever-diverse pair!

These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.
Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,
They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers:
But they fed not on the advancing hours:
Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.
Then each applied to each that fatal knife,
Deep questioning, which probes to endless dole.
Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life!—
In tragic hints here see what evermore
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,
Thumping like ramping hosts of warrior horse,
To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!

George Meredith [1828–1909]

LOVE IN THE WINDS

When I am standing on a mountain crest,
Or hold the tiller in the dashing spray,
My love of you leaps foaming in my breast,
Shouts with the winds and sweeps to their foray;
My heart bounds with the horses of the sea,
And plunges in the wild ride of the night,
Flaunts in the teeth of tempest the large glee
That rides out Fate and welcomes gods to fight.
Ho, love, I laugh aloud for love of you,
Glad that our love is fellow to rough weather,—
No fretful orchid hothoused from the dew,
But hale and hardy as the highland heather,
Rejoicing in the wind that stings and thrills,
Comrade of ocean, playmate of the hills.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

"OH! DEATH WILL FIND ME"

Oh! Death will find me, long before I tire
Of watching you; and swing me suddenly
Into the shade and loneliness and mire
Of the last land! There, waiting patiently,
One day, I think, I'll feel a cool wind blowing,
See a slow light across the Stygian tide,
And hear the Dead about me stir, unknowing,
And tremble. And *I* shall know that you have died,

And watch you, a broad-browed and smiling dream,
Pass, light as ever, through the lightless host,
Quietly ponder, start, and sway, and gleam—
Most individual and bewildering ghost!—
And turn, and toss your brown delightful head
Amusedly, among the ancient Dead.

Rupert Brooke [1887–1915]

THE BUSY HEART

Now that we've done our best and worst, and parted,
I would fill my mind with thoughts that will not rend.
(O heart, I do not dare go empty-hearted)
I'll think of Love in books, Love without end;
Women with child, content; and old men sleeping;
And wet strong ploughlands, scarred for certain grain;
And babes that weep, and so forget their weeping;
And the young heavens, forgetful after rain;
And evening hush, broken by homing wings;
And Song's nobility and Wisdom holy,
That live, we dead. I would think of a thousand things,
Lovely and durable, and taste them slowly,
One after one, like tasting a sweet food.
I have need to busy my heart with quietude.

Rupert Brooke [1887–1915]

THE HILL

Breathless, we flung us on the windy hill,
Laughed in the sun, and kissed the lovely grass.
You said, "Through glory and ecstasy we pass;
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,
When we are old, are old. . . ." "And when we die
All's over that is ours; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips," said I,
—"Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!"
"We are Earth's best, that learnt her lesson here.
Life is our cry. We have kept the faith!" we said;
"We shall go down with unreluctant tread
Rose-crowned into the darkness!" . . . Proud we were,
And laughed, that had such brave true things to say.
—And then you suddenly cried, and turned away.

Rupert Brooke [1887–1915]

SONNETS

From "Sonnets to Miranda"

I

DAUGHTER of her whose face, and lofty name
Prenuptial, of old States and Cities speak,
Where lands of wine look north to peak on peak
Of the overwatching Alps: through her, you claim
Kinship with vanished Power, unvanished Fame;
And midst a world grown colorless and bleak
I see the blood of Doges in your cheek,
And in your hair the Titian tints of flame.
Daughter of England too, you first drew breath
Where our coy Springs to our coy Summers yield;
And you descend from one whose lance and shield
Were with the grandsire of Elizabeth,
When the Plantagenet saw the avenger Death
Toward him spurring over Bosworth field.

II

If you had lived in that more stately time
When men remembered the great Tudor queen,
To noblest verse your name had wedded been,
And you for ever crowned with golden rhyme.
If, mid Lorenzo's Florence, made sublime
By Art's Re-Birth, you had moved, a Muse serene,
The mightiest limners had revealed your mien
To all the ages and each wondering clime.
Fled are the singers that from language drew
Its virgin secrets; and in narrow space
The mightiest limners sleep: and only He,
The Eternal Artist, still creates anew
That which is fairer than all song—the grace
That takes the world into captivity.

III

I dare but sing of you in such a strain
As may beseem the wandering harper's tongue,
Who of the glory of his Queen hath sung,
Outside her castle gates in wind and rain.

She, seated mid the noblest of her train,
In her great halls with pictured arras hung,
Hardly can know what melody hath rung
Through the forgetting night, and rung in vain.
He, with one word from her to whom he brings
The loyal heart that she alone can sway,
Would be made rich for ever; but he sings
Of queenhood too aloof, too great, to say
"Sing on, sing on, O minstrel"—though he flings
His soul to the winds that whirl his songs away.

V

I cast these lyric offerings at your feet,
And ask you but to fling them not away:
There suffer them to rest, till even they,
By happy nearness to yourself, grow sweet.
He that hath shaped and wrought them holds it meet
That you be sung, not in some artless way,
But with such pomp and ritual as when May
Sends her full choir, the thronèd Morn to greet.
With something caught from your own lofty air,
With something learned from your own highborn grace,
Song must approach your presence; must forbear
All light and easy accost; and yet abase
Its own proud spirit in awe and reverence there,
Before the Wonder of your form and face.

VI

I move amid your throng, I watch you hold
Converse with many who are noble and fair,
Yourself the noblest and the fairest there,
Reigning supreme, crowned with that living gold.
I talk with men whose names have been enrolled
In England's book of honor; and I share
With these *one* honor—your regard; and wear
Your friendship as a jewel of worth untold.
And then I go from out your spherèd light
Into a world which still seems full of You.
I know the stars are yonder, that possess
Their ancient seats, heedless what mortals do;

But I behold in all the range of Night
Only the splendor of your loveliness.

VIII

If I had never known your face at all,
Had only heard you speak, beyond thick screen
Of leaves, in an old garden, when the sheen
Of morning dwelt on dial and ivied wall,
I think your voice had been enough to call
Yourself before me, in living vision seen,
So pregnant with your Essence had it been,
So charged with You, in each soft rise and fall.
At least I know, that when upon the night
With chanted word your voice lets loose your soul,
I am pierced, I am pierced and cloven, with Delight
That hath all Pain within it, and the whole
World's tears, all ecstasy of inward sight,
And the blind cry of all the seas that roll.

William Watson [1858–

SONNETS

From "Thysia"

II

Twin songs there are, of joyance, or of pain;
One of the morning lark in midmost sky,
When falls to earth a mist, a silver rain,
A glittering cascade of melody;
And mead and wold and the wide heaven rejoice,
And praise the Maker; but alone I kneel
In sorrowing prayer. Then wanes the day; a voice
Trembles along the dusk, till peal on peal
It pierces every living heart that hears,
Pierces and burns and purifies like fire;
Again I kneel under the starry spheres,
And all my soul seems healed, and lifted higher,
Nor could that jubilant song of day prevail
Like thine of tender grief, O nightingale.

III

Bow down, my song, before her presence high,
In that far world where you must seek her now;
Say that you bring to her no sonnetry,
But plain-set anguish of the breast or brow;
Say that on earth I sang to her alone,
But now, while in her heaven she sits divine,
Turning, I tell the world my bitter moan,
Bidding it share its hopes and griefs with mine,
Versing not what I would, but what I must,
Wail of the wind, or sobbing of the wave;
Ah! say you raised my bowed head from the dust,
And held me backward from a willful grave;
Say this, and her sweet pity will approve,
And bind yet closer her dead bond of love.

VII

I watch beside you in your silent room;
Without, the chill rain falls, life dies away,
The dead leaves drip, and the fast-gathering gloom
Closes around this brief November day,
First day of holy death, of sacred rest;
I kiss your brow, calm, beautiful and cold,
I lay my yearning arms across your breast,
I claim our darling rapture as of old;
Dear heart, I linger but a little space,
Sweet wife, I come to your new world ere long;
This lily—keep it till our next embrace,
While the mute Angel makes our love more strong,
While here I cling, in life's short agony,
To God, and to your deathless memory.

XVI

Comes the New Year; wailing the north winds blow;
In her cold, lonely grave my dead love lies;
Dead lies the stiffened earth beneath the snow,
And blinding sleet blots out the desolate skies;
I stand between the living and the dead;
Hateful to me is life, hateful is death;

Her life was sad, and on that narrow bed
She will not turn, nor wake with human breath.
I kneel between the evil and the good;
The struggle o'er, this one sweet faith have I—
Though life and death be dimly understood,
She loved me; I loved her; love cannot die;
  Go then thy way with thine accustomed cheer,
  Nor heed my churlish greeting, O New Year.

XXIII

Like some lone miser, dear, behold me stand,
To count my treasures, and their worth extol:—
A last word penciled by that poor left hand;
Two kindred names on the same gentle scroll,
(I found it near your pillow,) traced below;
This little scarf you made, our latest pride;
The violet I digged so long ago,
That nestled in your bosom till you died;
But dearest to my heart, whereon it lies,
Is one warm tress of your luxuriant hair,
Still present to my touch, my lips, my eyes,
Forever changeless, and forever fair,
  And even in your grave, beauteous and free
  From the cold grasp of mutability.

XXXVI

So sang I in the springtime of my years—
"There's nothing we can call our own but love;"
So let me murmur now that winter nears,
And even in death the deathless truth approve.
Oft have I seen the slow, the broadening river
Roll its glad waters to the parent sea;
Death is the call of love to love; the giver
Claims his own gift for some new mystery.
In boundless love divine the heavens are spread,
In wedded love is earth's divinest store,
And he that liveth to himself is dead,
And he that lives for love lives evermore;
  Only in love can life's true path be trod;
  Love is self-giving; therefore love is God.

XXXVII

Hear, O Self-Giver, infinite as good;
This faith, at least, my wavering heart should hold,
Nor find in dark regret its daily food,
But catch the gleam of glories yet untold.
Yea, even on earth, beloved, as love well knew,
Brief absence brought our fond returning kiss,
So let my soul to God's great world and you
Look onward with sweet pain of secret bliss;—
O sunset sky and lonely gleaming star,
Your beauty thrills me from the bound of space,
O Love, thy loveliness shows best afar,
And only Heaven shall give thee perfect grace;
Grant then, dear Lord, that all who love may be
Heirs of Thy glorious Immortality.

XLV

How shall I tell the measure of my love?
'Tis vain that I have given thee vows and tears,
Or striven in verse my tenderness to prove,
Or held thy hand in journeyings through the years;
Vain that I follow now with hastening feet,
And sing thy death, still murmuring in my song,
"Only for thee I would the strain were sweet,
Only for thee I would the words were strong;"
Vain even that I closed with death, and fought
To hold thee longer in a world so dear,
Vain that I count a weary world as naught,
That I would die to bring thee back; I hear
God answer me from heaven, O angel wife—
"To prove thy love, live thou a nobler life."

Morton Luce [1849–

SONNETS

From "Sonnets from the Portuguese"

I

I THOUGHT once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:

And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove,—
"Guess now who holds thee?"—"Death," I said. But, there
The silver answer rang,—"Not Death, but Love."

III

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to play thy part
Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism is on thine head,—on mine, the dew,—
And Death must dig the level where these agree.

VI

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forbore,—
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue

God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

VII

The face of all the world is changed, I think,
Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul
Move still, oh, still, beside me, as they stole
Betwixt me and the dreadful outer brink
Of obvious death, where I, who thought to sink,
Was caught up into love, and taught the whole
Of life in a new rhythm. The cup of dole
God gave for baptism, I am fain to drink,
And praise its sweetness, Sweet, with thee anear.
The name of country, heaven, are changed away
For where thou art or shalt be, there or here;
And this . . . this lute and song . . . loved yesterday,
(The singing angels know) are only dear
Because thy name moves right in what they say.

VIII

What can I give thee back, O liberal
And princely giver, who hast brought the gold
And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,
And laid them on the outside of the wall
For such as I to take or leave withal,
In unexpected largess? Am I cold,
Ungrateful, that for these most manifold
High gifts, I render nothing back at all?
Not so; not cold,—but very poor instead.
Ask God who knows. For frequent tears have run
The colors from my life, and left so dead
And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done
To give the same as pillow to thy head.
Go farther! let it serve to trample on.

IX

Can it be right to give what I can give?
To let thee sit beneath the fall of tears
As salt as mine, and hear the sighing years
Re-sighing on my lips renunciative

Through those infrequent smiles which fail to live
For all thy adjurations? O my fears,
That this can scarce be right! We are not peers
So to be lovers; and I own, and grieve,
That givers of such gifts as mine are, must
Be counted with the ungenerous. Out, alas!
I will not soil thy purple with my dust,
Nor breathe my poison on thy Venice-glass,
Nor give thee any love—which were unjust.
Beloved, I only love thee! let it pass.

X

Yet, love, mere love, is beautiful indeed
And worthy of acceptation. Fire is bright,
Let temple burn, or flax; an equal light
Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or weed:
And love is fire. And when I say at need
I love thee . . . mark! . . . *I love thee*—in thy sight
I stand transfigured, glorified aright,
With conscience of the new rays that proceed
Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low
In love, when love the lowest: meanest creatures
Who love God, God accepts while loving so.
And what I *feel*, across the inferior features
Of what I *am*, doth flash itself, and show
How that great work of Love enhances Nature's.

XII

Indeed this very love which is my boast,
And which, when rising up from breast to brow,
Doth crown me with a ruby large enow
To draw men's eyes and prove the inner cost,—
This love even, all my worth, to the uttermost,
I should not love withal, unless that thou
Hadst set me an example, shown me how,
When first thine earnest eyes with mine were crossed,
And love called love. And thus, I cannot speak
Of love even, as a good thing of my own:
Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint and weak,
And placed it by thee on a golden throne,—

And that I love (O soul, we must be meek!)
Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

XIV

If thou must love me, let it be for naught
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
"I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day"—
For these things in themselves, Belovèd, may
Be changed, or change for thee,—and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry,—
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.

XVII

My poet, thou canst touch on all the notes
God set between His After and Before,
And strike up and strike off the general roar
Of the rushing worlds a melody that floats
In a serene air purely. Antidotes
Of medicated music, answering for
Mankind's forlornest uses, thou canst pour
From thence into their ears. God's will devotes
Thine to such ends, and mine to wait on thine.
How, Dearest, wilt thou have me for most use?
A hope, to sing by gladly? or a fine
Sad memory, with thy songs to interfuse?
A shade, in which to sing—of palm or pine?
A grave, on which to rest from singing? Choose.

XVIII

I never gave a lock of hair away
To a man, Dearest, except this to thee,
Which now upon my fingers thoughtfully
I ring out to the full brown length and say

"Take it." My day of youth went yesterday;
My hair no longer bounds to my foot's glee,
Nor plant I it from rose or myrtle-tree,
As girls do, any more: it only may
Now shade on two pale cheeks the mark of tears,
Taught drooping from the head that hangs aside
Through sorrow's trick. I thought the funeral-shears
Would take this first, but Love is justified,—
Take it thou,—finding pure, from all those years,
The kiss my mother left here when she died.

XXI

Say over again, and yet once over again,
That thou dost love me. Though the word repeated
Should seem "a cuckoo-song," as thou dost treat it,
Remember, never to the hill or plain,
Valley and wood, without her cuckoo-strain,
Comes the fresh Spring in all her green completed.
Belovèd, I, amid the darkness greeted
By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's pain
Cry: "Speak once more—thou lovest!" Who can fear
Too many stars, though each in heaven shall roll,
Too many flowers, though each shall crown the year?
Say thou dost love me, love me, love me,—toll
The silver iterance!—only minding, Dear,
To love me also in silence with thy soul.

XXII

When our two souls stand up erect and strong,
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
Until the lengthening wings break into fire
At either curvèd point,—what bitter wrong
Can the earth do us, that we should not long
Be here contented? Think. In mounting higher,
The angels would press on us and aspire
To drop some golden orb of perfect song
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
Rather on earth, Belovèd,—where the unfit
Contrarious moods of men recoil away
And isolate pure spirits, and permit

A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

XXVIII

My letters! all dead paper, mute and white!
And yet they seem alive and quivering
Against my tremulous hands which loose the string
And let them drop down on my knee to-night.
This said,—he wished to have me in his sight
Once, as a friend: this fixed a day in spring
To come and touch my hand . . . a simple thing,
Yet I wept for it!—this, . . . the paper's light . . .
Said, *Dear, I love thee;* and I sank and quailed,
As if God's future thundered on my past.
This said, *I am thine,*—and so its ink has paled
With lying at my heart that beat too fast.
And this . . . O Love, thy words have ill availed,
If, what this said, I dared repeat at last!

XXXVIII

First time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write;
And ever since, it grew more clean and white,
Slow to world-greetings, quick with its "Oh, list,"
When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here, plainer to my sight,
Than that first kiss. The second passed in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed,
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed!
That was the chrism of love, which love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state; since when, indeed,
I have been proud, and said, "My love, my own!"

XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

ONE WORD MORE

TO E. B. B.

I

THERE they are, my fifty men and women
Naming me the fifty poems finished!
Take them, Love, the book and me together;
Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also.

II

Rafael made a century of sonnets,
Made and wrote them in a certain volume
Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil
Else he only used to draw Madonnas:
These, the world might view—but one, the volume.
Who that one, you ask? Your heart instructs you.
Did she live and love it all her lifetime?
Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,
Die, and let it drop beside her pillow
Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,
Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving—
Cheek, the world was wont to hail a painter's,
Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a poet's?

III

You and I would rather read that volume,
(Taken to his beating bosom by it)
Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,
Would we not? than wonder at Madonnas—
Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,
Her, that visits Florence in a vision,
Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre—
Seen by us and all the world in circle.

IV

You and I will never read that volume.
Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple

Guarded long the treasure-book and loved it.
Guido Reni dying, all Bologna
Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours, the treasure!"
Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

V

Dante once prepared to paint an angel:
Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice."
While he mused and traced it and retraced it,
(Peradventure with a pen corroded
Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped for,
When, his left hand i' the hair o' the wicked,
Back he held the brow and pricked its stigma,
Bit into the live man's flesh for parchment,
Loosed him, laughed to see the writing rankle,
Let the wretch go festering through Florence)—
Dante, who loved well because he hated,
Hated wickedness that hinders loving,
Dante standing, studying his angel,—
In there broke the folk of his Inferno.
Says he—"Certain people of importance"
(Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)
"Entered and would seize, forsooth, the poet."
Says the poet—"Then I stopped my painting."

VI

You and I would rather see that angel,
Painted by the tenderness of Dante,
Would we not?—than read a fresh Inferno.

VII

You and I will never see that picture.
While he mused on love and Beatrice,
While he softened o'er his outlined angel,
In they broke, those "people of importance":
We and Bice bear the loss forever.

VIII

What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's picture?
This: no artist lives and loves, that longs not

Once, and only once, and for one only,
(Ah, the prize!) to find his love a language
Fit and fair and simple and sufficient—
Using nature that's an art to others,
Not, this one time, art that's turned his nature.
Ay, of all the artists living, loving,
None but would forego his proper dowry,—
Does he paint? he fain would write a poem,—
Does he write? he fain would paint a picture,
Put to proof art alien to the artist's,
Once, and only once, and for one only,
So to be the man and leave the artist,
Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's sorrow.

IX

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's abatement!
He who smites the rock and spreads the water,
Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath him,
Even he, the minute makes immortal,
Proves, perchance, but mortal in the minute,
Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.
While he smites, how can he but remember,
So he smote before, in such a peril,
When they stood and mocked—"Shall smiting help us?"
When they drank and sneered—"A stroke is easy!"
When they wiped their mouths and went their journey,
Throwing him for thanks—"But drought was pleasant."
Thus old memories mar the actual triumph;
Thus the doing savors of disrelish;
Thus achievement lacks a gracious somewhat;
O'er-importuned brows becloud the mandate,
Carelessness or consciousness—the gesture.
For he bears an ancient wrong about him,
Sees and knows again those phalanxed faces,
Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed prelude—
"How shouldst thou of all men, smite, and save us?"
Guesses what is like to prove the sequel—
"Egypt's flesh-pots—nay, the drought was better."

X

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic warrant!
Theirs, the Sinai-forehead's cloven brilliance,
Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial fiat.
Never dares the man put off the prophet.

XI

Did he love one face from out the thousands,
(Were she Jethro's daughter, white and wifely,
Were she but the Æthiopian bondslave,)
He would envy yon dumb patient camel,
Keeping a reserve of scanty water
Meant to save his own life in the desert;
Ready in the desert to deliver
(Kneeling down to let his breast be opened)
Hoard and life together for his mistress.

XII

I shall never, in the years remaining,
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues,
Make you music that should all-express me;
So it seems: I stand on my attainment.
This of verse alone, one life allows me;
Verse and nothing else have I to give you.
Other heights in other lives, God willing:
All the gifts from all the heights, your own, Love!

XIII

Yet a semblance of resource avails us—
Shade so finely touched, love's sense must seize it.
Take these lines, look lovingly and nearly,
Lines I write the first time and the last time.
He who works in fresco, steals a hair-brush,
Curbs the liberal hand, subservient proudly,
Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little,
Makes a strange art of an art familiar,
Fills his lady's missal-marge with flowerets.
He who blows through bronze, may breathe through silver,
Fitly serenade a slumbrous princess.
He who writes, may write for once as I do.

XIV

Love, you saw me gather men and women,
Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,
Enter each and all, and use their service,
Speak from every mouth,—the speech, a poem.
Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,
Hopes and fears, belief and disbelieving:
I am mine and yours—the rest be all men's,
Karshish, Cleon, Norbert, and the fifty.
Let me speak this once in my true person,
Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,
Though the fruit of speech be just this sentence:
Pray you, look on these my men and women,
Take and keep my fifty poems finished;
Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also!
Poor the speech; be how I speak, for all things.

XV

Not but that you know me! Lo, the moon's self!
Here in London, yonder late in Florence,
Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured.
Curving on a sky imbrued with color,
Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,
Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-breadth.
Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,
Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,
Perfect till the nightingales applauded.
Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,
Hard to greet, she traverses the house-roofs,
Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,
Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish.

XVI

What, there's nothing in the moon noteworthy?
Nay: for if that moon could love a mortal,
Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),
All her magic ('tis the old sweet mythos),
She would turn a new side to her mortal,
Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman, steersman—

Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,
Blind to Galileo on his turret,
Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats—him, even!
Think, the wonder of the moonstruck mortal—
When she turns round, comes again in heaven,
Opens out anew for worse or better!
Proves she like some portent of an iceberg
Swimming full upon the ship it founders,
Hungry with huge teeth of splintered crystals?
Proves she as the paved work of a sapphire
Seen by Moses when he climbed the mountain?
Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu
Climbed and saw the very God, the Highest,
Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire.
Like the bodied heaven in his clearness
Shone the stone, the sapphire of that paved work,
When they ate and drank and saw God also!

XVII

What were seen? None knows, none ever shall know.
Only this is sure—the sight were other,
Not the moon's same side, born late in Florence,
Dying now impoverished here in London.
God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures
Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,
One to show a woman when he loves her!

XVIII

This I say of me, but think of you, Love!
This to you—yourself my moon of poets!
Ah, but that's the world's side, there's the wonder,
Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you!
There, in turn I stand with them and praise you—
Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.
But the best is when I glide from out them,
Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,
Come out on the other side, the novel
Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,
Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

XIX

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,
Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,
Wrote one song—and in my brain I sing it,
Drew one angel—borne, see, on my bosom!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

PART III

POEMS OF NATURE

THE world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

MOTHER NATURE

THE BOOK OF THE WORLD

Of this fair volume which we World do name,
If we the sheets and leaves could turn with care,
Of him who it corrects, and did it frame,
We clear might read the art and wisdom rare;
Find out his power which wildest powers doth tame,
His providence extending everywhere,
His justice which proud rebels doth not spare,
In every page, no, period of the same.
But silly we, like foolish children, rest
Well pleased with colored vellum, leaves of gold,
Fair dangling ribbons, leaving what is best,
On the great Writer's sense ne'er taking hold;
Or, if by chance we stay our minds on aught,
It is some picture on the margin wrought.

William Drummond [1585–1649]

NATURE

The bubbling brook doth leap when I come by,
Because my feet find measure with its call;
The birds know when the friend they love is nigh,
For I am known to them, both great and small.
The flower that on the lonely hillside grows
Expects me there when spring its bloom has given;
And many a tree and bush my wanderings knows,
And e'en the clouds and silent stars of heaven;
For he who with his Maker walks aright,
Shall be their lord as Adam was before;
His ear shall catch each sound with new delight,
Each object wear the dress that then it wore;
And he, as when erect in soul he stood,
Hear from his Father's lips that all is good.

Jones Very [1813–1880]

COMPENSATION

In that new world toward which our feet are set,
Shall we find aught to make our hearts forget
Earth's homely joys and her bright hours of bliss?
Has heaven a spell divine enough for this?
For who the pleasure of the spring shall tell
When on the leafless stalk the brown buds swell,
When the grass brightens and the days grow long,
And little birds break out in rippling song?

O sweet the dropping eve, the blush of morn,
The starlit sky, the rustling fields of corn,
The soft airs blowing from the freshening seas,
The sunflecked shadow of the stately trees,
The mellow thunder and the lulling rain,
The warm, delicious, happy summer rain,
When the grass brightens and the days grow long,
And little birds break out in rippling song!

O beauty manifold, from morn till night,
Dawn's flush, noon's blaze and sunset's tender light!
O fair, familiar features, changes sweet
Of her revolving seasons, storm and sleet
And golden calm, as slow she wheels through space,
From snow to roses,—and how dear her face,
When the grass brightens, when the days grow long,
And little birds break out in rippling song!

O happy earth! O home so well beloved!
What recompense have we, from thee removed?
One hope we have that overtops the whole,—
The hope of finding every vanished soul,
We love and long for daily, and for this
Gladly we turn from thee, and all thy bliss,
Even at thy loveliest, when the days are long,
And little birds break out in rippling song.

Celia Thaxter [1835–1894]

THE LAST HOUR

O joys of love and joys of fame,
  It is not you I shall regret;
  I sadden lest I should forget
The beauty woven in earth's name:

The shout and battle of the gale,
  The stillness of the sun-rising,
  The sound of some deep hidden spring,
The glad sob of the filling sail,

The first green ripple of the wheat,
  The rain-song of the lifted leaves,
  The waking birds beneath the eaves,
The voices of the summer heat.

Ethel Clifford [18 =

NATURE

O NATURE! I do not aspire
To be the highest in thy choir,—
To be a meteor in thy sky,
Or comet that may range on high;
Only a zephyr that may blow
Among the reeds by the river low;
Give me thy most privy place
Where to run my airy race.

In some withdrawn, unpublic mead
Let me sigh upon a reed,
Or in the woods, with leafy din,
Whisper the still evening in:
Some still work give me to do,—
Only—be it near to you!

For I'd rather be thy child
And pupil, in the forest wild,
Than be the king of men elsewhere,
And most sovereign slave of care;

To have one moment of thy dawn,
Than share the city's year forlorn.

Henry David Thoreau [1817–1862]

SONG OF NATURE

MINE are the night and morning,
The pits of air, the gulf of space,
The sportive sun, the gibbous moon,
The innumerable days.

I hide in the solar glory,
I am dumb in the pealing song,
I rest on the pitch of the torrent,
In slumber I am strong.

No numbers have counted my tallies,
No tribes my house can fill,
I sit by the shining Fount of Life
And pour the deluge still;

And ever by delicate powers
Gathering along the centuries
From race on race the rarest flowers,
My wreath shall nothing miss.

And many a thousand summers
My gardens ripened well,
And light from meliorating stars
With firmer glory fell.

I wrote the past in characters
Of rock and fire the scroll,
The building in the coral sea,
The planting of the coal.

And thefts from satellites and rings
And broken stars I drew,
And out of spent and agèd things
I formed the world anew;

What time the gods kept carnival,
Tricked out in star and flower,
And in cramp elf and saurian forms
They swathed their too much power.

Time and Thought were my surveyors,
They laid their courses well,
They boiled the sea, and piled the layers
Of granite, marl and shell.

But he, the man-child glorious,—
Where tarries he the while?
The rainbow shines his harbinger,
The sunset gleams his smile.

My boreal lights leap upward,
Forthright my planets roll,
And still the man-child is not born,
The summit of the whole.

Must time and tide forever run?
Will never my winds go sleep in the west?
Will never my wheels which whirl the sun
And satellites have rest?

Too much of donning and doffing,
Too slow the rainbow fades,
I weary of my robe of snow,
My leaves and my cascades;

I tire of globes and races,
Too long the game is played;
What without him is summer's pomp,
Or winter's frozen shade?

I travail in pain for him,
My creatures travail and wait;
His couriers come by squadrons,
He comes not to the gate.

Twice I have moulded an image,
And thrice outstretched my hand,
Made one of day and one of night
And one of the salt sea-sand.

One in a Judæan manger,
And one by Avon stream,
One over against the mouths of Nile,
And one in the Academe.

I moulded kings and saviors,
And bards o'er kings to rule;—
But fell the starry influence short,
The cup was never full.

Yet whirl the glowing wheels once more,
And mix the bowl again;
Seethe, Fate! the ancient elements,
Heat, cold, wet, dry, and peace, and pain.

Let war and trade and creeds and song
Blend, ripen race on race,
The sunburnt world a man shall breed
Of all the zones and countless days.

No ray is dimmed, no atom worn,
My oldest force is good as new,
And the fresh rose on yonder thorn
Gives back the bending heavens in dew.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

"GREAT NATURE IS AN ARMY GAY"

Great nature is an army gay,
Resistless marching on its way;
I hear the bugles clear and sweet,
I hear the tread of million feet.
Across the plain I see it pour;
It tramples down the waving grass;
Within the echoing mountain-pass
I hear a thousand cannon roar.

It swarms within my garden gate;
My deepest well it drinketh dry.
It doth not rest; it doth not wait;
By night and day it sweepeth by;
Ceaseless it marcheth by my door;
It heeds me not, though I implore.
I know not whence it comes, nor where
It goes. For me it doth not care—
Whether I starve, or eat, or sleep,
Or live, or die, or sing, or weep.
And now the banners all are bright,
Now torn and blackened by the fight.
Sometimes its laughter shakes the sky,
Sometimes the groans of those who die.
Still through the night and through the livelong day
The infinite army marches on its remorseless way.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

TO MOTHER NATURE

Nature, in thy largess, grant
I may be thy confidant!
Taste who will life's roadside cheer
(Though my heart doth hold it dear—
Song and wine and trees and grass,
All the joys that flash and pass),
I must put within my prayer
Gifts more intimate and rare.
Show me how dry branches throw
Such blue shadows on the snow,—
Tell me how the wind can fare
On his unseen feet of air,—
Show me how the spider's loom
Weaves the fabric from her womb,—
Lead me to those brooks of morn
Where a woman's laugh is born,—
Let me taste the sap that flows
Through the blushes of a rose,

Yea, and drain the blood which runs
From the heart of dying suns,—
Teach me how the butterfly
Guessed at immortality,—
Let me follow up the track
Of Love's deathless Zodiac
Where Joy climbs among the spheres
Circled by her moon of tears,—
Tell me how, when I forget
All the schools have taught me, yet
I recall each trivial thing
In a golden, far-off Spring,—
Give me whispered hints how I
May instruct my heart to fly
Where the baffling Vision gleams
Till I overtake my dreams,
And the impossible be done
When the Wish and Deed grow one!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869–1905]

QUIET WORK

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,
One lesson which in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties kept at one
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—
Of toil unsevered from tranquillity;
Of labor, that in lasting fruit outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.

Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's fitful uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil;
Laborers that shall not fail, when man is gone.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

NATURE

As a fond mother, when the day is o'er,
Leads by the hand her little child to bed,
Half willing, half reluctant to be led,
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,
Still gazing at them through the open door,
Nor wholly reassured and comforted
By promises of others in their stead,
Which, though more splendid, may not please him more;
So Nature deals with us, and takes away
Our playthings one by one, and by the hand
Leads us to rest so gently, that we go
Scarce knowing if we wish to go or stay,
Being too full of sleep to understand
How far the unknown transcends the what we know.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

"AS AN OLD MERCER"

As an old mercer in some sleepy town
Swings wide his windows new day after day,
Sets all his wares around in arch array
To please the taste of passers up and down,—
His hoard of handy things of trite renown,
Of sweets and spices and of faint perfumes,
Of silks and prints,—and at the last illumes
His tiny panes to foil the evening's frown;
So Nature spreads her proffered treasures: such
As daily dazzle at the morning's rise,—
Fair show of isle and ocean merchandise,
And airy offerings filmy to the touch;
Then, lest we like not these, in Dark's bazaars
She nightly tempts us with her store of stars.

Mahlon Leonard Fisher [1874–

GOOD COMPANY

To-day I have grown taller from walking with the trees,
The seven sister-poplars who go softly in a line;
And I think my heart is whiter for its parley with a star
That trembled out at nightfall and hung above the pine.

The call-note of a redbird from the cedars in the dusk
Woke his happy mate within me to an answer free and fine;
And a sudden angel beckoned from a column of blue smoke—
Lord, who am I that they should stoop—these holy folk of thine?

Karle Wilson Baker [1878–

"HERE IS THE PLACE WHERE LOVELINESS KEEPS HOUSE"

Here is the place where Loveliness keeps house,
Between the river and the wooded hills,
Within a valley where the Springtime spills
Her firstling wind-flowers under blossoming boughs:
Where Summer sits braiding her warm, white brows
With bramble-roses; and where Autumn fills
Her lap with asters; and old Winter frills
With crimson haw and hip his snowy blouse.
Here you may meet with Beauty. Here she sits
Gazing upon the moon, or all the day
Tuning a wood-thrush flute, remote, unseen;
Or when the storm is out, 'tis she who flits
From rock to rock, a form of flying spray,
Shouting, beneath the leaves' tumultuous green.

Madison Cawein [1865–1914]

GOD'S WORLD

O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!
Thy winds, thy wide gray skies!
Thy mists, that roll and rise!
Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag
And all but cry with color! That gaunt crag
To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!
World, world, I cannot get thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all
But never knew I this.
Here such a passion is
As stretcheth me apart. Lord, I do fear
Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year.
My soul is all but out of me—let fall
No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

Edna St. Vincent Millay [1892–

SIC VITA

Heart free, hand free,
  Blue above, brown under,
All the world to me
  Is a place of wonder.
Sun shine, moon shine,
  Stars, and winds a-blowing,
All into this heart of mine
  Flowing, flowing, flowing!

Mind free, step free,
  Days to follow after,
Joys of life sold to me
  For the price of laughter.
Girl's love, man's love,
  Love of work and duty,
Just a will of God's to prove
  Beauty, beauty, beauty!

William Stanley Braithwaite [1878–

PATMOS

All around him Patmos lies,
Who hath spirit-gifted eyes,
Who his happy sight can suit
To the great and the minute.
Doubt not but he holds in view
A new earth and heaven new;
Doubt not but his ear doth catch
Strain nor voice nor reed can match:
Many a silver, sphery note
Shall within his hearing float.

All around him Patmos lies,
Who unto God's priestess flies:
Thou, O Nature, bid him see,
Through all guises worn by thee,
A divine apocalypse.
Manifold his fellowships:

Now the rocks their archives ope;
Voiceless creatures tell their hope
In a language symbol-wrought;
Groves to him sigh out their thought;
Musings of the flower and grass
Through his quiet spirit pass.
'Twixt new earth and heaven new
He hath traced and holds the clue,
Number his delights ye may not;
Fleets the year but these decay not.
Now the freshets of the rain,
Bounding on from hill to plain,
Show him earthly streams have rise
In the bosom of the skies.
Now he feels the morning thrill,
As upmounts, unseen and still,
Dew the wing of evening drops.
Now the frost, that meets and stops
Summer's feet in tender sward,
Greets him, breathing heavenward.
Hieroglyphics writes the snow,
Through the silence falling slow;
Types of star and petaled bloom
A white missal-page illume.
By these floating symbols fine,
Heaven-truth shall be divine.

All around him Patmos lies,
Who hath spirit-gifted eyes;
He need not afar remove,
He need not the times reprove,
Who would hold perpetual lease
Of an isle in seas of peace.

Edith M. Thomas [1854–

DAWN AND DARK

SONG

Phœbus, arise,
And paint the sable skies
With azure, white, and red:
Rouse Memnon's mother from her Tithon's bed,
That she thy càreer may with roses spread:
The nightingales thy coming each where sing,
Make an eternal Spring!
Give life to this dark world which lieth dead;
Spread forth thy golden hair
In larger locks than thou wast wont before,
And, emperor-like, decore
With diadem of pearl thy temples fair:
Chase hence the ugly night,
Which serves but to make dear thy glorious light.

This is that happy morn,
That day, long-wishèd day,
Of all my life so dark,
(If cruel stars have not my ruin sworn,
And fates not hope betray,)
Which, only white, deserves
A diamond for ever should it mark.
This is the morn should bring unto this grove
My Love, to hear and recompense my love.
Fair king, who all preserves,
But show thy blushing beams,
And thou two sweeter eyes
Shalt see, than those which by Peneus' streams
Did once thy heart surprise.
Nay, suns, which shine as clear
As thou, when two thou didst to Rome appear.
Now, Flora, deck thyself in fairest guise:
If that ye, winds, would hear

A voice surpassing far Amphion's lyre,
Your stormy chiding stay;
Let Zephyr only breathe,
And with her tresses play,
Kissing sometimes these purple ports of death.
—The winds all silent are,
And Phœbus in his chair
Ensaffroning sea and air,
Makes vanish every star:
Night like a drunkard reels
Beyond the hills, to shun his flaming wheels:
The fields with flowers are decked in every hue,
The clouds bespangle with bright gold their blue:
Here is the pleasant place,
And everything save her, who all should grace.

William Drummond [1585–1649]

HYMN OF APOLLO

The sleepless Hours who watch me as I lie,
Curtained with star-inwoven tapestries,
From the broad moonlight of the sky,
Fanning the busy dreams from my dim eyes,—
Waken me when their Mother, the gray Dawn,
Tells them that dreams and that the moon is gone.

Then I arise, and climbing Heaven's blue dome,
I walk over the mountains and the waves,
Leaving my robe upon the ocean foam;
My footsteps pave the clouds with fire; the caves
Are filled with my bright presence, and the air
Leaves the green Earth to my embraces bare.

The sunbeams are my shafts, with which I kill
Deceit, that loves the night and fears the day;
All men who do or even imagine ill
Fly me, and from the glory of my ray
Good minds and open actions take new might,
Until diminished by the reign of Night.

I feed the clouds, the rainbows, and the flowers,
With their ethereal colors; the Moon's globe,
And the pure stars in their eternal bowers,
Are cinctured with my power as with a robe;
Whatever lamps on Earth or Heaven may shine,
Are portions of one power, which is mine.

I stand at noon upon the peak of Heaven;
Then with unwilling steps I wander down
Into the clouds of the Atlantic even;
For grief that I depart they weep and frown:
What look is more delightful than the smile
With which I soothe them from the western isle?

I am the eye with which the Universe
Beholds itself, and knows it is divine;
All harmony of instrument or verse,
All prophecy, all medicine, is mine,
All light of art or nature;—to my song
Victory and praise in its own right belong.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

PRELUDE

From "The New Day"

The night was dark, though sometimes a faint star
A little while a little space made bright.
The night was dark and still the dawn seemed far,
When, o'er the muttering and invisible sea,
Slowly, within the East, there grew a light
Which half was starlight, and half seemed to be
The herald of a greater. The pale white
Turned slowly to pale rose, and up the height
Of heaven slowly climbed. The gray sea grew
Rose-colored like the sky. A white gull flew
Straight toward the utmost boundary of the East
Where slowly the rose gathered and increased.
There was light now, where all was black before:
It was as on the opening of a door

By one who in his hand a lamp doth hold
(Its flame being hidden by the garment's fold),—
The still air moves, the wide room is less dim.
More bright the East became, the ocean turned
Dark and more dark against the brightening sky—
Sharper against the sky the long sea line.
The hollows of the breakers on the shore
Were green like leaves whereon no sun doth shine,
Though sunlight make the outer branches hoar.
From rose to red the level heaven burned;
Then sudden, as if a sword fell from on high,
A blade of gold flashed on the ocean's rim.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

DAWN ON THE HEADLAND

Dawn—and a magical stillness: on earth, quiescence profound;
On the waters a vast Content, as of hunger appeased and stayed;
In the heavens a silence that seems not mere privation of sound,
But a thing with form and body, a thing to be touched and weighed!

Yet I know that I dwell in the midst of the roar of the cosmic wheel,
In the hot collision of Forces, and clangor of boundless Strife,
Mid the sound of the speed of the worlds, the rushing worlds, and the peal
Of the thunder of Life.

William Watson [1858–

THE MIRACLE OF THE DAWN

What would it mean for you and me
If dawn should come no more!
Think of its gold along the sea,
Its rose above the shore!
That rose of awful mystery,
Our souls bow down before.

What wonder that the Inca kneeled,
The Aztec prayed and pled
And sacrificed to it, and sealed,—
With rites that long are dead,—
The marvels that it once revealed
To them it comforted.

What wonder, yea! what awe, behold!
What rapture and what tears
Were ours, if wild its rivered gold,—
That now each day appears,—
Burst on the world, in darkness rolled,
Once every thousand years!

Think what it means to me and you
To see it even as God
Evolved it when the world was new!
When Light rose, earthquake-shod,
And slow its gradual splendor grew
O'er deeps the whirlwind trod.

What shoutings then and cymballings
Arose from depth and height!
What worship-solemn trumpetings,
And thunders, burning-white,
Of winds and waves, and anthemings
Of Earth received the Light.

Think what it meant to see the dawn!
The dawn, that comes each day!—
What if the East should ne'er grow wan,
Should nevermore grow gray!
That line of rose no more be drawn
Above the ocean's spray!

Madison Cawein [1865–1914]

DAWN-ANGELS

All night I watched awake for morning,
At last the East grew all a flame,
The birds for welcome sang, or warning,
And with their singing morning came.

Along the gold-green heavens drifted
Pale wandering souls that shun the light,
Whose cloudy pinions, torn and rifted,
Had beat the bars of Heaven all night.

These clustered round the moon, but higher
A troop of shining spirits went,
Who were not made of wind or fire,
But some divine dream-element.

Some held the Light, while those remaining
Shook out their harvest-colored wings,
A faint unusual music raining,
(Whose sound was Light) on earthly things.

They sang, and as a mighty river
Their voices washed the night away,
From East to West ran one white shiver,
And waxen strong their song was Day.

A. Mary F. Robinson [1857–

MUSIC OF THE DAWN

AT SEA, OCTOBER 23, 1907

In far forests' leafy twilight, now is stealing gray dawn's shy light,
And the misty air is tremulous with songs of many a bird;
While from mountain steeps descending, every streamlet's voice is blending
With the anthems of great pine trees, by the breath of daylight stirred.

But I turn from Fancy's dreaming of the green earth, to the gleaming
Of the fluttering wings of morning rushing o'er the jewelled deep;
And the ocean's rhythmic pounding, with each lucent wave resounding,
Seems the music made when God's own hands His mighty harpstrings sweep.

Virginia Bioren Harrison [18 –

SUNRISE ON MANSFIELD MOUNTAIN

O SWIFT forerunners, rosy with the race!
Spirits of dawn, divinely manifest
Behind your blushing banners in the sky,
Daring invaders of Night's tenting-ground,—
How do ye strain on forward-bending foot,
Each to be first in heralding of joy!
With silence sandalled, so they weave their way,
And so they stand, with silence panoplied,
Chanting, through mystic symbollings of flame,
Their solemn invocation to the light.

O changeless guardians! O ye wizard firs!
What strenuous philter feeds your potency,
That thus ye rest, in sweet wood-hardiness.
Ready to learn of all and utter naught?
What breath may move ye, or what breeze invite
To odorous hot lendings of the heart?
What wind—but all the winds are yet afar,
And e'en the little tricksy zephyr sprites,
That fleet before them, like their elfin locks,
Have lagged in sleep, nor stir nor waken yet
To pluck the robe of patient majesty.

Too still for dreaming, too divine for sleep,
So range the firs, the constant, fearless ones.
Warders of mountain secrets, there they wait,
Each with his cloak about him, breathless, calm,
And yet expectant, as who knows the dawn,
And all night thrills with memory and desire,
Searching in what has been for what shall be:
The marvel of the ne'er familiar day,
Sacred investiture of life renewed,
The chrism of dew, the coronal of flame.

Low in the valley lies the conquered rout
Of man's poor trivial turmoil, lost and drowned
Under the mist, in gleaming rivers rolled,
Where oozy marsh contends with frothing main.

And rounding all, springs one full, ambient arch,
One great good limpid world—so still, so still!
For no sound echoes from its crystal curve
Save four clear notes, the song of that lone bird
Who, brave but trembling, tries his morning hymn,
And has no heart to finish, for the awe
And wonder of this pearling globe of dawn.

Light, light eternal! veiling-place of stars!
Light, the revealer of dread beauty's face!
Weaving whereof the hills are lambent clad!
Mighty libation to the Unknown God!
Cup whereat pine-trees slake their giant thirst
And little leaves drink sweet delirium!
Being and breath and potion! Living soul
And all-informing heart of all that lives!
How can we magnify thine awful name
Save by its chanting: Light! and light! and light!
An exhalation from far sky retreats,
It grows in silence, as 'twere self-create,
Suffusing all the dusky web of night.
But one lone corner it invades not yet,
Where low above a black and rimy crag
Hangs the old moon, thin as a battered shield,
The holy, useless shield of long-past wars,
Dinted and frosty, on the crystal dark.
But lo! the east,—let none forget the east,
Pathway ordained of old where He should tread.
Through some sweet magic common in the skies
The rosy banners are with saffron tinct:
The saffron grows to gold, the gold is fire,
And led by silence more majestical
Than clash of conquering arms, He comes! He comes!
He holds his spear benignant, sceptrewise,
And strikes out flame from the adoring hills.

Alice Brown [1857–

ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs and dying gales;

O Nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises, 'midst the twilight path
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car:

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile,
Or upland fallows gray
Reflect its last cool gleam.

Or, if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut
That, from the mountain's side,
Views wilds and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as of the wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves,
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes:

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy favorite name!

William Collins [1721–1759]

"IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND FREE"

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in his tranquility;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea;
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,

Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

GLOAMING

Skies to the West are stained with madder;
Amber light on the rare blue hills;
The sough of the pines is growing sadder;
From the meadow-lands sound the whippoorwills.
Air is sweet with the breath of clover;
Dusk is on, and the day is over.

Skies to the East are streaked with golden;
Tremulous light on the darkening pond;
Glow-worms pale, to the dark beholden;
Twitterings hush in the hedge beyond.
Air is sweet with the breath of clover;
Silver the hills where the moon climbs over.

Robert Adger Bowen [1868–

EVENING MELODY

O that the pines which crown yon steep
Their fires might ne'er surrender!
O that yon fervid knoll might keep,
While lasts the world, its splendor!

Pale poplars on the breeze that lean,
And in the sunset shiver,
O that your golden stems might screen
For aye yon glassy river!

That yon white bird on homeward wing
Soft-sliding without motion,
And now in blue air vanishing
Like snow-flake lost in ocean,

Beyond our sight might never flee,
  Yet forward still be flying;
And all the dying day might be
  Immortal in its dying!

Pellucid thus in saintly trance,
  Thus mute in expectation,
What waits the earth? Deliverance?
  Ah no! Transfiguration!

She dreams of that "New Earth" divine,
  Conceived of seed immortal;
She sings "Not mine the holier shrine,
  Yet mine the steps and portal!"

Aubrey Thomas de Vere [1814–1902]

"IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING"

In the cool of the evening, when the low sweet whispers waken,
  When the laborers turn them homeward, and the weary have their will,
When the censers of the roses o'er the forest aisles are shaken,
  Is it but the wind that cometh o'er the far green hill?

For they say 'tis but the sunset winds that wander through the heather,
  Rustle all the meadow-grass and bend the dewy fern;
They say 'tis but the winds that bow the reeds in prayer together,
  And fill the shaken pools with fire along the shadowy burn.

In the beauty of the twilight, in the Garden that He loveth,
  They have veiled His lovely vesture with the darkness of a name!
Through His Garden, through His Garden, it is but the wind that moveth,
  No more! But O the miracle, the miracle is the same.

In the cool of the evening, when the sky is an old story,
Slowly dying, but remembered, ay, and loved with passion still . . .
Hush! . . . the fringes of His garment, in the fading golden glory
Softly rustling as He cometh o'er the far green hill.

Alfred Noyes [1880–

TWILIGHT

Spirit of Twilight, through your folded wings
I catch a glimpse of your averted face,
And rapturous on a sudden, my soul sings
"Is not this common earth a holy place?"

Spirit of Twilight, you are like a song
That sleeps, and waits a singer,—like a hymn
That God finds lovely and keeps near Him long,
Till it is choired by aureoled cherubim.

Spirit of Twilight, in the golden gloom
Of dreamland dim I sought you, and I found
A woman sitting in a silent room
Full of white flowers that moved and made no sound.

These white flowers were the thoughts you bring to all,
And the room's name is Mystery where you sit,
Woman whom we call Twilight, when night's pall
You lift across our Earth to cover it.

Olive Custance [1874–

TWILIGHT AT SEA

The twilight hours, like birds, flew by,
As lightly and as free,
Ten thousand stars were in the sky,
Ten thousand on the sea;
For every wave, with dimpled face,
That leaped upon the air,
Had caught a star in its embrace,
And held it trembling there.

Amelia C. Welby [1819–1852]

"THIS IS MY HOUR"

I

The ferries ply like shuttles in a loom,
And many barques come in across the bay
To lights and bells that signal through the gloom
Of twilight gray;

And like the brown soft flutter of the snow
The wide-winged sea-birds droop from closing skies,
And hover near the water, circling low,
As the day dies.

The city like a shadowed castle stands,
Its turrets indistinctly touching night;
Like earth-born stars far fetched from faerie lands,
Its lamps are bright.

This is my hour,—when wonder springs anew
To see the towers ascending, pale and high,
And the long seaward distances of blue,
And the dim sky.

II

This is my hour, between the day and night;
The sun has set and all the world is still,
The afterglow upon the distant hill
Is as a holy light.

This is my hour, between the sun and moon;
The little stars are gathering in the sky,
There is no sound but one bird's startled cry,—
One note that ceases soon.

The gardens and, far off, the meadow-land,
Are like the fading depths beneath a sea,
While over waves of misty shadows we
Drift onward, hand in hand.

This is my hour, that you have called your own;
  Its hushèd beauty silently we share,—
  Touched by the wistful wonder in the air
That leaves us so alone.

III

In rain and twilight mist the city street,
  Hushed and half-hidden, might this instant be
  A dark canal beneath our balcony,
Like one in Venice, Sweet.

The street-lights blossom, star-wise, one by one;
  A lofty tower the shadows have not hid
  Stands out—part column and part pyramid—
Holy to look upon.

The dusk grows deeper, and on silver wings
  The twilight flutters like a weary gull
  Toward some sea-island, lost and beautiful,
Where a sea-syren sings.

"This is my hour," you breathe with quiet lips;
  And filled with beauty, dreaming and devout,
  We sit in silence, while our thoughts go out—
Like treasure-seeking ships.

Zoë Akins [1886–

SONG TO THE EVENING STAR

Star that bringest home the bee,
And sett'st the weary laborer free!
If any star shed peace, 'tis thou
  That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
  Are sweet as hers we love.

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odors rise,

Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard
And songs when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirred
Curls yellow in the sun.

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse;
Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

THE EVENING CLOUD

A CLOUD lay cradled near the setting sun,
A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow;
Long had I watched the glory moving on
O'er the still radiance of the lake below.
Tranquil its spirit seemed, and floated slow!
Even in its very motion there was rest;
While every breath of eve that chanced to blow
Wafted the traveller to the beauteous west.
Emblem, methought, of the departed soul!
To whose white robe the gleam of bliss is given,
And by the breath of mercy made to roll
Right onwards to the golden gates of heaven,
Where to the eye of faith it peaceful lies,
And tells to man his glorious destinies.

John Wilson [1785–1854]

SONG: TO CYNTHIA

From "Cynthia's Revels"

QUEEN and huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep:
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear, when day did close:
Bless us then with wishèd sight,
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal-shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever:
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

MY STAR

All that I know
Of a certain star
Is, it can throw
(Like the angled spar)
Now a dart of red,
Now a dart of blue,
Till my friends have said
They would fain see, too,
My star that dartles the red and the blue!
Then it stops like a bird; like a flower, hangs furled:
They must solace themselves with the Saturn above it.
What matter to me if their star is a world?
Mine has opened its soul to me; therefore I love it.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

NIGHT

The sun descending in the West,
The evening star does shine;
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.

The moon, like a flower
In heaven's high bower,
With silent delight
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy grove,
Where flocks have ta'en delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move
The feet of angels bright:
Unseen, they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
On each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm.
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey
They pitying stand and weep,
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
But, if they rush dreadful,
The angels, most heedful,
Receive each mild spirit
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
Shall flow with tears of gold:
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold,
Saying: "Wrath by His meekness,
And by His health, sickness,
Are driven away
From our immortal day.

"And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
I can lie down and sleep.
Or think on Him who bore thy name,
Graze after thee, and weep.
For, washed in life's river,
My bright mane for ever
Shall shine like the gold,
As I guard o'er the fold."

William Blake [1757–1827]

TO NIGHT

Swiftly walk o'er the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long-sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
"Would'st thou me?"
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,

"Shall I nestle near thy side?
Would'st thou me?"—And I replied,
"No, not thee."

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovèd Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

TO NIGHT

Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath the curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened on man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
While fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we, then, shun Death with anxious strife?—
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

Joseph Blanco White [1775–1841]

NIGHT

Mysterious night! Spread wide thy silvery plume!
Soft as swan's down, brood o'er the sapphirine
Breadth of still shadowy waters dark as wine;
Smooth out the liquid heavens that stars illume!
Come with fresh airs breathing the faint perfume
Of deep-walled gardens, groves of whispering pine;
Scatter soft dews, waft pure sea-scent of brine;
In sweet repose man's pain, man's love resume!

Deep-bosomed night! Not here where down the marge
Marble with palaces those lamps of earth
Tremble on trembling blackness; nay, far hence,
There on the lake where space is lone and large,
And man's life lost in broad indifference,
Lift thou the soul to spheres that gave her birth!

John Addington Symonds [1840–1893]

NIGHT

Night is the time for rest;
How sweet, when labors close,
To gather round an aching breast
The curtain of repose,
Stretch the tired limbs, and lay the head
Down on our own delightful bed!

Night is the time for dreams;
The gay romance of life,
When truth that is, and truth that seems,
Blend in fantastic strife;
Ah! visions, less beguiling far
Than waking dreams by daylight are!

Night is the time for toil;
To plough the classic field,
Intent to find the buried spoil
Its wealthy furrows yield;
Till all is ours that sages taught,
That poets sang, or heroes wrought.

Night is the time to weep;
To wet with unseen tears
Those graves of Memory, where sleep
The joys of other years;
Hopes, that were Angels at their birth,
But perished young, like things of earth.

Night is the time to watch;
O'er ocean's dark expanse,
To hail the Pleiades, or catch
The full moon's earliest glance,

That brings into the homesick mind
All we have loved and left behind.

Night is the time for care;
  Brooding on hours misspent,
To see the spectre of Despair
  Come to our lonely tent;
Like Brutus, 'midst his slumbering host,
Summoned to die by Cæsar's ghost.

Night is the time to think;
  When, from the eye, the soul
Takes flight; and, on the utmost brink,
  Of yonder starry pole
Descries beyond the abyss of night
The dawn of uncreated light.

Night is the time to pray;
  Our Saviour oft withdrew
To desert mountains far away;
  So will his followers do,—
Steal from the throng to haunts untrod,
And hold communion there with God.

Night is the time for Death;
  When all around is peace,
Calmly to yield the weary breath,
  From sin and suffering cease,
Think of heaven's bliss, and give the sign
To parting friends;—such death be mine!

James Montgomery [1771–1854]

HE MADE THE NIGHT

Vast Chaos, of eld, was God's dominion;
'Twas His beloved child, His own first-born;
And He was aged ere the thought of morn
Shook the sheer steeps of dim Oblivion.
Then all the works of darkness being done
Through countless æons hopelessly forlorn,
Out to the very utmost verge and bourne,
God at the last, reluctant, made the sun.

He loved His darkness still, for it was old;
He grieved to see His eldest child take flight;
And when His *Fiat Lux* the death-knell tolled,
As the doomed Darkness backward by Him rolled,
He snatched a remnant flying into light
And strewed it with the stars, and called it Night.

Lloyd Mifflin [1846–

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

I HEARD the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best-belovèd Night!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

NIGHT'S MARDI GRAS

NIGHT is the true democracy. When day
Like some great monarch with his train has passed,
In regal pomp and splendor to the last,
The stars troop forth along the Milky Way,
A jostling crowd, in radiant disarray,
On heaven's broad boulevard in pageants vast.
And things of earth, the hunted and outcast,
Come from their haunts and hiding-places; yea,
Even from the nooks and crannies of the mind
Visions uncouth and vagrant fancies start,
And specters of dead joy, that shun the light,
And impotent regrets and terrors blind,
Each one, in form grotesque, playing its part
In the fantastic Mardi Gras of Night.

Edward J. Wheeler [1859–

DAWN AND DARK

GOD with His million cares
Went to the left or right,
Leaving our world; and the day
Grew night.

Back from a sphere He came
Over a starry lawn,
Looked at our world; and the dark
Grew dawn.

Norman Gale [1862–

DAWN

HIS radiant fingers so adorning
Earth that in silent joy she thrills,
The ancient day stands every morning
Above the flowing eastern hills.

This day the new-born world hath taken
Within his mantling arms of white,

And sent her forth by fear unshaken
To walk among the stars in light.

Risen with laughter unto leaping,
His feet untired, undimmed his eyes,
The old, old day comes up from sleeping,
Fresh as a flower, for new emprise.

The curtain of the night is parted
That once again the dawn may tread,
In spotless garments, ways uncharted
And death a million times is dead.

Slow speechless music robed in splendor
The deep sky sings eternally,
With childlike wonderment to render
Its own unwearied symphony.

Reborn between the great suns spinning
Forever where men's prayers ascend,
God's day in love hath its beginning,
And the beginning hath no end.

George B. Logan, Jr. [18

A WOOD SONG

Now one and all, you Roses,
Wake up, you lie too long!
This very morning closes
The Nightingale his song;

Each from its olive chamber
His babies every one
This very morning clamber
Into the shining sun.

You Slug-a-beds and Simples,
Why will you so delay!
Dears, doff your olive wimples,
And listen while you may.

Ralph Hodgson [18

THE CHANGING YEAR

A SONG FOR THE SEASONS

When the merry lark doth gild
With his song the summer hours,
And their nests the swallows build
In the roofs and tops of towers,
And the golden broom-flower burns
All about the waste,
And the maiden May returns
With a pretty haste,—
Then, how merry are the times!
The Spring times! the Summer times!

Now, from off the ashy stone
The chilly midnight cricket crieth,
And all merry birds are flown,
And our dream of pleasure dieth;
Now the once blue, laughing sky
Saddens into gray,
And the frozen rivers sigh,
Pining all away!
Now, how solemn are the times!
The Winter times! the Night times!

Yet, be merry; all around
Is through one vast change revolving;
Even Night, who lately frowned,
Is in paler dawn dissolving;
Earth will burst her fetters strange,
And in Spring grow free;
All things in the world will change,
Save—my love for thee!
Sing then, hopeful are all times!
Winter, Spring, Summer times!

Bryan Waller Procter [1787–1874]

A SONG OF THE SEASONS

Sing a song of Spring-time,
The world is going round,
Blown by the south wind:
Listen to its sound.
"Gurgle" goes the mill-wheel,
"Cluck" clucks the hen;
And it's O for a pretty girl
To kiss in the glen.

Sing a song of Summer,
The world is nearly still,
The mill-pond has gone to sleep,
And so has the mill.
Shall we go a-sailing,
Or shall we take a ride,
Or dream the afternoon away
Here, side by side?

Sing a song of Autumn,
The world is going back;
They glean in the corn-field,
And stamp on the stack.
Our boy, Charlie,
Tall, strong, and light:
He shoots all the day
And dances all the night.

Sing a song of Winter,
The world stops dead;
Under snowy coverlid
Flowers lie abed.
There's hunting for the young ones
And wine for the old,
And a sexton in the churchyard
Digging in the cold.

Cosmo Monkhouse [1840–1901]

TURN O' THE YEAR

This is the time when bit by bit
The days begin to lengthen sweet
And every minute gained is joy—
And love stirs in the heart of a boy.

This is the time the sun, of late
Content to lie abed till eight,
Lifts up betimes his sleepy head—
And love stirs in the heart of a maid.

This is the time we dock the night
Of a whole hour of candlelight;
When song of linnet and thrush is heard—
And love stirs in the heart of a bird.

This is the time when sword-blades green,
With gold and purple damascene,
Pierce the brown crocus-bed a-row—
And love stirs in a heart I know.

Katharine Tynan [1861–

THE WAKING YEAR

A lady red upon the hill
  Her annual secret keeps;
A lady white within the field
  In placid lily sleeps!

The tidy breezes with their brooms
  Sweep vale, and hill, and tree!
Prithee, my pretty housewives!
  Who may expected be?

The neighbors do not yet suspect!
  The woods exchange a smile,—
Orchard, and buttercup, and bird,
  In such a little while!

And yet how still the landscape stands,
How nonchalant the wood,
As if the resurrection
Were nothing very odd!

Emily Dickinson [1830–1886]

SONG

From "Pippa Passes"

THE year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His Heaven—
All's right with the world!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

EARLY SPRING

ONCE more the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And domes the red-plowed hills
With loving blue;
The blackbirds have their wills,
The throstles too.

Opens a door in Heaven;
From skies of glass
A Jacob's ladder falls
On greening grass,
And o'er the mountain-walls
Young angels pass.

Before them fleets the shower,
And burst the buds,
And shine the level lands,
And flash the floods;
The stars are from their hands
Flung through the woods,

The woods with living airs
How softly fanned,
Light airs from where the deep,
All down the sand,
Is breathing in his sleep,
Heard by the land.

O, follow, leaping blood,
The season's lure!
O heart, look down and up,
Serene, secure,
Warm as the crocus cup,
Like snow-drops, pure!

Past, Future glimpse and fade
Through some slight spell,
A gleam from yonder vale,
Some far blue fell,
And sympathies, how frail,
In sound and smell!

Till at thy chuckled note,
Thou twinkling bird,
The fairy fancies range,
And, lightly stirred,
Ring little bells of change
From word to word.

For now the Heavenly Power
Makes all things new,
And thaws the cold, and fills
The flower with dew;
The blackbirds have their wills,
The poets too.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What Man has made of Man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure,—
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man?

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

IN EARLY SPRING

O SPRING, I know thee! Seek for sweet surprise
In the young children's eyes.
But I have learnt the years, and know the yet
Leaf-folded violet.
Mine ear, awake to silence, can foretell
The cuckoo's fitful bell.
I wander in a gray time that encloses
June and the wild hedge-roses.
A year's procession of the flowers doth pass
My feet, along the grass.
And all you sweet birds silent yet, I know
The notes that stir you so,

Your songs yet half devised in the dim dear
Beginnings of the year.
In these young days you meditate your part;
I have it all by heart.
I know the secrets of the seeds of flowers
Hidden and warm with showers,
And how, in kindling Spring, the cuckoo shall
Alter his interval.
But not a flower or song I ponder is
My own, but memory's.
I shall be silent in those days desired
Before a world inspired.
O dear brown birds, compose your old song-phrases,
Earth, thy familiar daisies.

The poet mused upon the dusky height,
Between two stars towards night,
His purpose in his heart. I watched, a space,
The meaning of his face:
There was the secret, fled from earth and skies,
Hid in his gray young eyes.
My heart and all the Summer wait his choice,
And wonder for his voice.
Who shall foretell his songs, and who aspire
But to divine his lyre?
Sweet earth, we know thy dimmest mysteries,
But he is lord of his.

Alice Meynell [1853–

SPRING

From "Summer's Last Will and Testament"

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-too!
Spring, the sweet Spring!

Thomas Nashe [1567–1601]

A STARLING'S SPRING RONDEL

I CLINK my castanet
And beat my little drum;
For spring at last has come,
And on my parapet
Of chestnut, gummy-wet,
Where bees begin to hum,
I clink my castanet,
And beat my little drum.

"Spring goes," you say, "suns set."
So be it! Why be glum?
Enough, the spring has come;
And without fear or fret
I clink my castanet,
And beat my little drum.

James Cousins [1873–

"WHEN DAFFODILS BEGIN TO PEER"

From "The Winter's Tale"

WHEN daffodils begin to peer,
With heigh! the doxy, over the dale,
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

The white sheet bleaching on the hedge,
With heigh! the sweet birds, O, how they sing!
Doth set my pugging tooth on edge;
For a quart of ale is a dish for a king.

The lark, that tirra-lirra chants,
With heigh! with heigh! the thrush and the jay,
Are summer songs for me and my aunts,
While we lie tumbling in the hay.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

SPRING

From "In Memoriam"

LXXXIII

Dip down upon the northern shore,
O sweet new-year, delaying long;
Thou doest expectant Nature wrong,
Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,
Thy sweetness from its proper place?
Can trouble live with April days,
Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the fox-glove spire,
The little speedwell's darling blue,
Deep tulips dashed with fiery dew,
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
That longs to burst a frozen bud,
And flood a fresher throat with song.

CXV

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
Now burgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and thick
By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drowned in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milkier every milky sail,
On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
In yonder greening gleam, and fly
The happy birds, that change their sky
To build and brood, that live their lives

From land to land; and in my breast
Spring wakens too: and my regret
Become an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

"THE SPRING RETURNS"

The Spring returns! What matters then that War
On the horizon like a beacon burns,
That Death ascends, man's most desirèd star,
That Darkness is his hope? The Spring returns!
Triumphant through the wider-archèd cope
She comes, she comes, unto her tyranny,
And at her coronation are set ope
The prisons of the mind, and man is free!
The beggar-garbed or over-bent with snows,
Each mortal, long defeated, disallowed,
Feeling her touch, grows stronger limbed, and knows
The purple on his shoulders and is proud.
The Spring returns! O madness beyond sense,
Breed in our bones thine own omnipotence!

Charles Leonard Moore [1854–

"WHEN THE HOUNDS OF SPRING"

Chorus from "Atalanta in Calydon"

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
The mother of months in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;

And the brown bright nightingale amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus,
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
With a clamor of waters, and with might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
  Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
  The Mænad and the Bassarid;
And soft as lips that laugh and hide
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
  The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
  Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
  Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
  The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

SONG

Again rejoicing Nature sees
  Her robe assume its vernal hues;
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
  All freshly steeped in morning dews.

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,
  In vain to me the violets spring;
In vain to me in glen or shaw,
  The mavis and the lintwhite sing.

The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
  Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks,
But life to me's a weary dream,
  A dream of ane that never wauks.

The wanton coot the water skims,
  Amang the reeds the ducklings cry,
The stately swan majestic swims,
  And everything is blest but I.

The shepherd steeks his faulding slap,
And owre the moorland whistles shrill;
Wi' wild, unequal, wand'ring step
I meet him on the dewy hill.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blithe waukens by the daisy's side,
And mounts and sings on flittering wings,
A woe-worn ghaist I hameward glide.

Come, Winter, with thine angry howl,
And raging bend the naked tree;
Thy gloom will soothe my cheerless soul,
When Nature all is sad like me!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

TO SPRING

O Thou with dewy locks, who lookest down
Through the clear windows of the morning, turn
Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,
Which in full choir hails thy approach, O Spring!

The hills tell one another, and the listening
Valleys hear; all our longing eyes are turned
Up to thy bright pavilions: issue forth
And let thy holy feet visit our clime!

Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds
Kiss thy perfumèd garments; let us taste
Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy pearls
Upon our lovesick land that mourns for thee.

O deck her forth with thy fair fingers; pour
Thy soft kisses on her bosom; and put
Thy golden crown upon her languished head,
Whose modest tresses are bound up for thee!

William Blake [1757–1827]

AN ODE ON THE SPRING

Lo! where the rosy-bosomed Hours,
  Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
  And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
  The untaught harmony of spring:
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool Zephyrs through the clear blue sky
  Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
  A broader browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
  O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
  (At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardor of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
  How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care:
  The panting herds repose:
Yet, hark, how through the peopled air
  The busy murmur glows!
The insect-youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring
  And float amid the liquid noon;
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
  Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
  Such is the race of Man:
And they that creep, and they that fly,
  Shall end where they began.

Alike the Busy and the Gay
But flutter through life's little day,
In Fortune's varying colors dressed:
Brushed by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chilled by Age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear, in accents low,
The sportive kind reply:
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display;
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic, while 'tis May.

Thomas Gray [1716–1771]

SPRING

Spring, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells with all things fair,
Spring, with her golden suns and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
Its fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

In the deep heart of every forest tree
The blood is all aglee,
And there's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of Winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn;

Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,
The brown of Autumn corn.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the gloom,
And soon will burst their tomb.

Already, here and there, on frailest stems
Appear some azure gems,
Small as might deck, upon a gala day,
The forehead of a fay.

In gardens you may note amid the dearth,
The crocus breaking earth;
And near the snowdrop's tender white and green,
The violet in its screen.

But many gleams and shadows needs must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by, before the enamored South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn;
One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await
Before a palace gate

Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would start,
If from a beech's heart
A blue-eyed Dryad, stepping forth, should say,
"Behold me! I am May!"

Henry Timrod [1829–1867]

THE MEADOWS IN SPRING

'Tis a dull sight
To see the year dying,
When winter winds
Set the yellow wood sighing:
Sighing, oh! sighing.

When such a time cometh,
I do retire
Into an old room
Beside a bright fire:
Oh, pile a bright fire!

And there I sit
Reading old things,
Of knights and lorn damsels,
While the wind sings—
Oh, drearily sings!

I never look out
Nor attend to the blast;
For all to be seen
Is the leaves falling fast:
Falling, falling!

But close at the hearth,
Like a cricket, sit I,
Reading of summer
And chivalry—
Gallant chivalry!

Then with an old friend
I talk of our youth!
How 'twas gladsome, but often
Foolish, forsooth:
But gladsome, gladsome!

Or to get merry
We sing some old rhyme,
That made the wood ring again
In summer time—
Sweet summer time!

Then go we to smoking,
  Silent and snug:
Naught passes between us,
  Save a brown jug—
    Sometimes!

And sometimes a tear
  Will rise in each eye,
Seeing the two old friends
  So merrily—
    So merrily!

And ere to bed
  Go we, go we,
Down on the ashes
  We kneel on the knee,
    Praying together!

Thus, then, live I,
  Till, 'mid all the gloom,
By heaven! the bold sun
  Is with me in the room
    Shining, shining!

Then the clouds part,
  Swallows soaring between;
The spring is alive,
  And the meadows are green!

I jump up, like mad,
  Break the old pipe in twain,
And away to the meadows,
  The meadows again!

Edward Fitzgerald [1809–1883]

THE SPRING

When wintry weather's all a-done,
An' brooks do sparkle in the zun,
An' nâisy-builden rooks do vlee
Wi' sticks toward their elem tree;
When birds do zing, an' we can zee

Upon the boughs the buds o' spring,—
Then I'm as happy as a king,
A-vield wi' health an' zunsheen.

Vor then the cowslip's hangèn flower
A-wetted in the zunny shower,
Do grow wi' vi'lets, sweet o' smell,
Bezide the wood-screened graegle's bell;
Where drushes' aggs, wi' sky-blue shell,
Do lie in mossy nest among
The thorns, while they do zing their zong
At evenèn in the zunsheen.

An' God do meäke his win' to blow
An' raïn to vall vor high an' low,
An' bid his mornèn zun to rise
Vor all alike, an' groun' an' skies
Ha' colors vor the poor man's eyes:
An' in our trials He is near,
To hear our mwoan an' zee our tear,
An' turn our clouds to zunsheen.

An' many times when I do vind
Things all goo wrong, an' v'ok unkind,
To zee the happy veedèn herds,
An' hear the zingèn o' the birds,
Do soothe my sorrow mwore than words;
Vor I do zee that 'tis our sin
Do meäke woone's soul so dark 'ithin,
When God would gi'e woone zunsheen.

William Barnes [1801–1886]

"WHEN SPRING COMES BACK TO ENGLAND"

When Spring comes back to England
And crowns her brows with May,
Round the merry moonlit world
She goes the greenwood way:
She throws a rose to Italy,
A fleur-de-lys to France;
But round her regal morris-ring
The seas of England dance.

When Spring comes back to England
And dons her robe of green,
There's many a nation garlanded
But England is the Queen;
She's Queen, she's Queen of all the world
Beneath the laughing sky,
For the nations go a-Maying
When they hear the New Year cry—

"Come over the water to England,
My old love, my new love,
Come over the water to England,
In showers of flowery rain;
Come over the water to England,
April, my true love;
And tell the heart of England
The Spring is here again!"

Alfred Noyes [1880–

NEW LIFE

Spring comes laughing down the valley
All in white, from the snow
Where the winter's armies rally
Loth to go.
Beauty white her garments shower
On the world where they pass,—
Hawthorn hedges, trees in flower,
Daisies in the grass.
Tremulous with longings dim,
Thickets by the river's rim
Have begun to dream of green.
Every tree is loud with birds.
Bourgeon, heart,—do thy part!
Raise a slender stalk of words
From a root unseen.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878–

"OVER THE WINTRY THRESHOLD"

Over the wintry threshold
Who comes with joy today,
So frail, yet so enduring,
To triumph o'er dismay?

Ah, quick her tears are springing,
And quickly they are dried,
For sorrow walks before her,
But gladness walks beside.

She comes with gusts of laughter,—
The music as of rills;
With tenderness and sweetness,
The wisdom of the hills.

Her hands are strong to comfort,
Her heart is quick to heed;
She knows the signs of sadness,
She knows the voice of need;

There is no living creature,
However poor or small,
But she will know its trouble,
And hearken to its call.

Oh, well they fare forever,
By mighty dreams possessed,
Whose hearts have lain a moment
On that eternal breast.

Bliss Carman [1861–

MARCH

Slayer of winter, art thou here again?
O welcome, thou that bring'st the summer nigh!
The bitter wind makes not thy victory vain,
Nor will we mock thee for thy faint blue sky.
Welcome, O March! whose kindly days and dry
Make April ready for the throstle's song,
Thou first redresser of the winter's wrong!

Yea, welcome, March! and though I die ere June,
Yet for the hope of life I give thee praise,
Striving to swell the burden of the tune
That even now I hear thy brown birds raise,
Unmindful of the past or coming days;
Who sing, "O joy! a new year is begun!
What happiness to look upon the sun!"

O, what begetteth all this storm of bliss,
But Death himself, who, crying solemnly,
Even from the heart of sweet Forgetfulness,
Bids us, "Rejoice! lest pleasureless ye die.
Within a little time must ye go by.
Stretch forth your open hands, and, while ye live,
Take all the gifts that Death and Life may give."

William Morris [1834–1896]

SONG IN MARCH

Now are the winds about us in their glee,
Tossing the slender tree;
Whirling the sands about his furious car,
March cometh from afar;
Breaks the sealed magic of old Winter's dreams,
And rends his glassy streams;
Chafing with potent airs, he fiercely takes
Their fetters from the lakes,
And, with a power by queenly Spring supplied,
Wakens the slumbering tide.

With a wild love he seeks young Summer's charms
And clasps her to his arms;
Lifting his shield between, he drives away
Old Winter from his prey;—
The ancient tyrant whom he boldly braves,
Goes howling to his caves;
And, to his northern realm compelled to fly,
Yields up the victory;
Melted are all his bands, o'erthrown his towers,
And March comes bringing flowers.

William Gilmore Simms [1806–1870]

MARCH

Blossom on the plum,
  Wild wind and merry;
  Leaves upon the cherry,
And one swallow come.

Red windy dawn,
Swift rain and sunny;
Wild bees seeking honey,
Crocus on the lawn;
Blossom on the plum.

Grass begins to grow,
Dandelions come;
Snowdrops haste to go
After last month's snow;
Rough winds beat and blow,
Blossom on the plum.

Nora Hopper [1871–

WRITTEN IN MARCH

The Cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing;
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter;
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE PASSING OF MARCH

The braggart March stood in the season's door
With his broad shoulders blocking up the way,
Shaking the snow-flakes from the cloak he wore,
And from the fringes of his kirtle gray.
Near by him April stood with tearful face,
With violets in her hands, and in her hair
Pale, wild anemones; the fragrant lace
Half-parted from her breast, which seemed like fair,
Dawn-tinted mountain snow, smooth-drifted there.

She on the blusterer's arm laid one white hand,
But he would none of her soft blandishment,
Yet did she plead with tears none might withstand,
For even the fiercest hearts at last relent.
And he, at last, in ruffian tenderness,
With one swift, crushing kiss her lips did greet.
Ah, poor starved heart!—for that one rude caress,
She cast her violets underneath his feet.

Robert Burns Wilson [1850–

HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows
And the white-throat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush: he sings each song twice over,

Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

SONG

April, April,
Laugh thy girlish laughter;
Then, the moment after,
Weep thy girlish tears!
April, that mine ears
Like a lover greetest,
If I tell thee, sweetest,
All my hopes and fears,
April, April,
Laugh thy golden laughter,
But, the moment after,
Weep thy golden tears!

William Watson [1858–

AN APRIL ADORATION

Sang the sunrise on an amber morn—
"Earth, be glad! An April day is born.

"Winter's done, and April's in the skies,
Earth, look up with laughter in your eyes!"

Putting off her dumb dismay of snow,
Earth bade all her unseen children grow.

Then the sound of growing in the air
Rose to God a liturgy of prayer;

And the thronged succession of the days
Uttered up to God a psalm of praise.

Laughed the running sap in every vein,
Laughed the running flurries of warm rain,

Laughed the life in every wandering root,
Laughed the tingling cells of bud and shoot.

God in all the concord of their mirth
Heard the adoration-song of Earth.

Charles G. D. Roberts [1860–

SWEET WILD APRIL

O SWEET wild April
  Came over the hills,
He skipped with the winds
  And he tripped with the rills;
His raiment was all
  Of the daffodils.
    Sing hi,
    Sing hey,
    Sing ho!

O sweet wild April
  Came down the lea,
Dancing along
  With his sisters three:
Carnation, and Rose,
  And tall Lily.
    Sing hi,
    Sing hey,
    Sing ho!

O sweet wild April,
  On pastoral quill
Came piping in moonlight
  By hollow and hill,
In starlight at midnight,
  By dingle and rill.
    Sing hi,
    Sing hey,
    Sing ho!

Where sweet wild April
His melody played,
Trooped cowslip, and primrose,
And iris, the maid,
And silver narcissus,
A star in the shade.
Sing hi,
Sing hey,
Sing ho!

When sweet wild April
Dipped down the dale,
Pale cuckoopint brightened,
And windflower frail,
And white-thorn, the wood-bride,
In virginal veil.
Sing hi,
Sing hey,
Sing ho!

When sweet wild April
Through deep woods pressed,
Sang cuckoo above him,
And lark on his crest,
And Philomel fluttered
Close under his breast.
Sing hi,
Sing hey,
Sing ho!

O sweet wild April,
Wherever you went
The bondage of winter
Was broken and rent,
Sank elfin ice-city
And frost-goblin's tent.
Sing hi,
Sing hey,
Sing ho!

Yet sweet wild April,
The blithe, the brave,
Fell asleep in the fields
By a windless wave
And Jack-in-the-Pulpit
Preached over his grave.
Sing hi,
Sing hey,
Sing ho!

O sweet wild April,
Farewell to thee!
And a deep sweet sleep
To thy sisters three,—
Carnation, and Rose,
And tall Lily.
Sing hi,
Sing hey,
Sing ho!

William Force Stead [18 –

SPINNING IN APRIL

Moon in heaven's garden, among the clouds that wander,
Crescent moon so young to see, above the April ways,
Whiten, bloom not yet, not yet, within the twilight yonder;
All my spinning is not done, for all the loitering days.

Oh, my heart has two wild wings that ever would be flying!
Oh, my heart's a meadow-lark that ever would be free!
Well it is that I must spin until the light be dying;
Well it is the little wheel must turn all day for me!

All the hill-tops beckon, and beyond the western meadows
Something calls me ever, calls me ever, low and clear:
A little tree as young as I, the coming summer shadows,—
The voice of running waters that I ever thirst to hear.

Oftentime the plea of it has set my wings a-beating;
Oftentime it coaxes, as I sit weary-wise,

Till the wild life hastens out to wild things all entreating,
And leaves me at the spinning-wheel, with dark, unseeing eyes.

Josephine Preston Peabody [1874–

SONG: ON MAY MORNING

Now the bright morning-star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
Mirth and youth and warm desire!
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

John Milton [1608–1674]

A MAY BURDEN

Through meadow-ways as I did tread,
The corn grew in great lustihead,
And hey! the beeches burgeonèd.
By Goddès fay, by Goddès fay!
It is the month, the jolly month,
It is the jolly month of May.

God ripe the wines and corn, I say,
And wenches for the marriage-day,
And boys to teach love's comely play.
By Goddès fay, by Goddès fay!
It is the month, the jolly month,
It is the jolly month of May.

As I went down by lane and lea,
The daisies reddened so, pardie!
"Blushets!" I said, "I well do see,
By Goddès fay, by Goddès fay!
The thing ye think of in this month,
Heigho! this jolly month of May."

As down I went by rye and oats,
The blossoms smelt of kisses; throats
Of birds turned kisses into notes;
By Goddès fay, by Goddès fay!
The kiss it is a growing flower,
I trow, this jolly month of May.

God send a mouth to every kiss,
Seeing the blossom of this bliss
By gathering doth grow, certes!
By Goddès fay, by Goddès fay!
Thy brow-garland pushed all aslant
Tells—but I tell not, wanton May!

Francis Thompson [1859?–1907]

CORINNA'S GOING A-MAYING

Get up, get up for shame, the blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.
See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colors through the air:
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree.
Each flower has wept, and bowed toward the east,
Above an hour since: yet you not dressed;
Nay! not so much as out of bed;
When all the birds have matins said
And sung their thankful hymns: 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation, to keep in,
Whereas a thousand virgins on this day
Spring, sooner than the lark, to fetch in May.

Rise and put on your foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the spring-time, fresh and green,
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For jewels for your gown or hair:
Fear not; the leaves will strew
Gems in abundance upon you:
Besides, the childhood of the day has kept,
Against you come, some orient pearls unwept;

Come, and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night,
And Titan on the eastern hill
Retires himself, or else stands still
Till you come forth. Wash, dress, be brief in praying:
Few beads are best, when once we go a-Maying.

Come, my Corinna, come; and, coming, mark
How each field turns a street, each street a park
Made green and trimmed with trees; see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch: each porch, each door, ere this,
An ark, a tabernacle is,
Made up of white-thorn, neatly interwove;
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
Can such delights be in the street
And open fields, and we not see't?
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The proclamation made for May:
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

There's not a budding boy or girl, this day,
But is got up, and gone to bring in May.
A deal of youth, ere this, is come
Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
Some have despatched their cakes and cream
Before that we have left to dream:
And some have wept, and wooed and plighted troth,
And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth:
Many a green gown has been given;
Many a kiss, both odd and even:
Many a glance, too, has been sent
From out the eye, love's firmament;
Many a jest told of the keys betraying
This night, and locks picked, yet we're not a-Maying.

Come, let us go, while we are in our prime,
And take the harmless folly of the time.
We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.

Our life is short, and our days run
As fast away as does the sun;
And, as a vapor or a drop of rain,
Once lost, can ne'er be found again:
So when or you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade,
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drowned with us in endless night.
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

"SISTER, AWAKE!"

Sister, awake! close not your eyes!
The day her light discloses,
And the bright morning doth arise
Out of her bed of roses.

See the clear sun, the world's bright eye,
In at our window peeping:
Lo, how he blusheth to espy
Us idle wenches sleeping!

Therefore awake! make haste, I say,
And let us, without staying,
All in our gowns of green so gay
Into the Park a-maying!

Unknown

MAY

May! queen of blossoms,
And fulfilling flowers,
With what pretty music
Shall we charm the hours?
Wilt thou have pipe and reed,
Blown in the open mead?
Or to the lute give heed
In the green bowers?

Thou hast no need of us,
  Or pipe or wire;
Thou hast the golden bee
  Ripened with fire;
And many thousand more
Songsters, that thee adore,
Filling earth's grassy floor
  With new desire.

Thou hast thy mighty herds,
  Tame and free-livers;
Doubt not, thy music too
  In the deep rivers;
And the whole plumy flight
Warbling the day and night—
Up at the gates of light,
  See, the lark quivers!

Edward Hovell-Thurlow [1781–1829]

MAY

Come walk with me along this willowed lane,
  Where, like lost coinage from some miser's store,
  The golden dandelions more and more
Glow, as the warm sun kisses them again!
For this is May! who with a daisy chain
  Leads on the laughing Hours; for now is o'er
  Long winter's trance. No longer rise and roar
His forest-wrenching blasts. The hopeful swain,
Along the furrow, sings behind his team;
  Loud pipes the redbreast—troubadour of spring,
  And vocal all the morning copses ring;
More blue the skies in lucent lakelets gleam;
  And the glad earth, caressed by murmuring showers,
  Wakes like a bride, to deck herself with flowers!

Henry Sylvester Cornwell [1831–1886]

A SPRING LILT

Through the silver mist
Of the blossom-spray
Trill the orioles: list
To their joyous lay!
"What in all the world, in all the world," they say,
"Is half so sweet, so sweet, is half so sweet as May?"

"June! June! June!"
Low croon
The brown bees in the clover.
"Sweet! sweet! sweet!"
Repeat
The robins, nested over.

Unknown

SUMMER LONGINGS

Ah! my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the May,—
Waiting for the pleasant rambles
Where the fragrant hawthorn-brambles,
With the woodbine alternating,
Scent the dewy way.
Ah! my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the May.

Ah! my heart is sick with longing,
Longing for the May,—
Longing to escape from study
To the young face fair and ruddy,
And the thousand charms belonging
To the summer's day.
Ah! my heart is sick with longing,
Longing for the May.

Ah! my heart is sore with sighing,
Sighing for the May,—
Sighing for their sure returning,
When the summer beams are burning,

Hopes and flowers that, dead or dying,
All the winter lay.
Ah! my heart is sore with sighing,
Sighing for the May.

Ah! my heart is pained with throbbing,
Throbbing for the May,—
Throbbing for the seaside billows,
Or the water-wooing willows;
Where, in laughing and in sobbing,
Glide the streams away.
Ah! my heart, my heart is throbbing,
Throbbing for the May.

Waiting sad, dejected, weary,
Waiting for the May:
Spring goes by with wasted warnings,—
Moonlit evenings, sunbright mornings,—
Summer comes, yet dark and dreary
Life still ebbs away;
Man is ever weary, weary,
Waiting for the May!

Denis Florence MacCarthy [1817–1882]

MIDSUMMER

Around this lovely valley rise
The purple hills of Paradise.

O, softly on yon banks of haze,
Her rosy face the Summer lays!

Becalmed along the azure sky,
The argosies of cloudland lie,
Whose shores, with many a shining rift,
Far off their pearl-white peaks uplift.

Through all the long midsummer-day
The meadow-sides are sweet with hay.
I seek the coolest sheltered seat,
Just where the field and forest meet,—

Where grow the pine-trees tall and bland,
The ancient oaks austere and grand,
And fringy roots and pebbles fret
The ripples of the rivulet.

I watch the mowers, as they go
Through the tall grass, a white-sleeved row.
With even stroke their scythes they swing,
In tune their merry whetstones ring.
Behind the nimble youngsters run,
And toss the thick swaths in the sun.
The cattle graze, while, warm and still,
Slopes the broad pasture, basks the hill,
And bright, where summer breezes break,
The green wheat crinkles like a lake.

The butterfly and humblebee
Come to the pleasant woods with me;
Quickly before me runs the quail,
Her chickens skulk behind the rail;
High up the lone wood-pigeon sits,
And the woodpecker pecks and flits.
Sweet woodland music sinks and swells,
The brooklet rings its tinkling bells,
The swarming insects drone and hum,
The partridge beats its throbbing drum.
The squirrel leaps among the boughs,
And chatters in his leafy house.
The oriole flashes by; and, look!
Into the mirror of the brook,
Where the vain bluebird trims his coat,
Two tiny feathers fall and float.

As silently, as tenderly,
The down of peace descends on me.
O, this is peace! I have nc need
Of friend to talk, of book to read:
A dear Companion here abides;
Close to my thrilling heart He hides;

The holy silence is His Voice:
I lie and listen, and rejoice.

John Townsend Trowbridge [1827–1916]

A MIDSUMMER SONG

O, FATHER'S gone to market-town, he was up before the day,
And Jamie's after robins, and the man is making hay,
And whistling down the hollow goes the boy that minds the mill,
While mother from the kitchen-door is calling with a will:
"Polly!—Polly!—The cows are in the corn!
O, where's Polly?"

From all the misty morning air there comes a summer sound—
A murmur as of waters from skies and trees and ground.
The birds they sing upon the wing, the pigeons bill and coo,
And over hill and hollow rings again the loud halloo:
"Polly!—Polly!—The cows are in the corn!
O, where's Polly?"

Above the trees the honey-bees swarm by with buzz and boom,
And in the field and garden a thousand blossoms bloom.
Within the farmer's meadow a brown-eyed daisy blows,
And down at the edge of the hollow a red and thorny rose.
But Polly!—Polly!—The cows are in the corn!
O, where's Polly?

How strange at such a time of day the mill should stop its clatter!
The farmer's wife is listening now and wonders what's the matter.
O, wild the birds are singing in the wood and on the hill,
While whistling up the hollow goes the boy that minds the mill.
But Polly!—Polly!—The cows are in the corn!
O, where's Polly?

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

JUNE

From the Prelude to "The Vision of Sir Launfal"

Over his keys the musing organist,
  Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
  And builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay:
Then, as the touch of his loved instrument
  Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws his theme,
First guessed by faint auroral flushes sent
  Along the wavering vista of his dream.

  Not only around our infancy
  Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;
  Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
  We Sinais climb and know it not.

Over our manhood bend the skies;
  Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies;
  With our faint hearts the mountain strives;
Its arms outstretched, the druid wood
  Waits with its benedicite;
And to our age's drowsy blood
  Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
  The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
  We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
  For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:
  'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking;
No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays;
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;
He sings to the wide world and she to her nest,—
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green;
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
That dandelions are blossoming near,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,

That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;
We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

JUNE

When the bubble moon is young,
Down the sources of the breeze,
Like a yellow lantern hung
In the tops of blackened trees,
There is promise she will grow
Into beauty unforetold,
Into all unthought-of gold.
Heigh ho!

When the Spring has dipped her foot,
Like a bather, in the air,
And the ripples warm the root
Till the little flowers dare,
There is promise she will grow
Sweeter than the Springs of old,
Fairer than was ever told.
Heigh ho!

But the moon of middle night,
Risen, is the rounded moon;
And the Spring of budding light
Eddies into just a June.
Ah, the promise—was it so?
Nay, the gift was fairy gold;
All the new is over-old.
Heigh ho!

Harrison Smith Morris [1856–

HARVEST

Sweet, sweet, sweet,
Is the wind's song,
Astir in the rippled wheat
All day long,
It hath the brook's wild gayety,
The sorrowful cry of the sea.
Oh, hush and hear!
Sweet, sweet and clear,
Above the locust's whirr
And hum of bee
Rises that soft, pathetic harmony.

In the meadow-grass
The innocent white daisies blow,
The dandelion plume doth pass
Vaguely to and fro,—
The unquiet spirit of a flower
That hath too brief an hour.

Now doth a little cloud all white,
Or golden bright,
Drift down the warm, blue sky;
And now on the horizon line,
Where dusky woodlands lie,
A sunny mist doth shine,
Like to a veil before a holy shrine,
Concealing, half-revealing, things divine.

Sweet, sweet, sweet,
Is the wind's song,
Astir in the rippled wheat
All day long.
That exquisite music calls
The reaper everywhere,—
Life and death must share.
The golden harvest falls.

So doth all end,—
Honored Philosophy,
Science and Art,
The bloom of the heart;—
Master, Consoler, Friend,
Make Thou the harvest of our days
To fall within Thy ways.

Ellen Mackay Hutchinson Cortissoz [18 –

SCYTHE SONG

Mowers, weary and brown, and blithe,
What is the word methinks ye know,
Endless over-word that the Scythe
Sings to the blades of the grass below?
Scythes that swing in the grass and clover,
Something, still, they say as they pass;
What is the word that, over and over,
Sings the Scythe to the flowers and grass?

Hush, ah hush, the Scythes are saying,
Hush, and heed not, and fall asleep;
Hush, they say to the grasses swaying,
Hush, they sing to the clover deep!
Hush—'tis the lullaby Time is singing—
Hush, and heed not, for all things pass,
Hush, ah hush! and the Scythes are swinging
Over the clover, over the grass!

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

SEPTEMBER

Sweet is the voice that calls
From babbling waterfalls
In meadows where the downy seeds are flying;
And soft the breezes blow,
And eddying come and go,
In faded gardens where the rose is dying.

Among the stubbled corn
The blithe quail pipes at morn,
The merry partridge drums in hidden places,
And glittering insects gleam
Above the reedy stream,
Where busy spiders spin their filmy laces.

At eve, cool shadows fall
Across the garden wall,
And on the clustered grapes to purple turning;
And pearly vapors lie
Along the eastern sky,
Where the broad harvest-moon is redly burning.

Ah, soon on field and hill
The winds shall whistle chill,
And patriarch swallows call their flocks together
To fly from frost and snow,
And seek for lands where blow
The fairer blossoms of a balmier weather.

The pollen-dusted bees
Search for the honey-lees
That linger in the last flowers of September,
While plaintive mourning doves
Coo sadly to their loves
Of the dead summer they so well remember.

The cricket chirps all day,
"O fairest summer, stay!"
The squirrel eyes askance the chestnuts browning;
The wild fowl fly afar
Above the foamy bar,
And hasten southward ere the skies are frowning.

Now comes a fragrant breeze
Through the dark cedar-trees,
And round about my temples fondly lingers,
In gentle playfulness,
Like to the soft caress
Bestowed in happier days by loving fingers.

Yet, though a sense of grief
Comes with the falling leaf,
And memory makes the summer doubly pleasant,
In all my autumn dreams
A future summer gleams,
Passing the fairest glories of the present!

George Arnold [1834–1865]

INDIAN SUMMER

These are the days when birds come back,
A very few, a bird or two,
To take a backward look.

These are the days when skies put on
The old, old sophistries of June,—
A blue and gold mistake.

Oh, fraud that cannot cheat the bee,
Almost thy plausibility
Induces my belief,

Till ranks of seeds their witness bear,
And softly through the altered air
Hurries a timid leaf!

Oh, sacrament of summer days,
Oh, last communion in the haze,
Permit a child to join,

Thy sacred emblems to partake,
Thy consecrated bread to break,
Taste thine immortal wine!

Emily Dickinson [1830–1886]

PREVISION

Oh, days of beauty standing veiled apart,
With dreamy skies and tender, tremulous air,
In this rich Indian summer of the heart
Well may the earth her jewelled halo wear.

The long brown fields—no longer drear and dull—
Burn with the glow of these deep-hearted hours.
Until the dry weeds seem more beautiful,
More spiritlike than even summer's flowers.

But yesterday the world was stricken bare,
Left old and dead in gray, enshrouding gloom;
To-day what vivid wonder of the air
Awakes the soul of vanished light and bloom?

Sharp with the clean, fine ecstasy of death,
A mightier wind shall strike the shrinking earth,
An exhalation of creative breath
Wake the white wonder of the winter's birth.

In her wide Pantheon—her temple place—
Wrapped in strange beauty and new comforting,
We shall not miss the Summer's full-blown grace,
Nor hunger for the swift, exquisite Spring.

Ada Foster Murray [18 –

A SONG OF EARLY AUTUMN

When late in summer the streams run yellow,
Burst the bridges and spread into bays;
When berries are black and peaches are mellow,
And hills are hidden by rainy haze;

When the goldenrod is golden still,
But the heart of the sunflower is darker and sadder;
When the corn is in stacks on the slope of the hill,
And slides o'er the path the striped adder;

When butterflies flutter from clover to thicket,
Or wave their wings on the drooping leaf;
When the breeze comes shrill with the call of the cricket,
Grasshopper's rasp, and rustle of sheaf;

When high in the field the fern-leaves wrinkle,
And brown is the grass where the mowers have mown;
When low in the meadow the cow-bells tinkle,
And small brooks crinkle o'er stock and stone;

When heavy and hollow the robin's whistle
And shadows are deep in the heat of noon;
When the air is white with the down o' the thistle,
And the sky is red with the harvest moon;

O, then be chary, young Robert and Mary,
No time let slip, not a moment wait!
If the fiddle would play it must stop its tuning;
And they who would wed must be done with their mooning;
So let the churn rattle, see well to the cattle,
And pile the wood by the barn-yard gate!

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

TO AUTUMN

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twinèd flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing, and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

John Keats [1795–1821]

ODE TO AUTUMN

I saw old Autumn in the misty morn
Stand shadowless like Silence, listening
To silence, for no lonely bird would sing
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn;—
Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright
With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

Where are the songs of Summer?—With the sun,
Oping the dusky eyelids of the South,
Till shade and silence waken up as one,
And Morning sings with a warm odorous mouth.
Where are the merry birds?—Away, away,
On panting wings through the inclement skies,
Lest owls should prey
Undazzled at noonday,
And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

Where are the blooms of Summer?—In the West,
Blushing their last to the last sunny hours,
When the mild Eve by sudden Night is pressed
Like tearful Prosperine, snatched from her flowers,
To a most gloomy breast.

Where is the pride of Summer,—the green prime,—
The many, many leaves all twinkling?—Three
On the mossed elm; three on the naked lime
Trembling,—and one upon the old oak-tree!
  Where is the Dryad's immortality?—
Gone into mournful cypress and dark yew,
Or wearing the long gloomy Winter through
  In the smooth holly's green eternity.

The squirrel gloats on his accomplished hoard,
The ants have brimmed their garners with ripe grain,
  And honey bees have stored
The sweets of Summer in their luscious cells;
The swallows all have winged across the main;
But here the Autumn melancholy dwells,
  And sighs her tearful spells
Amongst the sunless shadows of the plain.
    Alone, alone,
    Upon a mossy stone,
She sits and reckons up the dead and gone,
With the last leaves for a love-rosary,
Whilst all the withered world looks drearily,
Like a dim picture of the drownèd past
In the hushed mind's mysterious far away,
Doubtful what ghostly thing will steal the last
Into that distance, gray upon the gray.

O go and sit with her, and be o'ershaded
Under the languid downfall of her hair:
She wears a coronal of flowers faded
Upon her forehead, and a face of care;—
There is enough of withered everywhere
To make her bower,—and enough of gloom;
There is enough of sadness to invite,
If only for the rose that died, whose doom
Is Beauty's,—she that with the living bloom
Of conscious cheeks most beautifies the light:
There is enough of sorrowing, and quite
Enough of bitter fruits the earth doth bear,—
Enough of chilly droppings for her bowl;

Enough of fear and shadowy despair,
To frame her cloudy prison for the soul!

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill;

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, O hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning! there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: O hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystàlline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: O hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision—I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
O! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own?
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like withered leaves, to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

AUTUMN: A DIRGE

The warm sun is failing; the bleak wind is wailing;
The bare boughs are sighing; the pale flowers are dying;
And the Year
On the earth, her death-bed, in a shroud of leaves dead,
Is lying.
Come, months, come away,
From November to May;
In your saddest array
Follow the bier
Of the dead, cold Year,
And like dim shadows watch by her sepulchre.

The chill rain is falling; the nipped worm is crawling;
The rivers are swelling; the thunder is knelling
For the Year;
The blithe swallows are flown, and the lizards each gone
To his dwelling;
Come, months, come away;
Put on white, black, and gray;
Let your light sisters play—
Ye, follow the bier
Of the dead, cold Year,
And make her grave green with tear on tear.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

AUTUMN

The morns are meeker than they were,
The nuts are getting brown;
The berry's cheek is plumper,
The rose is out of town.
The maple wears a gayer scarf,
The field a scarlet gown.
Lest I should be old-fashioned,
I'll put a trinket on.

Emily Dickinson [1830–1886]

"WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN"

When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock,
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of the struttin' turkey-cock,
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the cluckin' of the hens,
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes on the fence;
O, it's then's the times a feller is a-feelin' at his best,
With the risin' sun to greet him from a night of peaceful rest,
As he leaves the house, bareheaded, and goes out to feed the stock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

They's something kindo' harty-like about the atmusfere
When the heat of summer's over and the coolin' fall is here—
Of course we miss the flowers, and the blossoms on the trees,
And the mumble of the hummin'-birds and buzzin' of the bees;
But the air's so appetizin'; and the landscape through the haze
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airly autumn days
Is a pictur' that no painter has the colorin' to mock—
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty russel of the tossels of the corn,
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as golden as the morn;
The stubble in the furries—kindo' lonesome-like, but still
A-preachin' sermuns to us of the barns they growed to fill;
The strawstack in the medder, and the reaper in the shed;
The hosses in theyr stalls below—the clover overhead!—
O, it sets my hart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

Then your apples all is getherd, and the ones a feller keeps
Is poured around the celler-floor in red and yeller heaps;
And your cider-makin's over, and your wimmern-folks is through
With their mince and apple-butter, and theyr souse and saussage, too! . . .
I don't know how to tell it—but ef sich a thing could be
As the Angels wantin' boardin', and they'd call around on *me*—
I'd want to 'commodate 'em—all the whole-indurin' flock—
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

James Whitcomb Riley [1852–1916]

KORE

Yea, she hath passed hereby, and blessed the sheaves,
And the great garths, and stacks, and quiet farms,
And all the tawny, and the crimson leaves.
Yea, she hath passed with poppies in her arms,

Under the star of dusk, through stealing mist,
And blessed the earth, and gone, while no man wist.

With slow, reluctant feet, and weary eyes,
And eye-lids heavy with the coming sleep,
With small breasts lifted up in stress of sighs,
She passed, as shadows pass, among the sheep;
While the earth dreamed, and only I was ware
Of that faint fragrance blown from her soft hair.

The land lay steeped in peace of silent dreams;
There was no sound amid the sacred boughs.
Nor any mournful music in her streams:
Only I saw the shadow on her brows,
Only I knew her for the yearly slain,
And wept, and weep until she come again.

Frederic Manning [18

OLD OCTOBER

Hail, old October, bright and chill,
First freedman from the summer sun!
Spice high the bowl, and drink your fill!
Thank heaven, at last the summer's done!

Come, friend, my fire is burning bright,
A fire's no longer out of place,
How clear it glows! (there's frost to-night,)
It looks white winter in the face.

You've been to "Richard." Ah! you've seen
A noble play: I'm glad you went;
But what on earth does Shakespeare mean
By "*winter* of our *discontent?*"

Be mine the tree that feeds the fire!
Be mine the sun knows when to set!
Be mine the months when friends desire
To turn in here from cold and wet!

The sentry sun, that glared so long
O'erhead, deserts his summer post;
Ay, you may brew it hot and strong:
"The joys of winter"—come, a toast!

Shine on the kangaroo, thou sun!
Make far New Zealand faint with fear!
Don't hurry back to spoil our fun,
Thank goodness, old October's here!

Thomas Constable [1812–1881]

NOVEMBER

When thistle-blows do lightly float
About the pasture-height,
And shrills the hawk a parting note,
And creeps the frost at night,
Then hilly ho! though singing so,
And whistle as I may,
There comes again the old heart pain
Through all the livelong day.

In high wind creaks the leafless tree
And nods the fading fern;
The knolls are dun as snow-clouds be,
And cold the sun does burn.
Then ho, hollo! though calling so,
I cannot keep it down;
The tears arise unto my eyes,
And thoughts are chill and brown.

Far in the cedars' dusky stoles,
Where the sere ground-vine weaves,
The partridge drums funereal rolls
Above the fallen leaves.
And hip, hip, ho! though cheering so,
It stills no whit the pain;
For drip, drip, drip, from bare-branch tip,
I hear the year's last rain.

So drive the cold cows from the hill,
And call the wet sheep in;
And let their stamping clatter fill
The barn with warming din.
And ho, folk, ho! though it be so
That we no more may roam,
We still will find a cheerful mind
Around the fire at home!

C. L. Cleaveland [18 – ?]

NOVEMBER

HARK you such sound as quivers? Kings will hear,
As kings have heard, and tremble on their thrones;
The old will feel the weight of mossy stones;
The young alone will laugh and scoff at fear.
It is the tread of armies marching near,
From scarlet lands to lands forever pale;
It is a bugle dying down the gale;
It is the sudden gushing of a tear.
And it is hands that grope at ghostly doors;
And romp of spirit-children on the pave;
It is the tender sighing of the brave
Who fell, ah! long ago, in futile wars;
It is such sound as death; and, after all,
'Tis but the forest letting dead leaves fall.

Mahlon Leonard Fisher [1874–

STORM FEAR

WHEN the wind works against us in the dark,
And pelts with snow
The lower chamber window on the east,
And whispers with a sort of stifled bark,
The beast,
"Come out! Come out!"—
It costs no inward struggle not to go,
Ah, no!
I count our strength,
Two and a child,
Those of us not asleep subdued to mark
How the cold creeps as the fire dies at length,—
How drifts are piled,
Dooryard and road ungraded,
Till even the comforting barn grows far away
And my heart owns a doubt
Whether 'tis in us to arise with day
And save ourselves unaided.

Robert Frost [1875–

WINTER: A DIRGE

THE wintry west extends his blast,
And hail and rain does blaw;
Or the stormy north sends driving forth
The blinding sleet and snaw:
While, tumbling brown, the burn comes down,
And roars frae bank to brae;
And bird and beast in covert rest,
And pass the heartless day.

"The sweeping blast, the sky o'ercast,"
The joyless winter day,
Let others fear,—to me more dear
Than all the pride of May;
The tempest's howl, it soothes my soul,
My griefs it seems to join;
The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine!

Thou Power Supreme, whose mighty scheme
These woes of mine fulfil,
Here, firm, I rest,—they must be best,
Because they are Thy will.
Then all I want (oh, do Thou grant
This one request of mine!)
Since to enjoy Thou dost deny,
Assist me to resign!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

OLD WINTER

OLD Winter sad, in snow yclad,
Is making a doleful din;
But let him howl till he crack his jowl,
We will not let him in.

Ay, let him lift from the billowy drift
His hoary, haggard form,
And scowling stand, with his wrinkled hand
Outstretching to the storm.

And let his weird and sleety beard
  Stream loose upon the blast,
And, rustling, chime to the tinkling rime
  From his bald head falling fast.

Let his baleful breath shed blight and death
  On herb and flower and tree;
And brooks and ponds in crystal bonds
  Bind fast, but what care we?

Let him push at the door,—in the chimney roar,
  And rattle the window-pane;
Let him in at us spy with his icicle eye,
  But he shall not entrance gain.

Let him gnaw, forsooth, with his freezing tooth,
  On our roof-tiles, till he tire;
But we care not a whit, as we jovial sit
  Before our blazing fire.

Come, lads, let's sing, till the rafters ring;
  Come, push the can about;—
From our snug fire-side this Christmas-tide
  We'll keep old Winter out.

Thomas Noel [1799–1861]

THE FROST

The Frost looked forth, one still, clear night,
And he said, "Now I shall be out of sight;
So through the valley and over the height
  In silence I'll take my way.
I will not go like that blustering train,
The wind and the snow, the hail and the rain,
Who make so much bustle and noise in vain,
  But I'll be as busy as they!"

Then he went to the mountain, and powdered its crest,
He climbed up the trees, and their boughs he dressed
With diamonds and pearls, and over the breast
  Of the quivering lake he spread

A coat of mail, that it need not fear
The downward point of many a spear
That he hung on its margin, far and near,
Where a rock could rear its head.

He went to the windows of those who slept,
And over each pane like a fairy crept;
Wherever he breathed, wherever he stepped,
By the light of the moon were seen
Most beautiful things. There were flowers and trees,
There were bevies of birds and swarms of bees,
There were cities, thrones, temples, and towers, and these
All pictured in silver sheen!

But he did one thing that was hardly fair,—
He peeped in the cupboard, and, finding there
That all had forgotten for him to prepare,—
"Now, just to set them a-thinking,
I'll bite this basket of fruit," said he;
"This costly pitcher I'll burst in three,
And the glass of water they've left for me
Shall *'tchick!'* to tell them I'm drinking."

Hannah Flagg Gould [1789–1865]

THE FROSTED PANE

One night came Winter noiselessly and leaned
Against my window-pane.
In the deep stillness of his heart convened
The ghosts of all his slain.

Leaves, and ephemera, and stars of earth,
And fugitives of grass,—
White spirits loosed from bonds of mortal birth,
He drew them on the glass.

Charles G. D. Roberts [1860–

THE FROST SPIRIT

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes! You may trace his footsteps now
On the naked woods and the blasted fields and the brown hill's withered brow.

He has smitten the leaves of the gray old trees where their
pleasant green came forth,
And the winds, which follow wherever he goes, have shaken
them down to earth.

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes! from the
frozen Labrador,
From the icy bridge of the Northern seas, which the white
bear wanders o'er,
Where the fisherman's sail is stiff with ice and the luckless
forms below
In the sunless cold of the lingering night into marble statues
grow!

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes! on the rush-
ing Northern blast,
And the dark Norwegian pines have bowed as his fearful
breath went past.
With an unscorched wing he has hurried on, where the fires of
Hecla glow
On the darkly beautiful sky above and the ancient ice below.

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes! and the
quiet lake shall feel
The torpid touch of his glazing breath, and ring to the
skater's heel;
And the streams which danced on the broken rocks, or sang
to the leaning grass,
Shall bow again to their winter chain, and in mournful silence
pass.

He comes,—he comes,—the Frost Spirit comes! Let us meet
him as we may,
And turn with the light of the parlor-fire his evil power
away;
And gather closer the circle round, when that firelight dances
high,
And laugh at the shriek of the baffled Fiend as his sounding
wing goes by!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

SNOW

Lo, what wonders the day hath brought,
  Born of the soft and slumbrous snow!
Gradual, silent, slowly wrought;
Even as an artist, thought by thought,
  Writes expression on lip and brow.

Hanging garlands the eaves o'erbrim,
  Deep drifts smother the paths below;
The elms are shrouded, trunk and limb,
And all the air is dizzy and dim
  With a whirl of dancing, dazzling snow.

Dimly out of the baffled sight
  Houses and church-spires stretch away;
The trees, all spectral and still and white,
Stand up like ghosts in the failing light,
  And fade and faint with the blinded day.

Down from the roofs in gusts are hurled
  The eddying drifts to the waste below;
And still is the banner of storm unfurled,
Till all the drowned and desolate world
  Lies dumb and white in a trance of snow.

Slowly the shadows gather and fall,
  Still the whispering snow-flakes beat;
Night and darkness are over all:
Rest, pale city, beneath their pall!
  Sleep, white world, in thy winding-sheet!

Clouds may thicken, and storm-winds breathe:
  On my wall is a glimpse of Rome,—
Land of my longing!—and underneath
Swings and trembles my olive-wreath;
  Peace and I are at home, at home!

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

TO A SNOW-FLAKE

What heart could have thought you?—
Past our devisal
(O filigree petal!)
Fashioned so purely,
Fragilely, surely,
From what Paradisal
Imagineless metal,
Too costly for cost?
Who hammered you, wrought you,
From argentine vapor?—
"God was my shaper.
Passing surmisal,
He hammered, He wrought me,
From curled silver vapor,
To lust of His mind:—
Thou couldst not have thought me!
So purely, so palely,
Tinily, surely,
Mightily, frailly,
Insculped and embossed,
With His hammer of wind,
And His graver of frost."

Francis Thompson [1859?–1907]

THE SNOW-SHOWER

Stand here by my side and turn, I pray,
On the lake below thy gentle eyes;
The clouds hang over it, heavy and gray,
And dark and silent the water lies;
And out of that frozen mist the snow
In wavering flakes begins to flow;
Flake after flake
They sink in the dark and silent lake.

See how in a living swarm they come
From the chambers beyond that misty veil;
Some hover in air awhile, and some
Rush prone from the sky like summer hail.

All, dropping swiftly, or settling slow,
Meet, and are still in the depths below;
Flake after flake
Dissolved in the dark and silent lake.

Here delicate snow-stars, out of the cloud,
Come floating downward in airy play,
Like spangles dropped from the glistening crowd
That whiten by night the Milky Way;
There broader and burlier masses fall;
The sullen water buries them all,—
Flake after flake,—
All drowned in the dark and silent lake.

And some, as on tender wings they glide
From their chilly birth-cloud, dim and gray,
Are joined in their fall, and, side by side,
Come clinging along their unsteady way;
As friend with friend, or husband with wife,
Makes hand in hand the passage of life;
Each mated flake
Soon sinks in the dark and silent lake.

Lo! while we are gazing, in swifter haste
Stream down the snows, till the air is white,
As, myriads by myriads madly chased,
They fling themselves from their shadowy height.
The fair, frail creatures of middle sky,
What speed they make, with their grave so nigh;
Flake after flake
To lie in the dark and silent lake.

I see in thy gentle eyes a tear;
They turn to me in sorrowful thought;
Thou thinkest of friends, the good and dear,
Who were for a time, and now are not;
Like these fair children of cloud and frost,
That glisten a moment and then are lost,—
Flake after flake,—
All lost in the dark and silent lake.

Yet look again, for the clouds divide;
A gleam of blue on the water lies;
And far away, on the mountain-side,
A sunbeam falls from the opening skies;
But the hurrying host that flew between
The cloud and the water no more is seen;
Flake after flake,
At rest in the dark and silent lake.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

MIDWINTER

The speckled sky is dim with snow,
The light flakes falter and fall slow;
Athwart the hill-top, rapt and pale,
Silently drops a silvery veil;
And all the valley is shut in
By flickering curtains gray and thin.

But cheerily the chickadee
Singeth to me on fence and tree;
The snow sails round him as he sings,
White as the down of angels' wings.

I watch the slow flakes as they fall
On bank and brier and broken wall;
Over the orchard, waste and brown,
All noiselessly they settle down,
Tipping the apple-boughs, and each
Light quivering twig of plum and peach.

On turf and curb and bower-roof
The snow-storm spreads its ivory woof;
It paves with pearl the garden-walk;
And lovingly round tattered stalk
And shivering stem its magic weaves
A mantle fair as lily-leaves.

The hooded beehive, small and low,
Stands like a maiden in the snow;
And the old door-slab is half hid
Under an alabaster lid.

All day it snows: the sheeted post
Gleams in the dimness like a ghost;
All day the blasted oak has stood
A muffled wizard of the wood;
Garland and airy cap adorn
The sumach and the wayside thorn,
And clustering spangles lodge and shine
In the dark tresses of the pine.

The ragged bramble, dwarfed and old,
Shrinks like a beggar in the cold;
In surplice white the cedar stands,
And blesses him with priestly hands.

Still cheerily the chickadee
Singeth to me on fence and tree:
But in my inmost ear is heard
The music of a holier bird;
And heavenly thoughts, as soft and white
As snow-flakes, on my soul alight,
Clothing with love my lonely heart,
Healing with peace each bruisèd part,
Till all my being seems to be
Transfigured by their purity.

John Townsend Trowbridge [1827–1916]

A GLEE FOR WINTER

Hence, rude Winter! crabbed old fellow,
Never merry, never mellow!
Well-a-day! in rain and snow
What will keep one's heart aglow?
Groups of kinsmen, old and young,
Oldest they old friends among;
Groups of friends, so old and true
That they seem our kinsmen too;
These all merry all together
Charm away chill Winter weather.

What will kill this dull old fellow?
Ale that's bright, and wine that's mellow!

Dear old songs for ever new;
Some true love, and laughter too;
Pleasant wit, and harmless fun,
And a dance when day is done.
Music, friends so true and tried,
Whispered love by warm fireside,
Mirth at all times all together,
Make sweet May of Winter weather.

Alfred Domett [1811–1887]

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR

Full knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sighing:
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.
Old year, you must not die;
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still, he doth not move;
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above,
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,
And the New-year will take 'em away.
Old year, you must not go;
So long as you have been with us,
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.

He frothed his bumpers to the brim;
A jollier year we shall not see.
But though his eyes are waxing dim,
And though his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.
Old year, you shall not die;
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die, across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
But he'll be dead before.
Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my friend,
And the New-year, blithe and bold, my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro:
The cricket chirps; the light burns low;
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.
Shake hands before you die.
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you.
What is it we can do for you?
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.
Alack! our friend is gone.
Close up his eyes; tie up his chin;
Step from the corpse, and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my friend,
And a new face at the door, my friend,
A new face at the door.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

DIRGE FOR THE YEAR

Orphan hours, the year is dead,
Come and sigh, come and weep!
Merry hours, smile instead,
For the year is but asleep.
See, it smiles as it is sleeping,
Mocking your untimely weeping.

As an earthquake rocks a corse
  In its coffin in the clay,
So white Winter, that rough nurse,
  Rocks the dead-cold year to-day;
Solemn hours! wail aloud
For your mother in her shroud.

As the wild air stirs and sways
  The tree-swung cradle of a child,
So the breath of these rude days
  Rocks the year:—be calm and mild,
Trembling hours; she will arise
With new love within her eyes.

January gray is here,
  Like a sexton by her grave;
February bears the bier;
  March with grief doth howl and rave,
And April weeps—but, O, ye hours,
Follow with May's fairest flowers.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

WOOD AND FIELD AND RUNNING BROOK

WALDEINSAMKEIT

I DO not count the hours I spend
In wandering by the sea;
The forest is my loyal friend,
Like God it useth me.

In plains that room for shadows make
Of skirting hills to lie,
Bound in by streams which give and take
Their colors from the sky;

Or on the mountain-crest sublime,
Or down the oaken glade,
O what have I to do with time?
For this the day was made.

Cities of mortals woe-begone
Fantastic care derides,
But in the serious landscape lone
Stern benefit abides.

Sheen will tarnish, honey cloy,
And merry is only a mask of sad,
But, sober on a fund of joy,
The woods at heart are glad.

There the great Planter plants
Of fruitful worlds the grain,
And with a million spells enchants
The souls that walk in pain.

Still on the seeds of all he made
The rose of beauty burns;
Through times that wear and forms that fade,
Immortal youth returns.

The black ducks mounting from the lake,
The pigeon in the pines,
The bittern's boom, a desert make
Which no false art refines.

Down in yon watery nook,
Where bearded mists divide,
The gray old gods whom Chaos knew,
The sires of Nature, hide.

Aloft, in secret veins of air,
Blows the sweet breath of song,
O, few to scale those uplands dare,
Though they to all belong!

See thou bring not to field or stone
The fancies found in books;
Leave authors' eyes, and fetch your own,
To brave the landscape's looks.

Oblivion here thy wisdom is,
Thy thrift, the sleep of cares;
For a proud idleness like this
Crowns all thy mean affairs.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

"WHEN IN THE WOODS I WANDER ALL ALONE"

When in the woods I wander all alone,
The woods that are my solace and delight,
Which I more covet than a prince's throne,
My toil by day and canopy by night;
(Light heart, light foot, light food, and slumber light,
These lights shall light us to old age's gate,
While monarchs, whom rebellious dreams affright,
Heavy with fear, death's fearful summons wait;)

Whilst here I wander, pleased to be alone,
Weighing in thought the world's no-happiness,
I cannot choose but wonder at its moan,
Since so plain joys the woody life can bless:
Then live who may where honied words prevail,
I with the deer, and with the nightingale!

Edward Hovell-Thurlow [1781–1829]

ASPECTS OF THE PINES

Tall, somber, grim, against the morning sky
They rise, scarce touched by melancholy airs,
Which stir the fadeless foliage dreamfully,
As if from realms of mystical despairs.

Tall, somber, grim, they stand with dusky gleams
Brightening to gold within the woodland's core,
Beneath the gracious noontide's tranquil beams,—
But the weird winds of morning sigh no more.

A stillness, strange, divine, ineffable,
Broods round and o'er them in the wind's surcease,
And on each tinted copse and shimmering dell
Rests the mute rapture of deep hearted peace.

Last, sunset comes—the solemn joy and might
Borne from the West when cloudless day declines—
Low, flute-like breezes sweep the waves of light,
And, lifting dark green tresses of the pines,

Till every lock is luminous, gently float,
Fraught with hale odors up the heavens afar,
To faint when twilight on her virginal throat
Wears for a gem the tremulous vesper star.

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830–1886]

"THE WOODS THAT BRING THE SUNSET NEAR."

The wind from out the west is blowing;
The homeward-wandering cows are lowing;
Dark grow the pine-woods, dark and drear,—
The woods that bring the sunset near.

When o'er wide seas the sun declines,
Far off its fading glory shines,—
Far off, sublime, and full of fear,—
The pine-woods bring the sunset near.

This house that looks to east, to west,
This, dear one, is our home, our rest;
Yonder the stormy sea, and here
The woods that bring the sunset near.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

UNDER THE LEAVES

Oft have I walked these woodland paths,
Without the blessed foreknowing
That underneath the withered leaves
The fairest buds were growing.

To-day the south-wind sweeps away
The types of autumn's splendor,
And shows the sweet arbutus flowers,—
Spring's children, pure and tender.

O prophet-flowers!—with lips of bloom,
Outvying in your beauty
The pearly tints of ocean shells,—
Ye teach me faith and duty!

Walk life's dark ways, ye seem to say,
With love's divine foreknowing
That where man sees but withered leaves,
God sees sweet flowers growing.

Albert Laighton [1829–1887]

"ON WENLOCK EDGE"

On Wenlock Edge the wood's in trouble;
His forest fleece the Wrekin heaves;
The gale, it plies the saplings double,
And thick on Severn snow the leaves.

'Twould blow like this through holt and hanger
When Uricon the city stood:
'Tis the old wind in the old anger,
But then it threshed another wood.

Then, 'twas before my time, the Roman
At yonder heaving hill would stare:
The blood that warms an English yeoman,
The thoughts that hurt him, they were there.

There, like the wind through woods in riot,
Through him the gale of life blew high;
The tree of man was never quiet:
Then 'twas the Roman, now 'tis I.

The gale, it plies the saplings double,
It blows so hard, 'twill soon be gone:
To-day the Roman and his trouble
Are ashes under Uricon.

Alfred Edward Housman [1859–

"WHAT DO WE PLANT?"

What do we plant when we plant the tree?
We plant the ship, which will cross the sea.
We plant the mast to carry the sails;
We plant the planks to withstand the gales—
The keel, the keelson, the beam, the knee;
We plant the ship when we plant the tree.

What do we plant when we plant the tree?
We plant the houses for you and me.
We plant the rafters, the shingles, the floors,
We plant the studding, the lath, the doors,
The beams and siding, all parts that be;
We plant the house when we plant the tree.

What do we plant when we plant the tree?
A thousand things that we daily see;

We plant the spire that out-towers the crag,
We plant the staff for our country's flag,
We plant the shade, from the hot sun free;
We plant all these when we plant the tree.

Henry Abbey [1842–1911]

THE TREE

I LOVE thee when thy swelling buds appear,
And one by one their tender leaves unfold,
As if they knew that warmer suns were near,
Nor longer sought to hide from winter's cold;
And when with darker growth thy leaves are seen
To veil from view the early robin's nest,
I love to lie beneath thy waving screen,
With limbs by summer's heat and toil oppressed;
And when the autumn winds have stripped thee bare,
And round thee lies the smooth, untrodden snow,
When naught is thine that made thee once so fair,
I love to watch thy shadowy form below,
And through thy leafless arms to look above
On stars that brighter beam when most we need their love.

Jones Very [1813–1880]

THE BRAVE OLD OAK

A SONG to the oak, the brave old oak,
Who hath ruled in the greenwood long;
Here's health and renown to his broad green crown,
And his fifty arms so strong.
There's fear in his frown when the sun goes down,
And the fire in the west fades out;
And he showeth his might on a wild midnight,
When the storms through his branches shout.

Then here's to the oak, the brave old oak,
Who stands in his pride alone;
And still flourish he, a hale green tree,
When a hundred years are gone!

In the days of old, when the spring with cold
Had brightened his branches gray,
Through the grass at his feet crept maidens sweet,
To gather the dew of May.
And on that day to the rebeck gay
They frolicked with lovesome swains;
They are gone, they are dead, in the churchyard laid,
But the tree it still remains.

He saw the rare times when the Christmas chimes
Were a merry sound to hear,
When the squire's wide hall and the cottage small
Were filled with good English cheer.
Now gold hath sway we all obey,
And a ruthless king is he;
But he never shall send our ancient friend
To be tossed on the stormy sea.

Henry Fothergill Chorley [1808–1872]

"THE GIRT WOAK TREE THAT'S IN THE DELL"

The girt woak tree that's in the dell!
There's noo tree I do love so well;
Vor times an' times when I wer young,
I there've a-climbed, an' there've a-zwung,
An' picked the eäcorns green, a-shed
In wrestlèn storms vrom his broad head.
An' down below's the cloty brook
Where I did vish with line an' hook,
An' beät, in playÿsome dips and zwims,
The foamy stream, wi' white-skinned lim's.
An' there my mother nimbly shot
Her knittèn-needles, as she zot
At evenèn down below the wide
Woak's head, wi' father at her zide.
An' I've a-playÿed wi' many a bwoy,
That's now a man an' gone awoy;
Zoo I do like noo tree so well
'S the girt woak tree that's in the dell.

An' there, in leäter years, I roved
Wi' thik poor maïd I fondly loved,—
The maïd too feäir to die so soon,—
When evenèn twilight, or the moon,
Cast light enough 'ithin the pleäce
To show the smiles upon her feäce,
Wi' eyes so clear's the glassy pool,
An' lips an' cheäks so soft as wool.
There han' in han', wi' bosoms warm,
Wi' love that burned but thought nöo harm,
Below the wide-boughed tree we passed
The happy hours that went too vast;
An' though she'll never be my wife,
She's still my leaden stär o' life.
She's gone: an' she've a-left to me
Her mem'ry in the girt woak tree;
  Zoo I do love nöo tree so well
  'S the girt woak tree that's in the dell.

An' oh! mid never ax nor hook
Be brought to spweil his steätely look;
Nor ever roun' his ribby zides
Mid cattle rub ther heäiry hides;
Nor pigs rout up his turf, but keep
His lwonesome sheäde vor harmless sheep;
An' let en grow, an' let en spread,
An' let en live when I be dead.
But oh! if men should come an' vell
The girt woak tree that's in the dell,
An' build his planks 'ithin the zide
O' zome girt ship to plough the tide.
Then, life or death! I'd goo to sea,
A sailèn wi' the girt woak tree:
An' I upon his planks would stand,
An' die a-fightèn vor the land,—
The land so dear,—the land so free,—
The land that bore the girt woak tree;
  Vor I do love nöo tree so well
  'S the girt woak tree that's in the dell.

William Barnes [1801–1886]

TO THE WILLOW-TREE

Thou art to all lost love the best,
The only true plant found,
Wherewith young men and maids distressed,
And left of love, are crowned.

When once the lover's rose is dead,
Or laid aside forlorn:
Then willow-garlands 'bout the head
Bedewed with tears are worn.

When with neglect, the lovers' bane,
Poor maids rewarded be
For their love lost, their only gain
Is but a wreath from thee.

And underneath thy cooling shade,
When weary of the light,
The love-spent youth and love-sick maid
Come to weep out the night.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

ENCHANTMENT

The deep seclusion of this forest path,—
O'er which the green boughs weave a canopy;
Along which bluet and anemone
Spread dim a carpet; where the Twilight hath
Her cool abode; and, sweet as aftermath,
Wood-fragrance roams,—has so enchanted me,
That yonder blossoming bramble seems to be
A Sylvan resting, rosy from her bath:
Has so enspelled me with tradition's dreams,
That every foam-white stream that, twinkling, flows,
And every bird that flutters wings of tan,
Or warbles hidden, to my fancy seems
A Naiad dancing to a Faun who blows
Wild woodland music on the pipes of Pan.

Madison Cawein [1865–1914]

TREES

I THINK that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer [1886-

THE HOLLY-TREE

O READER! hast thou ever stood to see
The Holly-tree?
The eye that contemplates it well perceives
Its glossy leaves
Ordered by an Intelligence so wise
As might confound the Atheist's sophistries.

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen,
Wrinkled and keen;
No grazing cattle, through their prickly round,
Can reach to wound;
But, as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarmed the pointless leaves appear.

I love to view these things with curious eyes,
And moralize;

And in this wisdom of the Holly-tree
Can emblem see
Wherewith, perchance, to make a pleasant rhyme,—
One which may profit in the after-time.

Thus, though abroad, perchance, I might appear
Harsh and austere;
To those who on my leisure would intrude,
Reserved and rude;
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be,
Like the high leaves upon the Holly-tree.

And should my youth—as youth is apt, I know,—
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I, day by day,
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly-tree.

And as, when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green,
The Holly-leaves their fadeless hues display
Less bright than they;
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the Holly-tree?—

So, serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng;
So would I seem, amid the young and gay,
More grave than they;
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the Holly-tree.

Robert Southey [1774–1843]

THE PINE

The elm lets fall its leaves before the frost,
The very oak grows shivering and sere,
The trees are barren when the summer's lost:
But one tree keeps its goodness all the year.

Green pine, unchanging as the days go by,
Thou art thyself beneath whatever sky:
My shelter from all winds, my own strong pine,
'Tis spring, 'tis summer, still, while thou art mine.

Augusta Webster [1837–1894]

"WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE"

Woodman, spare that tree!
Touch not a single bough!
In youth it sheltered me,
And I'll protect it now.
'Twas my forefather's hand
That placed it near his cot;
There, woodman, let it stand,
Thy axe shall harm it not!

That old familiar tree,
Whose glory and renown
Are spread o'er land and sea,—
And wouldst thou hew it down?
Woodman, forbear thy stroke!
Cut not its earth-bound ties;
O, spare that aged oak,
Now towering to the skies!

When but an idle boy
I sought its grateful shade;
In all their gushing joy
Here, too, my sisters played.
My mother kissed me here;
My father pressed my hand—
Forgive this foolish tear,
But let that old oak stand!

My heart-strings round thee cling,
Close as thy bark, old friend!
Here shall the wild-bird sing,
And still thy branches bend.

Old tree! the storm still brave!
And, woodman, leave the spot;
While I've a hand to save,
Thy axe shall harm it not.

George Pope Morris [1802–1864]

THE BEECH TREE'S PETITION

O LEAVE this barren spot to me!
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!
Though bush or floweret never grow
My dark unwarming shade below;
Nor summer bud perfume the dew
Of rosy blush, or yellow hue;
Nor fruits of autumn, blossom-born,
My green and glossy leaves adorn;
Nor murmuring tribes from me derive
Th' ambrosial amber of the hive;
Yet leave this barren spot to me:
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!

Thrice twenty summers I have seen
The sky grow bright, the forest green;
And many a wintry wind have stood
In bloomless, fruitless solitude,
Since childhood in my pleasant bower
First spent its sweet and sportive hour;
Since youthful lovers in my shade
Their vows of truth and rapture made,
And on my trunk's surviving frame
Carved many a long-forgotten name.
Oh! by the sighs of gentle sound,
First breathed upon this sacred ground;
By all that Love has whispered here,
Or Beauty heard with ravished ear;
As Love's own altar honor me:
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

THE POPLAR FIELD

THE poplars are felled; farewell to the shade;
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade;
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
Of my favorite field, and the bank where they grew;
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat;
And the scene where his melody charmed me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

THE PLANTING OF THE APPLE-TREE

COME, let us plant the apple-tree.
Cleave the tough greensward with the spade;
Wide let its hollow bed be made;
There gently lay the roots, and there
Sift the dark mould with kindly care,
And press it o'er them tenderly,
As, round the sleeping infant's feet,
We softly fold the cradle-sheet;
So plant we the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Buds, which the breath of summer days
Shall lengthen into leafy sprays;
Boughs where the thrush, with crimson breast,
Shall haunt, and sing, and hide her nest;
We plant, upon the sunny lea,
A shadow for the noontide hour,
A shelter from the summer shower,
When we plant the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Sweets for a hundred flowery springs
To load the May-wind's restless wings,
When, from the orchard-row, he pours
Its fragrance through our open doors;
A world of blossoms for the bee,
Flowers for the sick girl's silent room,
For the glad infant sprigs of bloom,
We plant with the apple-tree.

What plant we in this apple-tree?
Fruits that shall swell in sunny June,
And redden in the August noon,
And drop, when gentle airs come by,
That fan the blue September sky,
While children come, with cries of glee,
And seek them where the fragrant grass
Betrays their bed to those who pass,
At the foot of the apple-tree.

And when, above this apple-tree,
The winter stars are quivering bright,
And winds go howling through the night,
Girls, whose young eyes o'erflow with mirth,
Shall peel its fruit by cottage-hearth,
And guests in prouder homes shall see,
Heaped with the grape of Cintra's vine
And golden orange of the line,
The fruit of the apple-tree.

The fruitage of this apple-tree
Winds and our flag of stripe and star
Shall bear to coasts that lie afar,
Where men shall wonder at the view,
And ask in what fair groves they grew;
And sojourners beyond the sea
Shall think of childhood's careless day,
And long, long hours of summer play,
In the shade of the apple-tree.

Each year shall give this apple-tree
A broader flush of roseate bloom,
A deeper maze of verdurous gloom,
And loosen, when the frost-clouds lower,
The crisp brown leaves in thicker shower.
The years shall come and pass, but we
Shall hear no longer, where we lie,
The summer's songs, the autumn's sigh,
In the boughs of the apple-tree.

And time shall waste this apple-tree.
Oh, when its aged branches throw
Thin shadows on the ground below,
Shall fraud and force and iron will
Oppress the weak and helpless still?
What shall the tasks of mercy be,
Amid the toils, the strifes, the tears
Of those who live when length of years
Is wasting this little apple-tree?

"Who planted this old apple-tree?"
The children of that distant day
Thus to some aged man shall say;
And, gazing on its mossy stem,
The gray-haired man shall answer them:
"A poet of the land was he,
Born in the rude but good old times;
'Tis said he made some quaint old rhymes,
On planting the apple-tree."

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

OF AN ORCHARD

Good is an Orchard, the Saint saith,
To meditate on life and death,
With a cool well, a hive of bees,
A hermit's grot below the trees.

Good is an Orchard: very good,
Though one should wear no monkish hood.
Right good, when Spring awakes her flute,
And good in yellowing time of fruit.

Very good in the grass to lie
And see the network 'gainst the sky,
A living lace of blue and green,
And boughs that let the gold between.

The bees are types of souls that dwell
With honey in a quiet cell;
The ripe fruit figures goldenly
The soul's perfection in God's eye.

Prayer and praise in a country home,
Honey and fruit: a man might come,
Fed on such meats, to walk abroad,
And in his Orchard talk with God.

Katherine Tynan [1861-

AN ORCHARD AT AVIGNON

The hills are white, but not with snow:
They are as pale in summer time,
For herb or grass may never grow
Upon their slopes of lime.

Within the circle of the hills
A ring, all flowering in a round,
An orchard-ring of almond fills
The plot of stony ground.

More fair than happier trees, I think,
Grown in well-watered pasture land
These parched and stunted branches, pink
Above the stones and sand.

O white, austere, ideal place,
Where very few will care to come,
Where spring hath lost the waving grace
She wears for us at home!

Fain would I sit and watch for hours
The holy whiteness of thy hills,
Their wreath of pale auroral flowers,
Their peace the silence fills.

A place of secret peace thou art,
Such peace as in an hour of pain
One moment fills the amazèd heart,
And never comes again.

A. Mary F. Robinson [1857–

THE TIDE RIVER

From "The Water Babies"

Clear and cool, clear and cool,
By laughing shallow and dreaming pool;
Cool and clear, cool and clear,
By shining shingle and foaming weir;
Under the crag where the ouzel sings,
And the ivied wall where the church-bell rings,
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

Dank and foul, dank and foul,
By the smoky town in its murky cowl;
Foul and dank, foul and dank,
By wharf and sewer and slimy bank;
Darker and darker the farther I go,
Baser and baser the richer I grow;
Who dare sport with the sin-defiled?
Shrink from me, turn from me, mother and child.

Strong and free, strong and free,
The flood-gates are open, away to the sea.
Free and strong, free and strong,
Cleansing my streams as I hurry along,
To the golden sands, and the leaping bar,
And the taintless tide that awaits me afar.
As I lose myself in the infinite main,
Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned again,
Undefiled, for the undefiled;
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

THE BROOK'S SONG

From "The Brook"

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery water-break
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

ARETHUSA

ARETHUSA arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains,—
From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.
She leapt down the rocks
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;
Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine
Which slopes to the western gleams:
And gliding and springing,
She went, ever singing,
In murmurs as soft as sleep;
The Earth seemed to love her,
And Heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered towards the deep.

Then Alpheus bold,
On his glacier cold,
With his trident the mountains strook;
And opened a chasm
In the rocks;—with the spasm
All Erymanthus shook.
And the black south wind
It unsealed behind
The urns of the silent snow,
And earthquake and thunder
Did rend in sunder
The bars of the springs below:
And the beard and the hair
Of the River-god were
Seen through the torrent's sweep,
As he followed the light
Of the fleet nymph's flight
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

"Oh, save me! Oh, guide me!
And bid the deep hide me!
For he grasps me now by the hair!"
The loud Ocean heard,
To its blue depth stirred,
And divided at her prayer;
And under the water
The Earth's white daughter
Fled like a sunny beam;
Behind her descended,
Her billows, unblended
With the brackish Dorian stream.
Like a gloomy stain
On the emerald main,
Alpheus rushed behind,—
As an eagle pursuing
A dove to its ruin
Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers
Where the Ocean Powers
Sit on their pearlèd thrones;
Through the coral woods
Of the weltering floods,
Over heaps of unvalued stones;
Through the dim beams
Which amid the streams
Weave a network of colored light;
And under the caves
Where the shadowy waves
Are as green as the forest's night:—
Outspeeding the shark,
And the swordfish dark,—
Under the Ocean's foam,
And up through the rifts
Of the mountain clifts,
They passed to their Dorian home.

And now from their fountains
In Enna's mountains,

Down one vale where the morning basks,
Like friends once parted
Grown single-hearted,
They ply their watery tasks.
At sunrise they leap
From their cradles steep
In the cave of the shelving hill;
At noontide they flow
Through the woods below
And the meadows of asphodel;
And at night they sleep
In the rocking deep
Beneath the Ortygian shore;—
Like spirits that lie
In the azure sky,
When they love but live no more.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

THE CATARACT OF LODORE

"How does the water
Come down at Lodore?"
My little boy asked me
Thus, once on a time;
And moreover he tasked me
To tell him in rhyme.
Anon, at the word,
There first came one daughter,
And then came another,
To second and third
The request of their brother,
And to hear how the water
Comes down at Lodore,
With its rush and its roar,
As many a time
They had seen it before.
So I told them in rhyme,
For of rhymes I had store;
And 'twas in my vocation
For their recreation

That so I should sing;
Because I was Laureate
To them and the King.

From its sources which well
In the tarn on the fell;
From its fountains
In the mountains,
Its rills and its gills;
Through moss and through brake,
It runs and it creeps
For a while, till it sleeps
In its own little lake.
And thence at departing,
Awakening and starting,
It runs through the reeds,
And away it proceeds,
Through meadow and glade,
In sun and in shade,
And through the wood-shelter,
Among crags in its flurry,
Helter-skelter,
Hurry-skurry.
Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling;
Now smoking and frothing
Its tumult and wrath in,
Till, in this rapid race
On which it is bent,
It reaches the place
Of its steep descent.

The cataract strong
Then plunges along,
Striking and raging
As if a war raging
Its caverns and rocks among;
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping,

Swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing,
Flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Turning and twisting,
Around and around
With endless rebound:
Smiting and fighting,
A sight to delight in;
Confounding, astounding,
Dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound.

Collecting, projecting,
Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,
And threading and spreading,
And whizzing and hissing,
And dripping and skipping,
And hitting and splitting,
And shining and twining,
And rattling and battling,
And shaking and quaking,
And pouring and roaring,
And waving and raving,
And tossing and crossing,
And flowing and going,
And running and stunning,
And foaming and roaming,
And dinning and spinning,
And dropping and hopping,
And working and jerking,
And guggling and struggling,
And heaving and cleaving,
And moaning and groaning;

And glittering and frittering,
And gathering and feathering,

And whitening and brightening,
And quivering and shivering,
And hurrying and skurrying,
And thundering and floundering;

Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And falling and brawling and sprawling,
And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,
And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering;

Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,
And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
And so never ending, but always descending,
Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending
All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar,—
And this way the water comes down at Lodore.

Robert Southey [1774–1843]

SONG OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE

Out of the hills of Habersham,
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain

Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried *Abide, abide,*
The wilful waterweeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said *Stay,*
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed *Abide, abide,*
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,
Said, *Pass not, so cold, these manifold*
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall.

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook-stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl,
And many a luminous jewel lone
—Crystals clear or a-cloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet and amethyst—
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone
In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of Duty call—

Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main.
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall.

Sidney Lanier [1842–1881]

"FLOW GENTLY, SWEET AFTON"

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes;
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Thou stock-dove whose echo resounds through the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear;
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighboring hills,
Far marked with the courses of clear-winding rills;
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow;
There oft as mild evening weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As, gathering sweet flowerets, she stems thy clear wave.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes;
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

CANADIAN BOAT-SONG

WRITTEN ON THE RIVER ST. LAWRENCE

FAINTLY as tolls the evening chime
Our voices keep tune and our oars keep time.
Soon as the woods on shore look dim,
We'll sing at St. Ann's our parting hymn.
Row, brothers, row, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near and the daylight's past.

Why should we yet our sail unfurl?
There is not a breath the blue wave to curl,
But, when the wind blows off the shore,
Oh, sweetly we'll rest our weary oar.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near and the daylight's past.

Utawas' tide! this trembling moon
Shall see us float over thy surges soon.
Saint of this green isle! hear our prayers,
Oh, grant us cool heavens and favoring airs.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near and the daylight's past.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

THE MARSHES OF GLYNN

GLOOMS of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven
Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,—
Emerald twilights,—
Virginal shy lights,
Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,
When lovers pace timidly down through the green colonnades
Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,
Of the heavenly woods and glades,
That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within
The wide sea-marshes of Glynn;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noonday fire,—
Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of leaves,—
Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that grieves,
Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the wood,
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good;—

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades of the vine,
While the riotous noonday sun of the June-day long did shine
Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you fast in mine;
But now when the noon is no more, and riot is rest,
And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate of the West,
And the slant yellow beam down the wood-aisle doth seem
Like a lane into heaven that leads from a dream,—
Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken the soul of the oak,
And my heart is at ease from men, and the wearisome sound of the stroke
Of the scythe of time and the trowel of trade is low,
And belief overmasters doubt, and I know that I know,
And my spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within,
That the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn
Will work me no fear like the fear they have wrought me of yore
When length was fatigue, and when breadth was but bitterness sore,
And when terror and shrinking and dreary unnamable pain
Drew over me out of the merciless miles of the plain,—

Oh, now, unafraid, I am fain to face
The vast sweet visage of space.
To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am drawn,
Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a belt of the dawn,
For a mete and a mark
To the forest-dark:—
So:
Affable live-oak, leaning low,—

Thus—with your favor—soft, with a reverent hand,
(Not lightly touching your person, Lord of the land!)
Bending your beauty aside, with a step I stand
On the firm-packed sand,
Free
By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.
Sinuous southward and sinuous northward the shimmering band
Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the marsh to the folds of the land.
Inward and outward to northward and southward the beach-lines linger and curl
As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and follows the firm sweet limbs of a girl.
Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight,
Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim gray looping of light.
And what if behind me to westward the wall of the woods stands high?
The world lies east: how ample, the marsh and the sea and the sky!
A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-high, broad in the blade,
Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with a light or a shade,
Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,
To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding and free
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to the sea!
Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath mightily won

God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies:
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his plenty the sea
Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:
Look how the grace of the sea doth go
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
Here and there,
Everywhere,
Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the low-lying lanes,
And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow
In the rose-and-silver evening glow.
Farewell, my lord Sun!
The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass stir;
Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whirr;
Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide is in his ecstasy;
The tide is at his highest height:
And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of sleep
Roll in on the souls of men,

But who will reveal to our waking ken
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when the tide comes in
On the length and the breadth of the marvelous marshes of Glynn.

Sidney Lanier [1842–1881]

THE TROSACHS

There's not a nook within this solemn Pass
But were an apt confessional for one
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,
That Life is but a tale of morning grass
Withered at eve. From scenes of art which chase
That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass
Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice happy quest,
If from a golden perch of aspen spray
(October's workmanship to rival May)
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

HYMN

BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald, awful head, O sovereign Blanc!
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form,
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,

An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshiped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there,
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my Heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of the Vale!
O, struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shattered and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,

Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came),
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the Gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the elements!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene,
Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast—
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow traveling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise!
Rise like a cloud of incense, from the Earth!
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,

Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

THE PEAKS

In the night
Gray, heavy clouds muffled the valleys,
And the peaks looked toward God alone.
"O Master, that movest the wind with a finger,
Humble, idle, futile peaks are we.
Grant that we may run swiftly across the world
To huddle in worship at Thy feet."

In the morning
A noise of men at work came through the clear blue miles,
And the little black cities were apparent.
"O Master, that knowest the meaning of raindrops,
Humble, idle, futile peaks are we.
Give voice to us, we pray, O Lord,
That we may sing Thy goodness to the sun."

In the evening
The far valleys were sprinkled with tiny lights.
"O Master,
Thou that knowest the value of kings and birds,
Thou hast made us humble, idle, futile peaks.
Thou only needest eternal patience;
We bow to Thy wisdom, O Lord—
Humble, idle, futile peaks."

In the night
Gray, heavy clouds muffled the valleys,
And the peaks looked toward God alone.

Stephen Crane [1870–1900]

KINCHINJUNGA

NEXT TO EVEREST HIGHEST OF MOUNTAINS

O WHITE priest of Eternity, around
Whose lofty summit veiling clouds arise
Of the earth's immemorial sacrifice
To Brahma, in whose breath all lives and dies;
O hierarch enrobed in timeless snows,
First-born of Asia, whose maternal throes
Seem changed now to a million human woes,
Holy thou art and still! Be so, nor sound
One sigh of all the mystery in thee found.

For in this world too much is overclear,
Immortal ministrant to many lands,
From whose ice altars flow, to fainting sands,
Rivers that each libation poured expands.
Too much is known, O Ganges-giving sire:
Thy people fathom life, and find it dire;
Thy people fathom death, and, in it, fire
To live again, though in Illusion's sphere,
Behold concealed as grief is in a tear.

Wherefore continue, still enshrined, thy rites,
Though dark Tibet, that dread ascetic, falls,
In strange austerity, whose trance appals,—
Before thee, and a suppliant on thee calls.
Continue still thy silence high and sure,
That something beyond fleeting may endure—
Something that shall forevermore allure
Imagination on to mystic flights
Wherein alone no wing of evil lights.

Yea, wrap thy awful gulfs and acolytes
Of lifted granite round with reachless snows.
Stand for eternity, while pilgrim rows
Of all the nations envy thy repose.
Ensheath thy swart sublimities, unscaled;
Be that alone on earth which has not failed;
Be that which never yet has yearned nor ailed,

But since primeval Power upreared thy heights
Has stood above all deaths and all delights.

And though thy loftier brother shall be king,
High-priest be thou to Brahma unrevealed,
While thy white sanctity forever sealed
In icy silence leaves desire congealed.
In ghostly ministrations to the sun,
And to the mendicant stars and the moon-nun,
Be holy still, till east to west has run,
And till no sacrificial suffering
On any shrine is left to tell life's sting.

Cale Young Rice [1872–

THE HILLS

Mussoorie and Chakrata Hill
  The Jumna flows between
And from Chakrata's hills afar
  Mussoorie's vale is seen.
The mountains sing together
In cloud or sunny weather,
The Jumna, through their tether,
  Foams white or plunges green.

The mountains stand and laugh at Time,
  They pillar up the Earth,
They watch the ages pass, they bring
  New centuries to birth.
They feel the daybreak shiver,
They see Time passing ever,
As flows the Jumna River
  As breaks the white sea-surf.

They drink the sun in a golden cup
  And in blue mist the rain;
With a sudden brightening they meet the lightning
  Or ere it strikes the plain.
They seize the sullen thunder
And take it up for plunder
And cast it down and under,
  And up and back again. . . .

. . . Here, in the hills of ages
I met thee face to face;
O mother Earth, O lover Earth,
Look down on me with grace.
Give me thy passion burning,
And thy strong patience, turning
All wrath to power, all yearning
To truth, thy dwelling-place.

Julian Grenfell [18 –1915]

HEMLOCK MOUNTAIN

By orange grove and palm-tree, we walked the southern shore,
Each day more still and golden than was the day before.
That calm and languid sunshine! How faint it made us grow
To look on Hemlock Mountain when the storm hangs low!

To see its rocky pastures, its sparse but hardy corn,
The mist roll off its forehead before a harvest morn;
To hear the pine-trees crashing across its gulfs of snow
Upon a roaring midnight when the whirlwinds blow.

Tell not of lost Atlantis, or fabled Avalon;
The olive, or the vineyard, no winter breathes upon;
Away from Hemlock Mountain we could not well forego,
For all the summer islands where the gulf tides flow.

Sarah N. Cleghorn [1876–

SUNRISE ON RYDAL WATER

Come down at dawn from windless hills
Into the valley of the lake,
Where yet a larger quiet fills
The hour, and mist and water make
With rocks and reeds and island boughs
One silence and one element,
Where wonder goes surely as once
It went
By Galilean prows.

Moveless the water and the mist,
  Moveless the secret air above,
Hushed, as upon some happy tryst
  The poised expectancy of love;
What spirit is it that adores
  What mighty presence yet unseen?
What consummation works apace
  Between
    These rapt enchanted shores?

Never did virgin beauty wake
  Devouter to the bridal feast
Than moves this hour upon the lake
  In adoration to the east.
Here is the bride a god may know,
  The primal will, the young consent,
Till surely upon the appointed mood
  Intent
    The god shall leap—and, lo,

Over the lake's end strikes the sun—
  White, flameless fire; some purity
Thrilling the mist, a splendor won
  Out of the world's heart. Let there be
Thoughts, and atonements, and desires;
  Proud limbs, and undeliberate tongue;
Where now we move with mortal care
  Among
    Immortal dews and fires.

So the old mating goes apace,
  Wind with the sea, and blood with thought,
Lover with lover; and the grace
  Of understanding comes unsought
When stars into the twilight steer,
  Or thrushes build among the may,
Or wonder moves between the hills,
  And day
    Comes up on Rydal mere.

John Drinkwater (1882–

THE DESERTED PASTURE

I LOVE the stony pasture
That no one else will have.
The old gray rocks so friendly seem,
So durable and brave.

In tranquil contemplation
It watches through the year,
Seeing the frosty stars arise,
The slender moons appear.

Its music is the rain-wind,
Its choristers the birds,
And there are secrets in its heart
Too wonderful for words.

It keeps the bright-eyed creatures
That play about its walls,
Though long ago its milking herds
Were banished from their stalls.

Only the children come there,
For buttercups in May,
Or nuts in autumn, where it lies
Dreaming the hours away.

Long since its strength was given
To making good increase,
And now its soul is turned again
To beauty and to peace.

There in the early springtime
The violets are blue,
And adder-tongues in coats of gold
Are garmented anew.

There bayberry and aster
Are crowded on its floors,

When marching summer halts to praise
The Lord of Out-of-doors.

And there October passes
In gorgeous livery,—
In purple ash, and crimson oak,
And golden tulip tree.

And when the winds of winter
Their bugle blasts begin,
The snowy hosts of heaven arrive
To pitch their tents therein.

Bliss Carman [1861–

TO MEADOWS

Ye have been fresh and green;
  Ye have been filled with flowers;
And ye the walks have been
  Where maids have spent their hours.

Ye have beheld how they
  With wicker arks did come
To kiss and bear away
  The richer cowslips home.

Ye've heard them sweetly sing,
  And seen them in a round,
Each virgin, like a Spring,
  With honeysuckles crowned.

But now we see none here
  Whose silvery feet did tread,
And with dishevelled hair
  Adorned this smoother mead.

Like unthrifts, having spent
  Your stock, and needy grown,
Ye're left here to lament
  Your poor estates, alone.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

THE CLOUD

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under;
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits.

Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the Genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead,

As on the jag of a mountain-crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And, when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardors of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The Stars peep behind her and peer.
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the Stars reel and swim,
When the Whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof;
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march,
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the Powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-colored bow;
The Sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
While the moist Earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
And the nursling of the Sky:
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain, when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise, and unbuild it again.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

APRIL RAIN

It is not raining rain for me,
It's raining daffodils;
In every dimpled drop I see
Wild flowers on the hills.

The clouds of gray engulf the day
And overwhelm the town;
It is not raining rain to me,
It's raining roses down.

It is not raining rain to me,
But fields of clover bloom,
Where any buccaneering bee
Can find a bed and room.

A health unto the happy,
A fig for him who frets!
It is not raining rain to me,
It's raining violets.

Robert Loveman [1864–

SUMMER INVOCATION

O GENTLE, gentle summer rain,
Let not the silver lily pine,
The drooping lily pine in vain
To feel that dewy touch of thine,—
To drink thy freshness once again,
O gentle, gentle summer rain!

In heat the landscape quivering lies;
The cattle pant beneath the tree;
Through parching air and purple skies
The earth looks up, in vain, for thee;
For thee—for thee, it looks in vain
O gentle, gentle summer rain.

Come thou, and brim the meadow streams,
And soften all the hills with mist,
O falling dew! from burning dreams
By thee shall herb and flower be kissed,
And Earth shall bless thee yet again,
O gentle, gentle summer rain.

William Cox Bennett [1820–1895]

APRIL RAIN

THE April rain, the April rain,
Comes slanting down in fitful showers,
Then from the furrow shoots the grain,
And banks are edged with nestling flowers;
And in gray shaw and woodland bowers
The cuckoo through the April rain
Calls once again.

The April sun, the April sun,
Glints through the rain in fitful splendor,
And in gray shaw and woodland dun
The little leaves spring forth and tender
Their infant hands, yet weak and slender,
For warmth towards the April sun,
One after one.

And between shower and shine hath birth
The rainbow's evanescent glory;
Heaven's light that breaks on mist of earth!
Frail symbol of our human story,
It flowers through showers where, looming hoary,
The rain-clouds flash with April mirth,
Like Life on earth.

Mathilde Blind [1841–1896]

TO THE RAINBOW

Triumphal arch, that fill'st the sky
When storms prepare to part,
I ask not proud Philosophy
To teach me what thou art;—

Still seem, as to my childhood's sight,
A midway station given
For happy spirits to alight
Betwixt the earth and heaven.

Can all that Optics teach unfold
Thy form to please me so,
As when I dreamt of gems and gold
Hid in thy radiant bow?

When Science from Creation's face
Enchantment's veil withdraws,
What lovely visions yield their place
To cold material laws!

And yet, fair bow, no fabling dreams,
But words of the Most High,
Have told why first thy robe of beams
Was woven in the sky.

When o'er the green, undeluged earth
Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the world's gray fathers forth
To watch thy sacred sign!

And when its yellow luster smiled
O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child
To bless the bow of God.

Methinks, thy jubilee to keep,
The first-made anthem rang
On earth, delivered from the deep,
And the first poet sang.

Nor ever shall the Muse's eye
Unraptured greet thy beam;
Theme of primeval prophecy,
Be still the prophet's theme!

The earth to thee her incense yields,
The lark thy welcome sings,
When, glittering in the freshened fields,
The snowy mushroom springs.

How glorious is thy girdle, cast
O'er mountain, tower, and town,
Or mirrored in the ocean vast,
A thousand fathoms down!

As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young thy beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in thy beam:

For, faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still rebuilds thy span;
Nor lets the type grow pale with age,
That first spoke peace to man.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

GREEN THINGS GROWING

MY GARDEN

A GARDEN is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot—
The veriest school
Of peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign:
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

Thomas Edward Brown [1830–1897]

THE GARDEN

How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
And their incessant labors see
Crowned from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow-vergèd shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all the flowers and trees do close
To weave the garlands of repose!

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men:
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow;
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name:
Little, alas! they know or heed
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees! where'er your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passions' heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat:
The gods, that mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race;
Apollo hunted Daphne so
Only that she might laurel grow;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness;
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide;

There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and combs its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy Garden-state
While man there walked without a mate:
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet!
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises 'twere in one,
To live in Paradise alone.

How well the skilful gardener drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new!
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run:
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned, but with herbs and flowers!

Andrew Marvell [1621–1678]

A GARDEN

WRITTEN AFTER THE CIVIL WARS

See how the flowers, as at parade,
Under their colors stand displayed:
Each regiment in order grows,
That of the tulip, pink, and rose.
But when the vigilant patrol
Of stars walks round about the pole,
Their leaves, that to the stalks are curled,
Seem to their staves the ensigns furled.
Then in some flower's beloved hut
Each bee, as sentinel, is shut,
And sleeps so too; but if once stirred,
She runs you through, nor asks the word.

O thou, that dear and happy Isle,
The garden of the world erewhile,
Thou Paradise of the four seas
Which Heaven planted us to please,
But, to exclude the world, did guard
With watery if not flaming sword;
What luckless apple did we taste
To make us mortal and thee waste!
Unhappy! shall we never more
That sweet militia restore,
When gardens only had their towers,
And all the garrisons were flowers;
When roses only arms might bear,
And men did rosy garlands wear?

Andrew Marvell [1621–1678]

A GARDEN SONG

Here, in this sequestered close
Bloom the hyacinth and rose;
Here beside the modest stock
Flaunts the flaring hollyhock;
Here, without a pang, one sees
Ranks, conditions, and degrees.

All the seasons run their race
In this quiet resting-place;
Peach, and apricot, and fig
Here will ripen, and grow big;
Here is store and overplus,—
More had not Alcinoüs!

Here, in alleys cool and green,
Far ahead the thrush is seen;
Here along the southern wall
Keeps the bee his festival;
All is quiet else—afar
Sounds of toil and turmoil are.

Here be shadows large and long;
Here be spaces meet for song;

Grant, O garden-god, that I,
Now that none profane is nigh,—
Now that mood and moment please,
Find the fair Pierides!

Austin Dobson [1840–

"IN GREEN OLD GARDENS"

In green old gardens, hidden away
From sight of revel and sound of strife,
Where the bird may sing out his soul ere he die,
Nor fears for the night, so he lives his day;
Where the high red walls, which are growing gray
With their lichen and moss embroideries,
Seem sadly and sternly to shut out life,
Because it is often as red as they;

Where even the bee has time to glide
(Gathering gayly his honey's store)
Right to the heart of the old-world flowers—
China-asters and purple stocks,
Dahlias and tall red hollyhocks,
Laburnums raining their golden showers,
Columbines prim of the folded core,
And lupins, and larkspurs, and "London pride";

Where the heron is waiting amongst the reeds,
Grown tame in the silence that reigns around,
Broken only, now and then,
By shy woodpecker or noisy jay,
By the far-off watch-dog's muffled bay;
But where never the purposeless laughter of men,
Or the seething city's murmurous sound
Will float up over the river-weeds.

Here may I live what life I please,
Married and buried out of sight,—
Married to pleasure, and buried to pain,—
Hidden away amongst scenes like these,
Under the fans of the chestnut trees;

Living my child-life over again,
With the further hope of a fallen delight,
Blithe as the birds and wise as the bees.

In green old gardens, hidden away
From sight of revel and sound of strife,—
Here have I leisure to breathe and move,
And to do my work in a nobler way;
To sing my songs, and to say my say;
To dream my dreams, and to love my love;
To hold my faith, and to live my life,
Making the most of its shadowy day.

Violet Fane [18 –

A BENEDICTINE GARDEN

Through all the wind-blown aisles of May,
Faint bells of perfume swing and fall.
Within this apple-petalled wall
(A gray east, flecked with rosy day)
The pink laburnum lays her cheek
In married, matchless, lovely bliss,
Against her golden mate, to seek
His airy kiss.

Tulips, in faded splendor drest,
Brood o'er their beds, a slumbrous gloom.
Dame Peony, red and ripe with bloom,
Swells the silk housing of her breast.
The Lilac, drunk to ecstasy,
Breaks her full flagons on the air,
And drenches home the reeling bee
Who found her fair.

O cowlèd Legion of the Cross,
What solemn pleasantry is thine,
Vowing to seek the life divine
Through abnegation and through loss!

Men but make monuments of sin
Who walk the earth's ambitious round;
Thou hast the richer realm within
This garden ground.

No woman's voice takes sweeter note
Than chanting of this plumèd choir.
No jewel ever wore the fire
Hung on a dewdrop's quivering throat.
A ruddier pomp and pageantry
Than world's delight o'erfleets thy sod;
And choosing this, thou hast in fee
The peace of God.

Alice Brown [1857–

AN AUTUMN GARDEN

My tent stands in a garden
Of aster and golden-rod,
Tilled by the rain and the sunshine,
And sown by the hand of God,—
An old New England pasture
Abandoned to peace and time,
And by the magic of beauty
Reclaimed to the sublime.

About it are golden woodlands
Of tulip and hickory;
On the open ridge behind it
You may mount to a glimpse of sea,—
The far-off, blue, Homeric
Rim of the world's great shield,
A border of boundless glamor
For the soul's familiar field.

In purple and gray-wrought lichen
The boulders lie in the sun;
Along its grassy footpath,
The white-tailed rabbits run.

The crickets work and chirrup
Through the still afternoon;
And the owl calls at twilight
Under the frosty moon.

The odorous wild grape clambers
Over the tumbling wall,
And through the autumnal quiet
The chestnuts open and fall.
Sharing time's freshness and fragrance,
Part of the earth's great soul,
Here man's spirit may ripen
To wisdom serene and whole.

Shall we not grow with the asters?—
Never reluctant nor sad,
Not counting the cost of being,
Living to dare and be glad.
Shall we not lift with the crickets
A chorus of ready cheer,
Braving the frost of oblivion,
Quick to be happy here?

The deep red cones of the sumach
And the woodbine's crimson sprays
Have bannered the common roadside
For the pageant of passing days.
These are the oracles Nature
Fills with her holy breath,
Giving them glory of color,
Transcending the shadow of death.

Here in the sifted sunlight
A spirit seems to brood
On the beauty and worth of being,
In tranquil, instinctive mood;
And the heart, athrob with gladness
Such as the wise earth knows,
Wells with a full thanksgiving
For the gifts that life bestows:

For the ancient and virile nurture
Of the teeming primordial ground,
For the splendid gospel of color,
The rapt revelations of sound;
For the morning-blue above us
And the rusted gold of the fern,
For the chickadee's call to valor
Bidding the faint-heart turn;

For fire and running water,
Snowfall and summer rain;
For sunsets and quiet meadows,
The fruit and the standing grain;
For the solemn hour of moonrise
Over the crest of trees,
When the mellow lights are kindled
In the lamps of the centuries.

For those who wrought aforetime,
Led by the mystic strain
To strive for the larger freedom,
And live for the greater gain;
For plenty and peace and playtime,
The homely goods of earth,
And for rare immaterial treasures
Accounted of little worth;

For art and learning and friendship,
Where beneficent truth is supreme,
Those everlasting cities
Built on the hills of dream;
For all things growing and goodly
That foster this life, and breed
The immortal flower of wisdom
Out of the mortal seed.

But most of all for the spirit
That can not rest nor bide
In stale and sterile convenience,
Nor safety proven and tried,

But still inspired and driven,
Must seek what better may be,
And up from the loveliest garden
Must climb for a glimpse of sea.

Bliss Carman [1861-

UNGUARDED

The Mistress of the Roses
Is haply far away,
And through her garden closes
What strange intruders stray.

See on its rustic spindles
The sundrop's amber fire!
And the goldenrod enkindles
The embers on its spire.

The dodder's shining tangle
From the meadow brook steals in,
Where in this shadowed angle
The pale lace-makers spin.

Here's Black-Eyed Susan weeping
Into exotic air,
And Bouncing Bet comes creeping
Back to her old parterre.

Now in this pleasant weather—
So sweetly reconciled—
They dwell and dream together,
The kin of court and wild.

Ada Foster Murray [18 -

THE DESERTED GARDEN

I mind me in the days departed,
How often underneath the sun,
With childish bounds I used to run
To a garden long deserted.

The beds and walks were vanished quite;
And wheresoe'er had struck the spade,
The greenest grasses Nature laid
To sanctify her right.

I called the place my wilderness;
For no one entered there but I;
The sheep looked in, the grass to espy,
And passed it ne'ertheless.

The trees were interwoven wild,
And spread their boughs enough about
To keep both sheep and shepherd out,
But not a happy child.

Adventurous joy it was for me!
I crept beneath the boughs, and found
A circle smooth of mossy ground
Beneath a poplar tree.

Old garden rose-trees hedged it in,
Bedropt with roses waxen-white,
Well satisfied with dew and light
And careless to be seen.

Long years ago, it might befall,
When all the garden flowers were trim,
The grave old gardener prided him
On these the most of all.

Some lady, stately overmuch,
Here moving with a silken noise,
Has blushed beside them at the voice
That likened her to such.

Or these, to make a diadem,
She often may have plucked and twined,
Half-smiling as it came to mind,
That few would look at *them*.

Oh, little thought that lady proud,
A child would watch her fair white rose,
When buried lay her whiter brows,
And silk was changed for shroud!

Nor thought that gardener, (full of scorns
For men unlearned and simple phrase,)
A child would bring it all its praise
By creeping through the thorns!

To me upon my low moss seat,
Though never a dream the roses sent
Of science or love's compliment,
I ween they smelt as sweet.

It did not move my grief to see
The trace of human step departed:
Because the garden was deserted,
The blither place for me!

Friends, blame me not! a narrow ken
Hath childhood 'twixt the sun and sward;
We draw the moral afterward,
We feel the gladness then.

And gladdest hours for me did glide
In silence at the rose-tree wall:
A thrush made gladness musical
Upon the other side.

Nor he nor I did e'er incline
To peck or pluck the blossoms white;
How should I know but roses might
Lead lives as glad as mine?

To make my hermit-home complete,
I brought clear water from the spring
Praised in its own low murmuring,
And cresses glossy wet.

And so, I thought, my likeness grew
(Without the melancholy tale)
To "gentle hermit of the dale,"
And Angelina too.

For oft I read within my nook
Such minstrel stories; till the breeze
Made sounds poetic in the trees,
And then I shut the book.

If I shut this wherein I write,
I hear no more the wind athwart
Those trees, nor feel that childish heart
Delighting in delight.

My childhood from my life is parted,
My footstep from the moss which drew
Its fairy circle round: anew
The garden is deserted.

Another thrush may there rehearse
The madrigals which sweetest are;
No more for me! myself afar
Do sing a sadder verse.

Ah me, ah me! when erst I lay
In that child's-nest so greenly wrought,
I laughed unto myself and thought
"The time will pass away."

And still I laughed, and did not fear
But that, whene'er was passed away
The childish time, some happier play
My womanhood would cheer.

I knew the time would pass away,
And yet, beside the rose-tree wall,
Dear God, how seldom, if at all,
Did I look up to pray!

The time *is* past; and now that grows
The cypress high among the trees,
And I behold white sepulchres
As well as the white rose,—

When graver, meeker thoughts are given;
And I have learnt to lift my face,
Reminded how earth's greenest place
The color draws from heaven,—

It something saith for earthly pain,
But more for Heavenly promise free,
That I who was, would shrink to be
That happy child again.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

A FORSAKEN GARDEN

In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep, square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its roses
Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand?
So long have the gray, bare walks lain guestless,
Through branches and briers if a man make way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
Night and day.

The dense, hard passage is blind and stifled
That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
Of all but the thorns that are touched not of Time.

The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;
The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that falls not;
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry;
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls not,
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
Over the meadows that blossom and wither
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song;
Only the sun and the rain come hither
All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
In a round where life seems barren as death.
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look thither,"
Did he whisper? "Look forth from the flowers to the sea;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms wither,
And men that love lightly may die—but we?"
And the same wind sang and the same waves whitened,
And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither?
And were one to the end—but what end who knows?
Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?
What love was ever as deep as a grave?
They are loveless now as the grass above them
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,
When, as they that are free now of weeping and laughter,
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever;
Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,
Who have left naught living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,
While the sun and the rain live, these shall be;
Till a last wind's breath, upon all these blowing,
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink;
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
Death lies dead.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

GREEN THINGS GROWING

O THE green things growing, the green things growing,
The faint sweet smell of the green things growing!
I should like to live, whether I smile or grieve,
Just to watch the happy life of my green things growing.

O the fluttering and the pattering of those green things growing!
How they talk each to each, when none of us are knowing;
In the wonderful white of the weird moonlight
Or the dim dreamy dawn when the cocks are crowing.

I love, I love them so—my green things growing!
And I think that they love me, without false showing;
For by many a tender touch, they comfort me so much,
With the soft mute comfort of green things growing.

And in the rich store of their blossoms glowing
Ten for one I take they're on me bestowing:
Oh, I should like to see, if God's will it may be,
Many, many a summer of my green things growing!

But if I must be gathered for the angel's sowing,
Sleep out of sight awhile, like the green things growing,
Though dust to dust return, I think I'll scarcely mourn,
If I may change into green things growing.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

A CHANTED CALENDAR

From "Balder"

First came the primrose,
On the bank high,
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower
When the battle rolls below,
So looked she,
And saw the storms go by.

Then came the wind-flower
In the valley left behind,
As a wounded maiden, pale
With purple streaks of woe,
When the battle has rolled by
Wanders to and fro,
So tottered she,
Dishevelled in the wind.

Then came the daisies,
On the first of May,
Like a bannered show's advance

While the crowd runs by the way,
With ten thousand flowers about them they came trooping through the fields.

As a happy people come,
So came they,
As a happy people come
When the war has rolled away,
With dance and tabor, pipe and drum,
And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip,
Like a dancer in the fair,
She spread her little mat of green,
And on it danced she.
With a fillet bound about her brow,
A fillet round her happy brow,
A golden fillet round her brow,
And rubies in her hair.

Sydney Dobell [1824–1874]

FLOWERS

Spake full well, in language quaint and olden
One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,
When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,
Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.

Stars they are, wherein we read our history,
As astrologers and seers of eld;
Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,
Like the burning stars, which they beheld.

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous,
God hath written in those stars above;
But not less in the bright flowerets under us
Stands the revelation of his love.

Bright and glorious is that revelation,
Writ all over this great world of ours;
Making evident our own creation,
In these stars of earth, these golden flowers.

And the Poet, faithful and far-seeing,
Sees, alike in stars and flowers, a part
Of the self-same, universal being,
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart.

Gorgeous flowerets in the sunlight shining,
Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day,
Tremulous leaves, with soft and silver lining,
Buds that open only to decay;

Brilliant hopes, all woven in gorgeous tissues,
Flaunting gayly in the golden light;
Large desires, with most uncertain issues,
Tender wishes, blossoming at night!

These in flowers and men are more than seeming;
Workings are they of the self-same powers
Which the Poet, in no idle dreaming,
Seeth in himself and in the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing,
Some like stars, to tell us Spring is born;
Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn;

Not alone in Spring's armorial bearing,
And in Summer's green-emblazoned field,
But in arms of brave old Autumn's wearing,
In the centre of his brazen shield;

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,
On the mountain-top, and by the brink
Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,
Where the slaves of nature stoop to drink;

Not alone in her vast dome of glory,
Not on graves of bird and beast alone,
But in old cathedrals, high and hoary,
On the tombs of heroes, carved in stone;

In the cottage of the rudest peasant;
In ancestral homes, whose crumbling towers,
Speaking of the Past unto the Present,
Tell us of the ancient Games of Flowers;

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

And with childlike, credulous affection,
We behold their tender buds expand;
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

FLOWERS

I WILL not have the mad Clytie,
Whose head is turned by the sun;
The tulip is a courtly quean,
Whom, therefore, I will shun:
The cowslip is a country wench,
The violet is a nun;—
But I will woo the dainty rose,
The queen of every one.

The pea is but a wanton witch,
In too much haste to wed,
And clasps her rings on every hand;
The wolfsbane I should dread;
Nor will I dreary rosemarye,
That always mourns the dead;
But I will woo the dainty rose,
With her cheeks of tender red.

The lily is all in white, like a saint,
And so is no mate for me;
And the daisy's cheek is tipped with a blush,
She is of such low degree;

Jasmine is sweet, and has many loves,
And the broom's betrothed to the bee;—
But I will plight with the dainty rose,
For fairest of all is she.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

A CONTEMPLATION UPON FLOWERS

Brave flowers—that I could gallant it like you,
And be as little vain!
You come abroad, and make a harmless show,
And to your beds of earth again.
You are not proud: you know your birth:
For your embroidered garments are from earth.

You do obey your months and times, but I
Would have it ever Spring:
My fate would know no Winter, never die,
Nor think of such a thing.
O that I could my bed of earth but view
And smile, and look as cheerfully as you!

O teach me to see Death and not to fear,
But rather to take truce!
How often have I seen you at a bier,
And there look fresh and spruce!
You fragrant flowers! then teach me, that my breath
Like yours may sweeten and perfume my death.

Henry King [1592–1669]

ALMOND BLOSSOM

Blossom of the almond trees,
April's gift to April's bees,
Birthday ornament of Spring,
Flora's fairest daughterling;
Coming when no flowerets dare
Trust the cruel outer air;
When the royal kingcup bold
Dares not don his coat of gold;

And the sturdy black-thorn spray
Keeps his silver for the May;—
Coming when no flowerets would,
Save thy lowly sisterhood,
Early violets, blue and white,
Dying for their love of light;—
Almond blossom, sent to teach us
That the spring days soon will reach us,
Lest, with longing over-tried,
We die, as the violets died;—
Blossom, clouding all the tree
With thy crimson broidery,
Long before a leaf of green
On the bravest bough is seen;—
Ah! when winter winds are swinging
All thy red bells into ringing,
With a bee in every bell,
Almond bloom, we greet thee well.

Edwin Arnold [1832–1904]

WHITE AZALEAS

Azaleas—whitest of white!
  White as the drifted snow
Fresh-fallen out of the night,
  Before the coming glow
Tinges the morning light;
  When the light is like the snow,
    White,
And the silence is like the light:
  Light, and silence, and snow,—
    All—white!

White! not a hint
Of the creamy tint
  A rose will hold,
The whitest rose, in its inmost fold;
Not a possible blush;
White as an embodied hush;

A very rapture of white;
A wedlock of silence and light:
White, white as the wonder undefiled
Of Eve just wakened in Paradise;
Nay, white as the angel of a child
That looks into God's own eyes!

Harriet McEwen Kimball [1834–

BUTTERCUPS

THERE must be fairy miners
Just underneath the mould,
Such wondrous quaint designers
Who live in caves of gold.

They take the shining metals,
And beat them into shreds;
And mould them into petals,
To make the flowers' heads.

Sometimes they melt the flowers
To tiny seeds like pearls,
And store them up in bowers
For little boys and girls.

And still a tiny fan turns
Above a forge of gold,
To keep, with fairy lanterns,
The world from growing old.

Wilfrid Thorley [1878–

THE BROOM FLOWER

OH the Broom, the yellow Broom,
The ancient poet sung it,
And dear it is on summer days
To lie at rest among it.

I know the realms where people say
The flowers have not their fellow;
I know where they shine out like suns,
The crimson and the yellow.

I know where ladies live enchained
In luxury's silken fetters,
And flowers as bright as glittering gems
Are used for written letters.

But ne'er was flower so fair as this,
In modern days or olden;
It groweth on its nodding stem
Like to a garland golden.

And all about my mother's door
Shine out its glittering bushes,
And down the glen, where clear as light
The mountain-water gushes.

Take all the rest; but give me this,
And the bird that nestles in it;
I love it, for it loves the Broom—
The green and yellow linnet.

Well call the rose the queen of flowers,
And boast of that of Sharon,
Of lilies like to marble cups,
And the golden rod of Aaron:

I care not how these flowers may be
Beloved of man and woman;
The Broom it is the flower for me,
That groweth on the common.

Oh the Broom, the yellow Broom,
The ancient poet sung it,
And dear it is on summer days
To lie at rest among it.

Mary Howitt [1799–1888]

THE SMALL CELANDINE

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain;
And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distressed,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
In close self-shelter, like a thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed
And recognized it, though an altered form,
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly-muttered voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold:
This neither is its courage, nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue."
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was gray.

To be a Prodigal's Favorite—then, worse truth,
A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot!
O Man, that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE

Pansies, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
Let them live upon their praises;
  Long as there's a sun that sets,
Primroses will have their glory;
  Long as there are violets,
They will have a place in story:
There's a flower that shall be mine,
'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
For the finding of a star;
  Up and down the heavens they go,
Men that keep a mighty rout!

I'm as great as them, I trow,
Since the day I found thee out.
Little Flower!—I'll make a stir,
Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf
Bold, and lavish of thyself;
Since we needs must first have met,
I have seen thee, high and low,
Thirty years or more, and yet
'Twas a face I did not know;
Thou hast now, go where I may,
Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
In the time before the thrush
Has a thought about her nest,
Thou wilt come with half a call,
Spreading out thy glossy breast
Like a careless Prodigal;
Telling tales about the sun,
When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood!
Travel with the multitude:
Never heed them; I aver
That they all are wanton wooers;
But the thrifty cottager,
Who stirs little out of doors,
Joys to spy thee near her home;
Spring is coming, Thou art come!

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
Kindly, unassuming Spirit!
Careless of thy neighborhood,
Thou dost show thy pleasant face
On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane;—there's not a place,
Howsoever mean it be,
But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
Children of the flaring hours!
Buttercups, that will be seen,
Whether we will see or no;
Others, too, of lofty mien;
They have done as worldings do,
Taken praise that should be thine,
Little, humble Celandine!

Prophet of delight and mirth,
Ill-requited upon earth;
Herald of a mighty band,
Of a joyous train ensuing,
Serving at my heart's command,
Tasks that are no tasks renewing,
I will sing, as dost behove,
Hymns in praise of what I love!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

FOUR-LEAF CLOVER

I KNOW a place where the sun is like gold,
And the cherry blossoms burst with snow,
And down underneath is the loveliest nook,
Where the four-leaf clovers grow.

One leaf is for hope, and one is for faith,
And one is for love, you know,
And God put another in for luck,—
If you search, you will find where they grow.

But you must have hope, and you must have faith,
You must love and be strong—and so,
If you work, if you wait, you will find the place
Where the four-leaf clovers grow.

Ella Higginson [1862–

SWEET CLOVER

WITHIN what weeks the melilot
Gave forth its fragrance, I, a lad,
Or never knew or quite forgot,
Save that 'twas while the year is glad.

Now know I that in bright July
It blossoms; and the perfume fine
Brings back my boyhood, until I
Am steeped in memory as with wine.

Now know I that the whole year long,
Though Winter chills or Summer cheers,
It writes along the weeks its song,
Even as my youth sings through my years.

Wallace Rice [1859–

"I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD"

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle in the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

TO DAFFODILS

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attained his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or any thing.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH, IN APRIL 1786

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonny gem.

Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet,
The bonny lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' speckled breast,
When upward-springing, blithe, to greet
The purpling east!

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield
High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod, or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet floweret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starred!
Unskillful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
He, ruined, sink!

Even thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

A FIELD FLOWER

THERE is a flower, a little flower
With silver crest and golden eye,
That welcomes every changing hour,
And weathers every sky.

The prouder beauties of the field
In gay but quick succession shine;
Race after race their honors yield,
They flourish and decline.

But this small flower, to Nature dear,
While moons and stars their courses run,
Wreathes the whole circle of the year,
Companion of the Sun.

It smiles upon the lap of May,
To sultry August spreads its charms,
Lights pale October on his way,
And twines December's arms.

The purple heath and golden broom
On moory mountains catch the gale;
O'er lawns the lily sheds perfume,
The violet in the vale.

But this bold floweret climbs the hill,
Hides in the forest, haunts the glen,
Plays on the margin of the rill,
Peeps round the fox's den.

Within the garden's cultured round
It shares the sweet carnation's bed;
And blooms on consecrated ground
In honor of the dead.

The lambkin crops its crimson gem;
The wild bee murmurs on its breast;
The blue-fly bends its pensile stem
Light o'er the skylark's nest.

'Tis Flora's page,—in every place,
In every season, fresh and fair;
It opens with perennial grace,
And blossoms everywhere.

On waste and woodland, rock and plain,
Its humble buds unheeded rise;
The Rose has but a summer reign;
The Daisy never dies!

James Montgomery [1771–1854]

TO DAISIES, NOT TO SHUT SO SOON

SHUT not so soon; the dull-eyed night
Has not as yet begun
To make a seizure on the light,
Or to seal up the sun.

No marigolds yet closèd are,
No shadows great appear;
Nor doth the early shepherd's star
Shine like a spangle here.

Stay but till my Julia close
Her life-begetting eye,
And let the whole world then dispose
Itself to live or die.

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

DAISIES

Over the shoulders and slopes of the dune
I saw the white daisies go down to the sea,
A host in the sunshine, an army in June,
The people God sends us to set our heart free.

The bobolinks rallied them up from the dell,
The orioles whistled them out of the wood;
And all of their saying was, "Earth, it is well!"
And all of their dancing was, "Life, thou art good!"

Bliss Carman [1861–

TO THE DAISY

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy! again I talk to thee,
For thou art worthy:
Thou unassuming common-place
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace,
Which love makes for thee!

Oft on the dappled turf at ease,
I sit, and play with similies,
Loose types of things through all degrees,
Thoughts of thy raising:
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame,
As is the humor of the game,
While I am gazing.

A nun demure, of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden of love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport
Of all temptations;
A queen in crown of rubies dressed
A starveling in a scanty vest;
Are all, as seem to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy—
That thought comes next—and instantly
    The freak is over.
The shape will vanish,—and behold!
A silver shield with boss of gold,
That spreads itself, some fairy bold
    In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar;—
And then thou art a pretty star;
Not quite so fair as many are
    In heaven above thee!
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air, thou seem'st to rest;—
May peace come never to his nest
    Who shall reprove thee!

Bright Flower! for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
    Sweet silent creature!
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
    Of thy meek nature!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

TO DAISIES

Ah, drops of gold in whitening flame
Burning, we know your lovely name—
Daisies, that little children pull!
Like all weak things, over the strong
Ye do not know your power for wrong,
And much abuse your feebleness.
Daisies, that little children pull,
As ye are weak, be merciful!
O hide your eyes! they are to me
Beautiful insupportably.

Or be but conscious ye are fair,
And I your loveliness could bear,
But, being fair so without art,
Ye vex the silted memories of my heart!

As a pale ghost yearning strays
With sundered gaze,
'Mid corporal presences that are
To it impalpable—such a bar
Sets you more distant than the morning-star.
Such wonder is on you, and amaze,
I look and marvel if I be
Indeed the phantom, or are ye?
The light is on your innocence
Which fell from me.
The fields ye still inhabit whence
My world-acquainted treading strays,
The country where I did commence;
And though ye shine to me so near,
So close to gross and visible sense,—
Between us lies impassable year on year.

To other time and far-off place
Belongs your beauty: silent thus,
Though to other naught you tell,
To me your ranks are rumorous
Of an ancient miracle.
Vain does my touch your petals graze,
I touch you not; and though ye blossom here,
Your roots are fast in alienated days.
Ye there are anchored, while Time's stream
Has swept me past them: your white ways
And infantile delights do seem
To look in on me like a face,
Dead and sweet, come back through dream,
With tears, because for old embrace
It has no arms.

These hands did toy,
Children, with you, when I was child,

And in each other's eyes we smiled:
Not yours, not yours the grievous-fair
Apparelling
With which you wet mine eyes; you wear,
Ah me, the garment of the grace
I wove you when I was a boy;
O mine, and not the year's your stolen Spring!
And since ye wear it,
Hide your sweet selves! I cannot bear it.
For when ye break the cloven earth
With your young laughter and endearment,
No blossomy carillon 'tis of mirth
To me; I see my slaughtered joy
Bursting its cerement.

Francis Thompson [1859?–1907]

TO THE DANDELION

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride, uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth, thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer-blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease;
'Tis the Spring's largess, which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy;
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime;
The eyes thou givest me
Are in the heart, and heed not space or time:
Not in mid June the golden-cuirassed bee
Feels a more summer-like warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent,
His fragrant Sybaris, than I, when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
Or whiten in the wind, of waters blue
That from the distance sparkle through
Some woodland gap, and of a sky above,
Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with thee;
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
Who, from the dark old tree
Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from heaven, which he could bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven, and could some wondrous secret show,
Did we but pay the love we owe,
And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

DANDELION

At dawn, when England's childish tongue
Lisped happy truths, and men were young,
Her Chaucer, with a gay content
Hummed through the shining fields, scarce bent
By poet's foot, and, plucking, set,
All lusty, sunny, dewy-wet,
A dandelion in his verse,
Like the first gold in childhood's purse.

At noon, when harvest colors die
On the pale azure of the sky,
And dreams through dozing grasses creep
Of winds that are themselves asleep,
Rapt Shelley found the airy ghost
Of that bright flower the spring loves most,
And ere one silvery ray was blown
From its full disk made it his own.

Now from the stubble poets glean
Scant flowers of thought; the Muse would wean
Her myriad nurslings, feeding them
On petals plucked from a dry stem.
For one small plumule still adrift,
The wind-blown dandelion's gift,
The fields once blossomy we scour
Where the old poets plucked the flower.

Annie Rankin Annan [18 --

THE DANDELIONS

Upon a showery night and still,
Without a sound of warning,
A trooper band surprised the hill,
And held it in the morning.

We were not waked by bugle-notes,
No cheer our dreams invaded,
And yet, at dawn, their yellow coats
On the green slopes paraded.

We careless folk the deed forgot;
  Till one day, idly walking,
We marked upon the self-same spot
  A crowd of veterans talking.

They shook their trembling heads and gray
  With pride and noiseless laughter;
When, well-a-day! they blew away,
  And ne'er were heard of after!

Helen Gray Cone [1859–

TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN

Thou blossom bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue,
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night,

Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone,
When woods are bare and birds are flown,
And frost and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope, blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

GOLDENROD

When the wayside tangles blaze
  In the low September sun,
When the flowers of Summer days
  Droop and wither, one by one,
Reaching up through bush and brier,
Sumptuous brow and heart of fire,
Flaunting high its wind-rocked plume,
Brave with wealth of native bloom,—
    Goldenrod!

When the meadow, lately shorn,
  Parched and languid, swoons with pain,
When her life-blood, night and morn,
  Shrinks in every throbbing vein,
Round her fallen, tarnished urn
Leaping watch-fires brighter burn;
Royal arch o'er Autumn's gate,
Bending low with lustrous weight,—
    Goldenrod!

In the pasture's rude embrace,
  All o'errun with tangled vines,
Where the thistle claims its place,
  And the straggling hedge confines,
Bearing still the sweet impress
Of unfettered loveliness,
In the field and by the wall,
Binding, clasping, crowning all,—
    Goldenrod!

Nature lies disheveled, pale,
  With her feverish lips apart,—
Day by day the pulses fail,
  Nearer to her bounding heart;
Yet that slackened grasp doth hold
Store of pure and genuine gold;

Quick thou comest, strong and free,
Type of all the wealth to be,—
Goldenrod!

Elaine Goodale Eastman [1863–

LESSONS FROM THE GORSE

Mountain gorses, ever-golden,
Cankered not the whole year long!
Do ye teach us to be strong,
Howsoever pricked and holden,
Like your thorny blooms, and so
Trodden on by rain and snow,
Up the hill-side of this life, as bleak as where ye grow?

Mountain blossoms, shining blossoms,
Do ye teach us to be glad
When no summer can be had,
Blooming in our inward bosoms?
Ye whom God preserveth still,
Set as lights upon a hill,
Tokens to the wintry earth that Beauty liveth still!

Mountain gorses, do ye teach us
From that academic chair
Canopied with azure air,
That the wisest word man reaches
Is the humblest he can speak?
Ye, who live on mountain peak,
Yet live low along the ground, beside the grasses meek!

Mountain gorses, since Linnæus
Knelt beside you on the sod,
For your beauty thanking God,—
For your teaching, ye should see us
Bowing in prostration new!
Whence arisen,—if one or two
Drops be on our cheeks—O world, they are not tears but dew.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

THE VOICE OF THE GRASS

HERE I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
By the dusty roadside,
On the sunny hillside,
Close by the noisy brook,
In every shady nook,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, smiling everywhere;
All round the open door,
Where sit the aged poor;
Here where the children play,
In the bright and merry May,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
In the noisy city street
My pleasant face you'll meet,
Cheering the sick at heart
Toiling his busy part,—
Silently creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
You cannot see me coming,
Nor hear my low sweet humming;
For in the starry night,
And the glad morning light,
I come quietly creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
More welcome than the flowers
In summer's pleasant hours;
The gentle cow is glad,
And the merry bird not sad,
To see me creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
When you're numbered with the dead
In your still and narrow bed,

In the happy spring I'll come
And deck your silent home,—
Creeping, silently creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
My humble song of praise
Most joyfully I raise
To Him at whose command
I beautify the land,
Creeping, silently creeping everywhere.

Sarah Roberts Boyle [1812–1869]

A SONG THE GRASS SINGS

The violet is much too shy,
The rose too little so;
I think I'll ask the buttercup
If I may be her beau.

When winds go by, I'll nod to her
And she will nod to me,
And I will kiss her on the cheek
As gently as may be.

And when the mower cuts us down,
Together we will pass,
I smiling at the buttercup,
She smiling at the grass.

Charles G. Blanden [1857–

THE WILD HONEYSUCKLE

Fair flower, that dost so comely grow,
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,
Untouched thy honied blossoms blow,
Unseen thy little branches greet:
No roving foot shall crush thee here,
No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white arrayed,
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
And sent soft waters murmuring by;
Thus quietly thy summer goes,
Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
I grieve to see your future doom;
They died—nor were those flowers more gay,
The flowers that did in Eden bloom;
Unpitying frosts and Autumn's power
Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
At first thy little being came;
If nothing once, you nothing lose,
For when you die you are the same;
The space between is but an hour,
The frail duration of a flower.

Philip Freneau [1752–1832]

THE IVY GREEN

Oh, a dainty plant is the Ivy green,
That creepeth o'er ruins old!
Of right choice food are his meals I ween,
In his cell so lone and cold.
The wall must be crumbled, the stone decayed,
To pleasure his dainty whim;
And the mouldering dust that years have made
Is a merry meal for him.
Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Fast he stealeth on, though he wears no wings,
And a staunch old heart has he.
How closely he twineth, how tight he clings
To his friend the huge Oak Tree!

And slily he traileth along the ground,
And his leaves he gently waves,
As he joyously hugs and crawleth round
The rich mould of dead men's graves.
Creeping where grim death has been,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Whole ages have fled and their works decayed,
And nations have scattered been;
But the stout old Ivy shall never fade,
From its hale and hearty green.
The brave old plant, in its lonely days,
Shall fatten upon the past:
For the stateliest building man can raise
Is the Ivy's food at last.
Creeping on, where time has been,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Charles Dickens [1812–1870]

YELLOW JESSAMINE

In tangled wreaths, in clustered gleaming stars,
In floating, curling sprays,
The golden flower comes shining through the woods
These February days;
Forth go all hearts, all hands, from out the town,
To bring her gayly in,
This wild, sweet Princess of far Florida—
The yellow jessamine.

The live-oaks smile to see her lovely face
Peep from the thickets; shy,
She hides behind the leaves her golden buds
Till, bolder grown, on high
She curls a tendril, throws a spray, then flings
Herself aloft in glee,
And, bursting into thousand blossoms, swings
In wreaths from tree to tree.

The dwarf-palmetto on his knees adores
This Princess of the air;
The lone pine-barren broods afar and sighs,
"Ah! come, lest I despair;"
The myrtle-thickets and ill-tempered thorns
Quiver and thrill within,
As through their leaves they feel the dainty touch
Of yellow jessamine.

The garden-roses wonder as they see
The wreaths of golden bloom,
Brought in from the far woods with eager haste
To deck the poorest room,
The rich man's house, alike; the loaded hands
Give sprays to all they meet,
Till, gay with flowers, the people come and go,
And all the air is sweet.

The Southern land, well weary of its green
Which may not fall nor fade,
Bestirs itself to greet the lovely flower
With leaves of fresher shade;
The pine has tassels, and the orange-trees
Their fragrant work begin:
The spring has come—has come to Florida,
With yellow jessamine.

Constance Fenimore Woolson [1840–1894]

KNAPWEED

By copse and hedgerow, waste and wall,
He thrusts his cushions red;
O'er burdock rank, o'er thistles tall,
He rears his hardy head:
Within, without, the strong leaves press,
He screens the mossy stone,
Lord of a narrow wilderness,
Self-centred and alone.

He numbers no observant friends,
He soothes no childish woes,
Yet nature nurtures him, and tends
As duly as the rose;
He drinks the blessèd dew of heaven,
The wind is in his ears,
To guard his growth the planets seven
Swing in their airy spheres.

The spirits of the fields and woods
Throb in his sturdy veins:
He drinks the secret, stealing floods,
And swills the volleying rains:
And when the bird's note showers and breaks
The wood's green heart within,
He stirs his plumy brow and wakes
To draw the sunlight in.

Mute sheep that pull the grasses soft
Crop close and pass him by,
Until he stands alone, aloft,
In surly majesty.
No fly so keen, no bee so bold,
To pierce that knotted zone:
He frowns as though he guarded gold,
And yet he garners none.

And so when autumn winds blow late,
And whirl the chilly wave,
He bows before the common fate,
And drops beside his grave.
None ever owed him thanks or said
"A gift of gracious heaven."
Down in the mire he droops his head;
Forgotten, not forgiven.

Smile on, brave weed! let none inquire
What made or bade thee rise:
Toss thy tough fingers high and higher
To flout the drenching skies.

Let others toil for others' good,
And miss or mar their own;
Thou hast brave health and fortitude
To live and die alone!

Arthur Christopher Benson [1862–

MOLY

The root is hard to loose
From hold of earth by mortals; but God's power
Can all things do. 'Tis black, but bears a flower
As white as milk.

—Chapman's *Homer*

Traveler, pluck a stem of moly,
If thou touch at Circe's isle,—
Hermes' moly, growing solely
To undo enchanter's wile!
When she proffers thee her chalice,—
Wine and spices mixed with malice,—
When she smites thee with her staff,
To transform thee, do thou laugh!
Safe thou art if thou but bear
The least leaf of moly rare.
Close it grows beside her portal,
Springing from a stock immortal,—
Yes! and often has the Witch
Sought to tear it from its niche;
But to thwart her cruel will
The wise God renews it still.
Though it grows in soil perverse,
Heaven hath been its jealous nurse,
And a flower of snowy mark
Springs from root and sheathing dark;
Kingly safeguard, only herb
That can brutish passion curb!
Some do think its name should be
Shield-Heart, White Integrity.
Traveler, pluck a stem of moly,
If thou touch at Circe's isle,—
Hermes' moly, growing solely
To undo enchanter's wile!

Edith M. Thomas [1854–

THE MORNING-GLORY

Was it worth while to paint so fair
Thy every leaf—to vein with faultless art
Each petal, taking the boon light and air
Of summer so to heart?

To bring thy beauty unto perfect flower,
Then, like a passing fragrance or a smile,
Vanish away, beyond recovery's power—
Was it, frail bloom, worth while?

Thy silence answers: "Life was mine!
And I, who pass without regret or grief,
Have cared the more to make my moment fine,
Because it was so brief.

"In its first radiance I have seen
The sun!—why tarry then till comes the night?
I go my way, content that I have been
Part of the morning light!"

Florence Earle Coates [1850–

THE MOUNTAIN HEART'S-EASE

By scattered rocks and turbid waters shifting,
By furrowed glade and dell,
To feverish men thy calm, sweet face uplifting,
Thou stayest them to tell

The delicate thought that cannot find expression,
For ruder speech too fair,
That, like thy petals, trembles in possession,
And scatters on the air.

The miner pauses in his rugged labor,
And, leaning on his spade,
Laughingly calls unto his comrade-neighbor
To see thy charms displayed.

But in his eyes a mist unwonted rises,
And for a moment clear
Some sweet home face his foolish thought surprises
And passes in a tear,—

Some boyish vision of his Eastern village,
Of uneventful toil,
Where golden harvests followed quiet tillage
Above a peaceful soil.

One moment only, for the pick, uplifting,
Through root and fibre cleaves,
And on the muddy current slowly drifting
Are swept thy bruisèd leaves.

And yet, O poet, in thy homely fashion,
Thy work thou dost fulfil,
For on the turbid current of his passion
Thy face is shining still!

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

THE PRIMROSE

Ask me why I send you here
This sweet Infanta of the year?
Ask me why I send to you
This Primrose, thus bepearled with dew?
I will whisper to your ears:—
The sweets of love are mixed with tears.

Ask me why this flower does show
So yellow-green, and sickly too?
Ask me why the stalk is weak
And bending, yet it doth not break?
I will answer:—These discover
What fainting hopes are in a lover.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO PRIMROSES FILLED WITH MORNING DEW

Why do ye weep, sweet babes? Can tears
Speak grief in you,
Who were but born
Just as the modest morn
Teemed her refreshing dew?
Alas, you have not known that shower
That mars a flower,
Nor felt the unkind
Breath of a blasting wind,
Nor are ye worn with years,
Or warped, as we,
Who think it strange to see
Such pretty flowers, like to orphans young,
To speak by tears, before ye have a tongue.

Speak, whimpering younglings, and make known
The reason why
Ye droop and weep;
Is it for want of sleep,
Or childish lullaby?
Or that ye have not seen as yet
The violet?
Or brought a kiss
From that Sweet-heart, to this?
—No, no, this sorrow shown
By your tears shed,
Would have this lecture read,
That things of greatest, so of meanest worth,
Conceived with grief are, and with tears brought forth.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO AN EARLY PRIMROSE

Mild offspring of a dark and sullen sire!
Whose modest form, so delicately fine,
Was nursed in whirling storms
And cradled in the winds;

Thee, when young Spring first questioned Winter's sway,
And dared the sturdy blusterer to the fight,
Thee on this bank he threw
To mark his victory.

In this low vale, the promise of the year,
Serene, thou openest to the nipping gale,
Unnoticed and alone,
Thy tender elegance.

So Virtue blooms, brought forth amid the storms
Of chill adversity; in some lone walk
Of life she rears her head,
Obscure and unobserved;

While every bleaching breeze that on her blows
Chastens her spotless purity of breast,
And hardens her to bear
Serene the ills of life.

Henry Kirke White [1785–1806]

THE RHODORA

ON BEING ASKED WHENCE IS THE FLOWER

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

THE ROSE

A ROSE, as fair as ever saw the North,
Grew in a little garden all alone;
A sweeter flower did Nature ne'er put forth,
Nor fairer garden yet was never known:
The maidens danced about it morn and noon,
And learnèd bards of it their ditties made;
The nimble fairies by the pale-faced moon
Watered the root and kissed her pretty shade.
But well-a-day!—the gardener careless grew;
The maids and fairies both were kept away,
And in a drought the caterpillars threw
Themselves upon the bud and every spray.
God shield the stock! If heaven send no supplies,
The fairest blossom of the garden dies.

William Browne [1591–1643]

WILD ROSES

ON long, serene midsummer days
Of ripening fruit and yellow grain,
How sweetly, by dim woodland ways,
In tangled hedge or leafy lane,
Fair wild-rose thickets, you unfold
Those pale pink stars with hearts of gold!

Your sleek patrician sisters dwell
On lawns where gleams the shrub's trim bosk,
In terraced gardens, tended well,
Near pebbled walk and quaint kiosk.
In costliest urns their colors rest;
They beam on beauty's fragrant breast!

But you in lowly calm abide,
Scarce heeded save by breeze or bee;
You know what splendor, pomp and pride
Full oft your brilliant sisters see;
What sorrow too, and bitter fears;
What mad farewells and hopeless tears.

How some are kept in old, dear books,
That once in bridal wreaths were worn;
How some are kissed, with tender looks,
And later tossed aside with scorn;
How some their taintless petals lay
On icy foreheads, pale as they!

So, while these truths you vaguely guess,
A-bloom in many a lonesome spot,
Shy roadside roses, may you bless
The fate that rules your modest lot,
Like rustic maids that meekly stand
Below the ladies of their land!

Edgar Fawcett [1847–1904]

THE ROSE OF MAY

Ah! there's the lily, marble pale,
The bonny broom, the cistus frail;
The rich sweet pea, the iris blue,
The larkspur with its peacock hue;
All these are fair, yet hold I will
That the Rose of May is fairer still.

'Tis grand 'neath palace walls to grow,
To blaze where lords and ladies go;
To hang o'er marble founts, and shine
In modern gardens, trim and fine;
But the Rose of May is only seen
Where the great of other days have been.

The house is mouldering stone by stone,
The garden-walks are overgrown;
The flowers are low, the weeds are high,
The fountain-stream is choked and dry,
The dial-stone with moss is green,
Where'er the Rose of May is seen.

The Rose of May its pride displayed
Along the old stone balustrade;
And ancient ladies, quaintly dight,
In its pink blossoms took delight;
And on the steps would make a stand
To scent its fragrance—fan in hand.

Long have been dead those ladies gay;
Their very heirs have passed away;
And their old portraits, prim and tall,
Are mouldering in the mouldering hall;
The terrace and the balustrade
Lie broken, weedy and decayed.

But blithe and tall the Rose of May
Shoots upward through the ruin gray;
With scented flower, and leaf pale green,
Such rose as it hath never been,
Left, like a noble deed, to grace
The memory of an ancient race.

Mary Howitt [1799–1888]

A ROSE

Blown in the morning, thou shalt fade ere noon.
What boots a life which in such haste forsakes thee?
Thou'rt wondrous frolic, being to die so soon,
And passing proud a little color makes thee.
If thee thy brittle beauty so deceives,
Know then the thing that swells thee is thy bane;
For the same beauty doth, in bloody leaves,
The sentence of thy early death contain.
Some clown's coarse lungs will poison thy sweet flower,
If by the careless plough thou shalt be torn;
And many Herods lie in wait each hour
To murder thee as soon as thou art born—
Nay, force thy bud to blow—their tyrant breath
Anticipating life, to hasten death!

Richard Fanshawe [1608–1666]

THE SHAMROCK

When April rains make flowers bloom
  And Johnny-jump-ups come to light,
And clouds of color and perfume
  Float from the orchards pink and white,
I see my shamrock in the rain,
  An emerald spray with raindrops set,
Like jewels on Spring's coronet,
  So fair, and yet it breathes of pain.

The shamrock on an older shore
  Sprang from a rich and sacred soil
Where saint and hero lived of yore,
  And where their sons in sorrow toil;
And here, transplanted, it to me
  Seems weeping for the soil it left:
The diamonds that all others see
  Are tears drawn from its heart bereft.

When April rain makes flowers grow,
  And sparkles on their tiny buds
That in June nights will over-blow
  And fill the world with scented floods,
The lonely shamrock in our land—
  So fine among the clover leaves—
For the old springtime often grieves,—
  I feel its tears upon my hand.

Maurice Francis Egan [1852–

TO VIOLETS

Welcome, maids of honor,
  You do bring
  In the Spring,
And wait upon her.

She has virgins many,
Fresh and fair;
Yet you are
More sweet than any.

You're the maiden posies,
And, so graced,
To be placed
'Fore damask roses.

Yet, though thus respected,
By and by
Ye do lie,
Poor girls, neglected.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

THE VIOLET

O FAINT, delicious, spring-time violet!
Thine odor, like a key,
Turns noiselessly in memory's wards to let
A thought of sorrow free.

The breath of distant fields upon my brow
Blows through that open door
The sound of wind-borne bells, more sweet and low,
And sadder than of yore.

It comes afar, from that belovèd place,
And that belovèd hour,
When life hung ripening in love's golden grace,
Like grapes above a bower.

A spring goes singing through its reedy grass;
The lark sings o'er my head,
Drowned in the sky—O, pass, ye visions, pass!
I would that I were dead!—

Why hast thou opened that forbidden door,
From which I ever flee?
O vanished Joy! O Love, that art no more,
Let my vexed spirit be!

O violet! thy odor through my brain
Hath searched, and stung to grief
This sunny day, as if a curse did stain
Thy velvet leaf.

William Wetmore Story [1819–1895]

TO A WOOD-VIOLET

In this secluded shrine,
O miracle of grace,
No mortal eye but mine
Hath looked upon thy face.

No shadow but mine own
Hath screened thee from the sight
Of Heaven, whose love alone
Hath led me to thy light.

Whereof—as shade to shade
Is wedded in the sun—
A moment's glance hath made
Our souls forever one.

John Banister Tabb [1845–1909]

THE VIOLET AND THE ROSE

The violet in the wood, that's sweet to-day,
Is longer sweet than roses of red June;
Set me sweet violets along my way,
And bid the red rose flower, but not too soon.
Ah violet, ah rose, why not the two?
Why bloom not all fair flowers the whole year through?
Why not the two, young violet, ripe rose?
Why dies one sweetness when another blows?

Augusta Webster [1837–1894]

TO A WIND-FLOWER

Teach me the secret of thy loveliness,
That, being made wise, I may aspire to be
As beautiful in thought, and so express
Immortal truths to earth's mortality;

Though to my soul ability be less
Than 'tis to thee, O sweet anemone.

Teach me the secret of thy innocence,
That in simplicity I may grow wise,
Asking from Art no other recompense
Than the approval of her own just eyes;
So may I rise to some fair eminence,
Though less than thine, O cousin of the skies.

Teach me these things, through whose high knowledge, I,—
When Death hath poured oblivion through my veins,
And brought me home, as all are brought, to lie
In that vast house, common to serfs and thanes,—
I shall not die, I shall not utterly die,
For beauty born of beauty—*that* remains.

Madison Cawein [1865–1914]

TO BLOSSOMS

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past
But you may stay yet here awhile
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What! were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought you forth
Merely to show your worth
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave:
And after they have shown their pride
Like you awhile, they glide
Into the grave.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

"'TIS THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER"

'Tis the last rose of summer,
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred,
No rose-bud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes,
Or give sigh for sigh.

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one!
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go, sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter
Thy leaves o'er the bed
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.

So soon may *I* follow,
When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle
The gems drop away.
When true hearts lie withered,
And fond ones are flown,
O who would inhabit
This bleak world alone?

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere.
Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn leaves lie dead;
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's tread;
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately
sprang and stood
In brighter light and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves, the gentle race of flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of ours.
The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold November
rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long ago,
And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the summer
glow;
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook, in autumn beauty
stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the
plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone, from upland,
glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such days
will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the
trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance
late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no
more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty died,
The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by my side.
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forest cast the
leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so brief:
Yet not unmeet it was that one like that young friend of
ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

GOD'S CREATURES

ONCE ON A TIME

Once on a time I used to dream
  Strange spirits moved about my way,
And I might catch a vagrant gleam,
  A glint of pixy or of fay;
Their lives were mingled with my own,
  So far they roamed, so near they drew;
And when I from a child had grown,
  I woke—and found my dream was true.

For one is clad in coat of fur,
  And one is decked with feathers gay;
Another, wiser, will prefer
  A sober suit of Quaker gray:
This one's your servant from his birth,
  And that a Princess you must please,
And this one loves to wake your mirth,
  And that one likes to share your ease.

O gracious creatures, tiny souls!
  You seem so near, so far away,
Yet while the cloudland round us rolls,
  We love you better every day.

Margaret Benson [18 -

TO A MOUSE

ON TURNING UP HER NEST WITH THE PLOW, NOVEMBER, 1785

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa' sae hasty,
  Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
  Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin' wi' the laive,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin',
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,—
Till, crash! the cruel coulter passed
Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men,
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us naught but grief an' pain,
For promised joy!

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But, och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward, though I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

THE GRASSHOPPER

Happy insect, what can be
In happiness compared to thee?
Fed with nourishment divine,
The dewy morning's gentle wine!
Nature waits upon thee still,
And thy verdant cup does fill;
'Tis filled wherever thou dost tread,
Nature's self's thy Ganymede.
Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing,
Happier than the happiest king!
All the fields which thou dost see,
All the plants belong to thee;
All the summer hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does sow and plow,
Farmer he, and landlord thou!
Thou dost innocently enjoy;
Nor does thy luxury destroy.
The shepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious than he.
Thee country hinds with gladness hear,
Prophet of the ripened year!
Thee Phoebus loves, and does inspire
Phoebus is himself thy sire.
To thee, of all things upon earth,
Life is no longer than thy mirth.
Happy insect! happy thou,
Dost neither age nor winter know;
But when thou'st drunk, and danced, and sung
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,

(Voluptuous and wise withal,
Epicurean animal!)
Sated with thy summer feast,
Thou retir'st to endless rest.

After Anacreon, by Abraham Cowley [1618–1667]

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

THE poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead:
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights, for when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half-lost,
The Grasshopper's among the grassy hills.

John Keats [1795–1821]

TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET

GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June;
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass;
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass;
O sweet and tiny cousins, that belong
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,

Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To sing in thoughtful ears their natural song—
In-doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

THE CRICKET

Little inmate, full of mirth,
Chirping on my kitchen hearth,
Wheresoe'er be thine abode
Always harbinger of good,
Pay me for thy warm retreat
With a song more soft and sweet;
In return thou shalt receive
Such a strain as I can give.

Thus thy praise shall be expressed,
Inoffensive, welcome guest!
While the rat is on the scout,
And the mouse with curious snout,
With what vermin else infest
Every dish, and spoil the best;
Frisking thus before the fire,
Thou hast all thy heart's desire.

Though in voice and shape they be
Formed as if akin to thee,
Thou surpassest, happier far,
Happiest grasshoppers that are;
Theirs is but a summer's song,
Thine endures the winter long,
Unimpaired, and shrill, and clear,
Melody throughout the year.

Neither night nor dawn of day
Puts a period to thy play:
Sing then—and extend thy span
Far beyond the date of man;

Wretched man, whose years are spent
In repining discontent,
Lives not, aged though he be,
Half a span, compared with thee.

From the Latin of Vincent Bourne,
by William Cowper [1731–1800]

TO A CRICKET

Voice of summer, keen and shrill,
Chirping round my winter fire,
Of thy song I never tire,
Weary others as they will,
For thy song with summer's filled—
Filled with sunshine, filled with June;
Firelight echo of that noon
Heard in fields when all is stilled
In the golden light of May,
Bringing scents of new-mown hay,
Bees, and birds, and flowers away,
Prithee, haunt my fireside still,
Voice of summer, keen and shrill.

William Cox Bennett [1820–1895]

TO AN INSECT

I love to hear thine earnest voice,
Wherever thou art hid,
Thou testy little dogmatist,
Thou pretty Katydid!
Thou mindest me of gentlefolks,—
Old gentlefolks are they,—
Thou say'st an undisputed thing
In such a solemn way.

Thou art a female, Katydid!
I know it by the trill
That quivers through thy piercing notes,
So petulant and shrill;

I think there is a knot of you
  Beneath the hollow tree,—
A knot of spinster Katydids,—
  Do Katydids drink tea?

Oh, tell me where did Katy live,
  And what did Katy do?
And was she very fair and young,
  And yet so wicked, too?
Did Katy love a naughty man,
  Or kiss more cheeks than one?
I warrant Katy did no more
  Than many a Kate has done.

Dear me! I'll tell you all about
  My fuss with little Jane,
And Ann, with whom I used to walk
  So often down the lane,
And all that tore their locks of black,
  Or wet their eyes of blue,—
Pray tell me, sweetest Katydid,
  What did poor Katy do?

Ah no! the living oak shall crash,
  That stood for ages still,
The rock shall rend its mossy base
  And thunder down the hill,
Before the little Katydid
  Shall add one word, to tell
The mystic story of the maid
  Whose name she knows so well.

Peace to the ever-murmuring race!
  And when the latest one
Shall fold in death her feeble wings
  Beneath the autumn sun,
Then shall she raise her fainting voice,
  And lift her drooping lid,
And then the child of future years
  Shall hear what Katy did.

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE SNAIL

To grass, or leaf, or fruit, or wall,
The snail sticks close, nor fears to fall,
As if he grew there, house and all
Together.

Within that house secure he hides,
When danger imminent betides,
Of storm, or other harm besides
Of weather.

Give but his horns the slightest touch,
His self-collecting power is such,
He shrinks into his house with much
Displeasure.

Where'er he dwells, he dwells alone,
Except himself, has chattels none,
Well satisfied to be his own
Whole treasure.

Thus, hermit-like, his life he leads,
Nor partner of his banquet needs,
And if he meets one, only feeds
The faster.

Who seeks him must be worse than blind
(He and his house are so combined),
If, finding it, he fails to find
Its master.

From the Latin of Vincent Bourne,
by William Cowper [1731–1800]

THE HOUSEKEEPER

THE frugal snail, with forecast of repose,
Carries his house with him where'er he goes;
Peeps out,—and if there comes a shower of rain,
Retreats to his small domicile amain.

Touch but a tip of him, a horn,—'tis well,—
He curls up in his sanctuary shell.
He's his own landlord, his own tenant; stay
Long as he will, he dreads no Quarter Day.
Himself he boards and lodges; both invites
And feasts himself; sleeps with himself o' nights.
He spares the upholsterer trouble to procure
Chattels; himself is his own furniture,
And his sole riches. Whereso'er he roam,—
Knock when you will,—he's sure to be at home.

From the Latin of Vincent Bourne,
by Charles Lamb [1775–1834]

THE HUMBLE-BEE

Burly, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines;
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And with softness touching all,

Tints the human countenance
With a color of romance,
And infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and birdlike pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's tongue
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;

Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

TO A BUTTERFLY

I've watched you now a full half-hour,
Self-poised upon that yellow flower;
And, little Butterfly! indeed
I know not if you sleep or feed.
How motionless! not frozen seas
More motionless! and then
What joy awaits you, when the breeze
Has found you out among the trees,
And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;
Here rest your wings when they are weary;
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
Come often to us, fear no wrong;
Sit near us on the bough!
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
And summer days, when we are young;
Sweet childish days, that were as long
As twenty days are now.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

ODE TO A BUTTERFLY

Thou spark of life that wavest wings of gold,
Thou songless wanderer mid the songful birds,
With Nature's secrets in thy tints unrolled
Through gorgeous cipher, past the reach of words,
Yet dear to every child
In glad pursuit beguiled,
Living his unspoiled days mid flowers and flocks and herds!

Thou wingèd blossom, liberated thing,
What secret tie binds thee to other flowers,
Still held within the garden's fostering?
Will they too soar with the completed hours,
Take flight, and be like thee
Irrevocably free,
Hovering at will o'er their parental bowers?

Or is thy luster drawn from heavenly hues,—
A sumptuous drifting fragment of the sky,
Caught when the sunset its last glance imbues
With sudden splendor, and the tree-tops high
Grasp that swift blazonry,
Then lend those tints to thee,
On thee to float a few short hours, and die?

Birds have their nests; they rear their eager young,
And flit on errands all the livelong day;
Each fieldmouse keeps the homestead whence it sprung;
But thou art Nature's freeman,—free to stray
Unfettered through the wood,
Seeking thine airy food,
The sweetness spiced on every blossomed spray.

The garden one wide banquet spreads for thee,
O daintiest reveller of the joyous earth!
One drop of honey gives satiety;
A second draught would drug thee past all mirth.
Thy feast no orgy shows;
Thy calm eyes never close,
Thou soberest sprite to which the sun gives birth.

And yet the soul of man upon thy wings
Forever soars in aspiration; thou
His emblem of the new career that springs
When death's arrest bids all his spirit bow.
He seeks his hope in thee
Of immortality.
Symbol of life, me with such faith endow!

Thomas Wentworth Higginson [1823–1911]

THE BUTTERFLY

I HOLD you at last in my hand,
Exquisite child of the air.
Can I ever understand
How you grew to be so fair?

You came to my linden tree
To taste its delicious sweet,
I sitting here in the shadow and shine
Playing around its feet.

Now I hold you fast in my hand,
You marvelous butterfly,
Till you help me to understand
The eternal mystery.

From that creeping thing in the dust
To this shining bliss in the blue!
God give me courage to trust,
I can break my chrysalis too!

Alice Freeman Palmer [1855–1902]

FIREFLIES

I SAW, one sultry night above a swamp,
The darkness throbbing with their golden pomp!
And long my dazzled sight did they entrance
With the weird chaos of their dizzy dance!
Quicker than yellow leaves, when gales despoil,
Quivered the brilliance of their mute turmoil,
Within whose light was intricately blent
Perpetual rise, perpetual descent.
As though their scintillant flickerings had met
In the vague meshes of some airy net!
And now mysteriously I seemed to guess,
While watching their tumultuous loveliness,
What fervor of deep passion strangely thrives
In the warm richness of these tropic lives,
Whose wings can never tremble but they show
These hearts of living fire that beat below!

Edgar Fawcett [1847–1904]

THE BLOOD HORSE

GAMARRA is a dainty steed,
Strong, black, and of a noble breed,
Full of fire, and full of bone,
With all his line of fathers known;
Fine his nose, his nostrils thin,
But blown abroad by the pride within!
His mane is like a river flowing,
And his eyes like embers glowing
In the darkness of the night,
And his pace as swift as light.

Look,—how 'round his straining throat
Grace and shifting beauty float!
Sinewy strength is in his reins,
And the red blood gallops through his veins;
Richer, redder, never ran
Through the boasting heart of man.
He can trace his lineage higher
Than the Bourbon dare aspire,—
Douglas, Guzman, or the Guelph,
Or O'Brien's blood itself!

He, who hath no peer, was born,
Here, upon a red March morn;
But his famous fathers dead
Were Arabs all, and Arab bred,
And the last of that great line
Trod like one of a race divine!
And yet,—he was but friend to one
Who fed him at the set of sun,
By some lone fountain fringed with green:
With him, a roving Bedouin,
He lived, (none else would he obey
Through all the hot Arabian day),
And died untamed upon the sands
Where Balkh amidst the desert stands.

Bryan Waller Procter [1787–1874]

BIRDS

Sure maybe ye've heard the storm-thrush
  Whistlin' bould in March,
Before there's a primrose peepin' out,
  Or a wee red cone on the larch;
Whistlin' the sun to come out o' the cloud,
  An' the wind to come over the sea,
But for all he can whistle so clear an' loud,
  He's never the bird for me.

Sure maybe ye've seen the song-thrush
  After an April rain
Slip from in-undher the drippin' leaves,
  Wishful to sing again;
An' low wi' love when he's near the nest,
  An' loud from the top o' the tree,
But for all he can flutter the heart in your breast,
  He's never the bird for me.

Sure maybe ye've heard the cushadoo
  Callin' his mate in May,
When one sweet thought is the whole of his life,
  An' he tells it the one sweet way.
But my heart is sore at the cushadoo
  Filled wid his own soft glee,
Over an' over his "me an' you!"
  He's never the bird for me.

Sure maybe ye've heard the red-breast
  Singin' his lone on a thorn,
Mindin' himself o' the dear days lost,
  Brave wid his heart forlorn.
The time is in dark November,
  An' no spring hopes has he:
"Remember," he sings, "remember!"
  Ay, *thon's* the wee bird for me.

Moira O'Neill [18

BIRDS

Birds are singing round my window,
Tunes the sweetest ever heard,
And I hang my cage there daily,
But I never catch a bird.

So with thoughts my brain is peopled,
And they sing there all day long:
But they will not fold their pinions
In the little cage of Song!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825–1903]

SEA-BIRDS

O lonesome sea-gull, floating far
Over the ocean's icy waste,
Aimless and wide thy wanderings are,
Forever vainly seeking rest:—
Where is thy mate, and where thy nest?

'Twixt wintry sea and wintry sky,
Cleaving the keen air with thy breast,
Thou sailest slowly, solemnly;
No fetter on thy wing is pressed:—
Where is thy mate, and where thy nest?

O restless, homeless human soul,
Following for aye thy nameless quest,
The gulls float, and the billows roll;
Thou watchest still, and questionest:—
Where is *thy* mate, and where thy nest?

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

THE LITTLE BEACH-BIRD

Thou little bird, thou dweller by the sea,
Why takest thou its melancholy voice,
And with that boding cry
Why o'er the waves dost fly?
O, rather, bird, with me
Through the fair land rejoice!

Thy flitting form comes ghostly dim and pale,
As driven by a beating storm at sea;
Thy cry is weak and scared,
As if thy mates had shared
The doom of us. Thy wail,—
What doth it bring to me?

Thou call'st along the sand, and haunt'st the surge,
Restless, and sad; as if, in strange accord
With the motion and the roar
Of waves that drive to shore,
One spirit did ye urge—
The Mystery—the Word.

Of thousands, thou, both sepulchre and pall,
Old Ocean! A requiem o'er the dead,
From out thy gloomy cells,
A tale of mourning tells,—
Tells of man's woe and fall,
His sinless glory fled.

Then turn thee, little bird, and take thy flight
Where the complaining sea shall sadness bring
Thy spirit nevermore.
Come, quit with me the shore,
For gladness and the light,
Where birds of summer sing.

Richard Henry Dana [1787–1879]

THE BLACKBIRD

How sweet the harmonies of afternoon:
The Blackbird sings along the sunny breeze
His ancient song of leaves, and summer boon;
Rich breath of hayfields streams through whispering trees;
And birds of morning trim their bustling wings,
And listen fondly—while the Blackbird sings.

How soft the lovelight of the West reposes
On this green valley's cheery solitude,
On the trim cottage with its screen of roses,
On the gray belfry with its ivy hood,

And murmuring mill-race, and the wheel that flings
Its bubbling freshness—while the Blackbird sings.

The very dial on the village church
Seems as 'twere dreaming in a dozy rest;
The scribbled benches underneath the porch
Bask in the kindly welcome of the West;
But the broad casements of the old Three Kings
Blaze like a furnace—while the Blackbird sings.

And there beneath the immemorial elm
Three rosy revellers round a table sit,
And through gray clouds give laws unto the realm,
Curse good and great, but worship their own wit,
And roar of fights, and fairs, and junketings,
Corn, colts, and curs—the while the Blackbird sings.

Before her home, in her accustomed seat,
The tidy Grandam spins beneath the shade
Of the old honeysuckle, at her feet
The dreaming pug, and purring tabby laid;
To her low chair a little maiden clings,
And spells in silence—while the Blackbird sings.

Sometimes the shadow of a lazy cloud
Breathes o'er the hamlet with its gardens green,
While the far fields with sunlight overflowed
Like golden shores of Fairyland are seen;
Again, the sunshine on the shadow springs,
And fires the thicket where the Blackbird sings.

The woods, the lawn, the peakèd Manorhouse,
With its peach-covered walls, and rookery loud,
The trim, quaint garden alleys, screened with boughs,
The lion-headed gates, so grim and proud,
The mossy fountain with its murmurings,
Lie in warm sunshine—while the Blackbird sings.

The ring of silver voices, and the sheen
Of festal garments—and my Lady streams
With her gay court across the garden green;
Some laugh, and dance, some whisper their love-dreams;

And one calls for a little page; he strings
Her lute beside her—while the Blackbird sings.

A little while—and lo! the charm is heard,
A youth, whose life has been all Summer, steals
Forth from the noisy guests around the board,
Creeps by her softly; at her footstool kneels;
And, when she pauses, murmurs tender things
Into her fond ear—while the Blackbird sings.

The smoke-wreaths from the chimneys curl up higher,
And dizzy things of eve begin to float
Upon the light; the breeze begins to tire;
Half way to sunset with a drowsy note
The ancient clock from out the valley swings;
The Grandam nods—and still the Blackbird sings.

Far shouts and laughter from the farmstead peal,
Where the great stack is piling in the sun;
Through narrow gates o'erladen wagons reel,
And barking curs into the tumult run;
While the inconstant wind bears off, and brings
The merry tempest—and the Blackbird sings.

On the high wold the last look of the sun
Burns, like a beacon, over dale and stream;
The shouts have ceased, the laughter and the fun;
The Grandam sleeps, and peaceful be her dream;
Only a hammer on an anvil rings;
The day is dying—still the Blackbird sings.

Now the good Vicar passes from his gate
Serene, with long white hair; and in his eye
Burns the clear spirit that hath conquered Fate,
And felt the wings of immortality;
His heart is thronged with great imaginings,
And tender mercies—while the Blackbird sings.

Down by the brook he bends his steps, and through
A lowly wicket; and at last he stands
Awful beside the bed of one who grew
From boyhood with him—who, with lifted hands

And eyes, seems listening to far welcomings,
And sweeter music than the Blackbird sings.

Two golden stars, like tokens from the Blest,
Strike on his dim orbs from the setting sun;
His sinking hands seem pointing to the West;
He smiles as though he said—"Thy will be done":
His eyes, they see not those illuminings;
His ears, they hear not what the Blackbird sings.

Frederick Tennyson [1807–1898]

THE BLACKBIRD

When smoke stood up from Ludlow
And mist blew off from Teme,
And blithe afield to ploughing
Against the morning beam
I strode beside my team,

The blackbird in the coppice
Looked out to see me stride,
And hearkened as I whistled
The trampling team beside,
And fluted and replied:

"Lie down, lie down, young yeoman;
What use to rise and rise?
Rise man a thousand mornings
Yet down at last he lies,
And then the man is wise."

I heard the tune he sang me,
And spied his yellow bill;
I picked a stone and aimed it
And threw it with a will:
Then the bird was still.

Then my soul within me
Took up the blackbird's strain,
And still beside the horses
Along the dewy lane
It sang the song again:

"Lie down, lie down, young yeoman;
The sun moves always west;
The road one treads to labor
Will lead one home to rest,
And that will be the best."

Alfred Edward Housman [1859–

THE BLACKBIRD

THE nightingale has a lyre of gold;
The lark's is a clarion call,
And the blackbird plays but a box-wood flute,
But I love him best of all.

For his song is all of the joy of life,
And we in the mad, spring weather,
We too have listened till he sang
Our hearts and lips together.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

THE BLACKBIRD

Ov all the birds upon the wing
Between the zunny showers o' spring,—
Vor all the lark, a-swingèn high,
Mid zing below a cloudless sky,
An' sparrows, clust'rèn roun' the bough,
Mid chatter to the men at plough,—
The blackbird, whisslèn in among
The boughs, do zing the gayest zong.

Vor we do hear the blackbird zing
His sweetest ditties in the spring,
When nippèn win's noo mwore do blow
Vrom northern skies, wi' sleet or snow,
But drēve light doust along between
The leäne-zide hedges, thick an' green;
An' zoo the blackbird in among
The boughs do zing the gayest zong.

'Tis blithe, wi' newly-opened eyes,
To zee the mornèn's ruddy skies;
Or, out a-haulèn frith or lops
Vrom new-plèshed hedge or new-velled copse,
To rest at noon in primrwose beds
Below the white-barked woak-trees' heads;
But there's noo time, the whole däy long,
Lik' evenèn wi' the blackbird's zong.

Vor when my work is all a-done
Avore the zettèn o' the zun,
Then blushèn Jeäne do walk along
The hedge to meet me in the drong,
An' stay till all is dim an' dark
Bezides the ashen tree's white bark;
An' all bezides the blackbird's shrill
An' runnèn evenèn-whissle's still.

An' there in bwoyhood I did rove
Wi' pryèn eyes along the drove
To vind the nest the blackbird meäde
O' grass-stalks in the high bough's sheäde;
Or climb aloft, wi' clingèn knees,
Vor crows' aggs up in swaÿèn trees,
While frightened blackbirds down below
Did chatter o' their little foe.
An' zoo there's noo pleäce lik' the drong,
Where I do hear the blackbird's zong.

William Barnes [1801–1886]

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly dressed,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest.
Hear him call in his merry note:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

THE O'LINCON FAMILY

A FLOCK of merry singing-birds were sporting in the grove;
Some were warbling cheerily, and some were making love:
There were Bobolincon, Wadolincon, Winterseeble, Conquedle,—
A livelier set was never led by tabor, pipe, or fiddle,—
Crying, "Phew, shew, Wadolincon, see, see, Bobolincon,
Down among the tickletops, hiding in the buttercups!

I know a saucy chap, I see his shining cap
Bobbing in the clover there—see, see, see!"

Up flies Bobolincon, perching on an apple-tree,
Startled by his rival's song, quickened by his raillery,
Soon he spies the rogue afloat, curveting in the air,
And merrily he turns about, and warns him to beware!
" 'Tis you that would a-wooing go, down among the rushes O!
But wait a week, till flowers are cheery,—wait a week, and, ere you marry,
Be sure of a house wherein to tarry!
Wadolink, Whiskodink, Tom Denny, wait, wait, wait!"

Every one's a funny fellow; every one's a little mellow;
Follow, follow, follow, follow, o'er the hill and in the hollow!
Merrily, merrily, there they hie; now they rise and now they fly;
They cross and turn, and in and out, and down in the middle and wheel about,—
With a "Phew, shew, Wadolincon! listen to me, Bobolincon!—
Happy's the wooing that's speedily doing, that's speedily doing,
That's merry and over with the bloom of the clover!
Bobolincon, Wadolincon, Winterseeble, follow, follow, follow me!"

Wilson Flagg [1805–1884]

THE BOBOLINK

Bobolink! that in the meadow,
Or beneath the orchard's shadow,
Keepest up a constant rattle
Joyous as my children's prattle,
Welcome to the north again!
Welcome to mine ear thy strain,
Welcome to mine eye the sight
Of thy buff, thy black and white.

Brighter plumes may greet the sun
By the banks of Amazon;
Sweeter tones may weave the spell
Of enchanting Philomel;
But the tropic bird would fail,
And the English nightingale,
If we should compare their worth
With thine endless, gushing mirth.

When the ides of May are past,
June and Summer nearing fast,
While from depths of blue above
Comes the mighty breath of love,
Calling out each bud and flower
With resistless, secret power,
Waking hope and fond desire,
Kindling the erotic fire,
Filling youths' and maidens' dreams
With mysterious, pleasing themes;
Then, amid the sunlight clear
Floating in the fragrant air,
Thou dost fill each heart with pleasure
By thy glad ecstatic measure.

A single note, so sweet and low,
Like a full heart's overflow,
Forms the prelude; but the strain
Gives no such tone again,
For the wild and saucy song
Leaps and skips the notes among,
With such quick and sportive play,
Ne'er was madder, merrier lay.

Gayest songster of the Spring!
Thy melodies before me bring
Visions of some dream-built land,
Where, by constant zephyrs fanned,
I might walk the livelong day,
Embosomed in perpetual May.
Nor care nor fear thy bosom knows;
For thee a tempest never blows;

But when our northern Summer's o'er,
By Delaware's or Schuylkill's shore
The wild rice lifts its airy head,
And royal feasts for thee are spread.
And when the Winter threatens there,
Thy tireless wings yet own no fear.
But bear thee to more southern coasts,
Far beyond the reach of frosts.

Bobolink! still may thy gladness
Take from me all taint of sadness;
Fill my soul with trust unshaken
In that Being who has taken
Care for every living thing,
In Summer, Winter, Fall, and Spring.

Thomas Hill [1818–1891]

MY CATBIRD

A CAPRICCIO

NIGHTINGALE I never heard,
Nor skylark, poet's bird;
But there is an æther-winger
So surpasses every singer,
(Though unknown to lyric fame,)
That at morning, or at nooning,
When I hear his pipe a-tuning,
Down I fling Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth,—
What are all their songs of birds worth?
All their soaring
Souls' outpouring?
When my Mimus Carolinensis,
(That's his Latin name,)
When my warbler wild commences
Song's hilarious rhapsody,
Just to please himself and me!
Primo Cantante!
Scherzo! Andante!
Piano, pianissimo!
Presto, prestissimo!

Hark! are there nine birds or ninety and nine?
And now a miraculous gurgling gushes
Like nectar from Hebe's Olympian bottle,
The laughter of tune from a rapturous throttle!
Such melody must be a hermit-thrush's!
But that other caroler, nearer,
Outrivaling rivalry with clearer
Sweetness incredibly fine!
Is it oriole, redbird, or bluebird,
Or some strange, un-Audubonèd new bird?
All one, sir, both this bird and that bird,
The whole flight are all the same catbird!
The whole visible and invisible choir you see
On one lithe twig of yon green tree.
Flitting, feathery Blondel!
Listen to his rondel!
To his lay romantical!
To his sacred canticle!
Hear him lilting,
See him tilting
His saucy head and tail, and fluttering
While uttering
All the difficult operas under the sun
Just for fun;
Or in tipsy revelry,
Or at love devilry,
Or, disdaining his divine gift and art,
Like an inimitable poet
Who captivates the world's heart
And don't know it.
Hear him lilt!
See him tilt!
Then suddenly he stops,
Peers about, flirts, hops,
As if looking where he might gather up
The wasted ecstasy just spilt
From the quivering cup
Of his bliss overrun.
Then, as in mockery of all
The tuneful spells that e'er did fall

From vocal pipe, or evermore shall rise,
He snarls, and mews, and flies.

William Henry Venable [1836–

THE HERALD CRANE

Oh! say you so, bold sailor
In the sun-lit deeps of sky!
Dost thou so soon the seed-time tell
In thy imperial cry,
As circling in yon shoreless sea
Thine unseen form goes drifting by?

I cannot trace in the noon-day glare
Thy regal flight, O crane!
From the leaping might of the fiery light
Mine eyes recoil in pain,
But on mine ear, thine echoing cry
Falls like a bugle strain.

The mellow soil glows beneath my feet,
Where lies the buried grain;
The warm light floods the length and breadth
Of the vast, dim, shimmering plain,
Throbbing with heat and the nameless thrill
Of the birth-time's restless pain.

On weary wing, plebeian geese
Push on their arrowy line
Straight into the north, or snowy brant
In dazzling sunshine, gloom and shine;
But thou, O crane, save for thy sovereign cry,
At thy majestic height
On proud, extended wings sweep'st on
In lonely, easeful flight.

Then cry, thou martial-throated herald!
Cry to the sun, and sweep
And swing along thy mateless, tireless course
Above the clouds that sleep

Afloat on lazy air—cry on! Send down
Thy trumpet note—it seems
The voice of hope and dauntless will,
And breaks the spell of dreams.

Hamlin Garland [1860–

THE CROW

With rakish eye and plenished crop,
Oblivious of the farmer's gun,
Upon the naked ash-tree top
The Crow sits basking in the sun.

An old ungodly rogue, I wot!
For, perched in black against the blue,
His feathers, torn with beak and shot,
Let woeful glints of April through.

The year's new grass, and, golden-eyed,
The daisies sparkle underneath,
And chestnut-trees on either side
Have opened every ruddy sheath.

But doubtful still of frost and snow,
The ash alone stands stark and bare,
And on its topmost twig the Crow
Takes the glad morning's sun and air.

William Canton [1845–

TO THE CUCKOO

Hail, beauteous stranger of the grove!
Thou messenger of Spring!
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome ring.

What time the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear:
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant! with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers.

The school-boy, wandering through the wood
To pull the primrose gay,
Starts, the new voice of Spring to hear,
And imitates thy lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom,
Thou fli'st thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another Spring to hail.

Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No Winter in thy year!

O could I fly, I'd fly with thee!
We'd make, with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Companions of the Spring.

John Logan [1748–1788]

THE CUCKOO

We heard it calling, clear and low,
That tender April morn; we stood
And listened in the quiet wood,
We heard it, ay, long years ago.

It came, and with a strange, sweet cry,
A friend, but from a far-off land;
We stood and listened, hand in hand,
And heart to heart, my Love and I.

In dreamland then we found our joy,
And so it seemed as 'twere the Bird
That Helen in old times had heard
At noon beneath the oaks of Troy.

O time far off, and yet so near!
It came to her in that hushed grove,
It warbled while the wooing throve,
It sang the song she loved to hear.

And now I hear its voice again,
And still its message is of peace,
It sings of love that will not cease—
For me it never sings in vain.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways,
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessèd Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place;
That is fit home for Thee!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE EAGLE

A FRAGMENT

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE HAWKBIT

How sweetly on the autumn scene,
When haws are red amid the green,
The hawkbit shines with face of cheer,
The favorite of the faltering year!

When days grow short and nights grow cold,
How fairly gleams its eye of gold
On pastured field and grassy hill,
Along the roadside and the rill!

It seems the spirit of a flower,
This offspring of the autumn hour,
Wandering back to earth to bring
Some kindly afterthought of spring,

A dandelion's ghost might so
Amid Elysian meadows blow,
Become more fragile and more fine
Breathing the atmosphere divine.

Charles G. D. Roberts [1860–

THE HERON

O MELANCHOLY Bird, a winter's day
Thou standest by the margin of the pool,
And, taught by God, dost thy whole being school
To Patience, which all evil can allay.
God has appointed thee the Fish thy prey;
And given thyself a lesson to the Fool
Unthrifty, to submit to moral rule,
And his unthinking course by thee to weigh.
There need not schools, nor the Professor's chair,
Though these be good, true wisdom to impart;
He, who has not enough for these to spare
Of time, or gold, may yet amend his heart,
And teach his soul, by brooks and rivers fair:
Nature is always wise in every part.

Edward Hovell-Thurlow [1781–1829]

THE JACKDAW

THERE is a bird, who by his coat,
And by the hoarseness of his note,
Might be supposed a crow;
A great frequenter of the church,
Where bishop-like he finds a perch,
And dormitory too.

Above the steeple shines a plate,
That turns and turns, to indicate
From what point blows the weather;
Look up—your brains begin to swim,
'Tis in the clouds—that pleases him,
He chooses it the rather.

Fond of the speculative height,
Thither he wings his airy flight,
And thence securely sees
The bustle and the raree-show,
That occupy mankind below,
Secure and at his ease.

You think, no doubt, he sits and muses
On future broken bones and bruises,
If he should chance to fall.
No: not a single thought like that
Employs his philosophic pate,
Or troubles it at all.

He sees that this great roundabout,
The world, with all its medley rout,
Church, army, physic, law,
Its customs, and its businesses
Is no concern at all of his,
And says—what says he?—"Caw."

Thrice happy bird! I too have seen
Much of the vanities of men;
And, sick of having seen 'em,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine,
And such a head between 'em.

From the Latin of Vincent Bourne,
by William Cowper [1731–1800]

THE GREEN LINNET

Beneath these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread
Of Spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat!
And flowers and birds once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest:
Hail to Thee, far above the rest
  In joy of voice and pinion!
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array
Presiding Spirit here to-day
Dost lead the revels of the May,
  And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
  Art sole in thy employment;
A Life, a Presence like the air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair,
  Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
  Yet seeming still to hover;
There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
  That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives—
A Brother of the dancing leaves;
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
  Pours forth his song in gushes,
As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign
  While fluttering in the bushes.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

TO THE MAN-OF-WAR-BIRD

Thou who hast slept all night upon the storm,
Waking renewed on thy prodigious pinions,

(Burst the wild storm? above it thou ascended'st,
And rested on the sky, thy slave that cradled thee,)
Now a blue point, far, far in heaven floating,
As to the light emerging here on deck I watch thee,
(Myself a speck, a point on the world's floating vast.)

Far, far at sea,
After the night's fierce drifts have strewn the shore with wrecks,
With re-appearing day as now so happy and serene,
The rosy and elastic dawn, the flashing sun,
The limpid spread of air cerulean,
Thou also re-appearest.

Thou born to match the gale, (thou art all wings,)
To cope with heaven and earth and sea and hurricane,
Thou ship of air that never furl'st thy sails,
Days, even weeks untired and onward, through spaces, realms gyrating,
At dusk that look'st on Senegal, at morn America,
That sport'st amid the lightning-flash and thunder-cloud,
In them, in thy experiences, hadst thou my soul,
What joys! what joys were thine!

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

THE MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT

When May bedecks the naked trees
With tassels and embroideries,
And many blue-eyed violets beam
Along the edges of the stream,
I hear a voice that seems to say,
Now near at hand, now far away,
"Witchery—witchery—witchery."

An incantation so serene,
So innocent, befits the scene:
There's magic in that small bird's note—
See, there he flits—the Yellow-throat;
A living sunbeam, tipped with wings,
A spark of light that shines and sings
"Witchery—witchery—witchery."

You prophet with a pleasant name,
If out of Mary-land you came,
You know the way that thither goes
Where Mary's lovely garden grows:
Fly swiftly back to her, I pray,
And try, to call her down this way,
"Witchery—witchery—witchery!"

Tell her to leave her cockle-shells,
And all her little silver bells
That blossom into melody,
And all her maids less fair than she.
She does not need these pretty things,
For everywhere she comes, she brings
"Witchery—witchery—witchery!"

The woods are greening overhead,
And flowers adorn each mossy bed;
The waters babble as they run—
One thing is lacking, only one:
If Mary were but here to-day,
I would believe your charming lay,
"Witchery—witchery—witchery!"

Along the shady road I look—
Who's coming now across the brook?
A woodland maid, all robed in white—
The leaves dance round her with delight,
The stream laughs out beneath her feet—
Sing, merry bird, the charm's complete,
"Witchery—witchery—witchery!"

Henry Van Dyke [1852–

LAMENT OF A MOCKING-BIRD

Silence instead of thy sweet song, my bird,
Which through the darkness of my winter days
Warbling of summer sunshine still was heard;
Mute is thy song, and vacant is thy place.

The spring comes back again, the fields rejoice,
  Carols of gladness ring from every tree;
But I shall hear thy wild triumphant voice
  No more: my summer song has died with thee.

What didst thou sing of, O my summer bird?
  The broad, bright, brimming river, whose swift sweep
And whirling eddies by the home are heard,
  Rushing, resistless, to the calling deep.

What didst thou sing of, thou melodious sprite?
  Pine forests, with smooth russet carpets spread,
Where e'en at noonday dimly falls the light,
  Through gloomy blue-green branches overhead.

What didst thou sing of, O thou jubilant soul?
  Ever-fresh flowers and never-leafless trees,
Bending great ivory cups to the control
  Of the soft swaying, orange scented breeze.

What didst thou sing of, thou embodied glee?
  The wide wild marshes with their clashing reeds
And topaz-tinted channels, where the sea
  Daily its tides of briny freshness leads.

What didst thou sing of, O thou wingèd voice?
  Dark, bronze-leaved oaks, with silver mosses crowned,
Where thy free kindred live, love, and rejoice,
  With wreaths of golden jasmine curtained round.

These didst thou sing of, spirit of delight!
  From thy own radiant sky, thou quivering spark!
These thy sweet southern dreams of warmth and light,
  Through the grim northern winter drear and dark.

Frances Anne Kemble [1809–1893]

"O NIGHTINGALE! THOU SURELY ART"

O NIGHTINGALE! thou surely art
A creature of a "fiery heart":—
These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce;
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!

Thou sing'st as if the God of wine
Had helped thee to a Valentine;
A song in mockery and despite
Of shades, and dews, and silent night;
And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say
His homely tale, this very day;
His voice was buried among trees,
Yet to be come at by the breeze:
He did not cease, but cooed—and cooed;
And somewhat pensively he wooed:
He sang of love, with quiet blending,
Slow to begin, and never ending;
Of serious faith, and inward glee;
That was the Song—the Song for me!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

PHILOMEL

As it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap and birds did sing,
Trees did grow and plants did spring;
Everything did banish moan
Save the Nightingale alone:
She, poor bird, as all forlorn
Leaned her breast up-till a thorn,
And there sung the doleful'st ditty,
That to hear it was great pity.
Fie, fie, fie! now would she cry;
Tereu, Tereu! by and by;
That to hear her so complain
Scarce I could from tears refrain;
For her griefs so lively shown
Made me think upon mine own.

Ah! thought I, thou mourn'st in vain,
None takes pity on thy pain:
Senseless trees they cannot hear thee,
Ruthless beasts they will not cheer thee:
King Pandion he is dead,
All thy friends are lapped in lead;
All thy fellow birds do sing
Careless of thy sorrowing:
Even so, poor bird, like thee,
None alive will pity me.

Richard Barnfield [1574–1627]

PHILOMELA

HARK! ah, the nightingale—
The tawny-throated!
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
What triumph! hark!—what pain!

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,
Still nourishing in thy bewildered brain
That wild, unquenched, deep-sunken, old-world pain—
Say, will it never heal?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy racked heart and brain
Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold,
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?
Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and seared eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's shame?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,

Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?
Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding through the leaves!
Again—thou hearest?
Eternal passion!
Eternal pain!

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

ON A NIGHTINGALE IN APRIL

The yellow moon is a dancing phantom
Down secret ways of the flowing shade;
And the waveless stream has a murmuring whisper
Where the alders wave.

Not a breath, not a sigh, save the slow stream's whisper:
Only the moon is a dancing blade
That leads a host of the Crescent warriors
To a phantom raid.

Out of the Lands of Faerie a summons,
A long, strange cry that thrills through the glade:—
The gray-green glooms of the elm are stirring,
Newly afraid.

Last heard, white music, under the olives
Where once Theocritus sang and played—
Thy Thracian song is the old new wonder,
O moon-white maid!

William Sharp [1855–1905]

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

Dear chorister, who from those shadows sends,
Ere that the blushing morn dare show her light,
Such sad lamenting strains, that night attends,
Become all ear, stars stay to hear thy plight:

If one whose grief even reach of thought transcends,
Who ne'er, not in a dream, did taste delight,
May thee importune who like care pretends,
And seems to joy in woe, in woe's despite;
Tell me (so may thou fortune milder try,
And long, long sing) for what thou thus complains,
Since, winter gone, the sun in dappled sky
Now smiles on meadows, mountains, woods, and plains?
The bird, as if my questions did her move,
With trembling wings sobbed forth, "I love! I love!"

William Drummond [1585–1649]

THE NIGHTINGALE

To-night retired, the queen of heaven
With young Endymion stays;
And now to Hesper it is given
Awhile to rule the vacant sky,
Till she shall to her lamp supply
A stream of brighter rays. . . .

Propitious send thy golden ray,
Thou purest light above:
Let no false flame seduce to stray
Where gulf or steep lie hid for harm;
But lead where music's healing charm
May soothe afflicted love.

To them, by many a grateful song
In happier seasons vowed,
These lawns, Olympia's haunt, belong:
Oft by yon silver stream we walked,
Or fixed, while Philomela talked,
Beneath yon copses stood.

Nor seldom, where the beechen boughs
That roofless tower invade,
We came, while her enchanting Muse
The radiant moon above us held:
Till, by a clamorous owl compelled,
She fled the solemn shade.

But hark! I hear her liquid tone!
Now, Hesper, guide my feet
Down the red marl with moss o'ergrown,
Through yon wild thicket next the plain,
Whose hawthorns choke the winding lane
Which leads to her retreat.

See the green space: on either hand
Enlarged it spreads around:
See, in the midst she takes her stand,
Where one old oak his awful shade
Extends o'er half the level mead,
Enclosed in woods profound.

Hark! how through many a melting note
She now prolongs her lays:
How sweetly down the void they float!
The breeze their magic path attends;
The stars shine out; the forest bends;
The wakeful heifers gaze.

Whoe'er thou art whom chance may bring
To this sequestered spot,
If then the plaintive Siren sing,
O softly tread beneath her bower
And think of Heaven's disposing power,
Of man's uncertain lot.

O think, o'er all this mortal stage
What mournful scenes arise:
What ruin waits on kingly rage;
How often virtue dwells with woe;
How many griefs from knowledge flow;
How swiftly pleasure flies!

O sacred bird! let me at eve,
Thus wandering all alone,
Thy tender counsel oft receive,
Bear witness to thy pensive airs,
And pity Nature's common cares,
Till I forget my own.

Mark Akenside [1721–1770]

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

O NIGHTINGALE that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still,
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love. O, if Jove's will
Have linked that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretell my hopeless doom, in some grove nigh;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why.
Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

John Milton [1608–1674]

PHILOMELA

THE Nightingale, as soon as April bringeth
Unto her rested sense a perfect waking,
While late-bare Earth, proud of new clothing, springeth,
Sings out her woes, a thorn her song-book making;
And mournfully bewailing,
Her throat in tunes expresseth
What grief her breast oppresseth,
For Tereus' force on her chaste will prevailing.

O Philomela fair, O take some gladness
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness!
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Alas! she hath no other cause of anguish
But Tereus' love, on her by strong hand wroken;
Wherein she suffering, all her spirits languish,
Full womanlike, complains her will was broken,

But I, who, daily craving,
Cannot have to content me,
Have more cause to lament me,
Since wanting is more woe than too much having.

O Philomela fair, O take some gladness
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness!
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Philip Sidney [1554–1586]

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage, that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret,
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and specter-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

John Keats [1795–1821]

SONG

'Tis sweet to hear the merry lark,
That bids a blithe good-morrow;
But sweeter to hark, in the twinkling dark,
To the soothing song of sorrow.
Oh nightingale! What doth she ail?
And is she sad or jolly?
For ne'er on earth was sound of mirth
So like to melancholy.

The merry lark, he soars on high,
No worldly thought o'ertakes him;
He sings aloud to the clear blue sky,
And the daylight that awakes him.
As sweet a lay, as loud, as gay,
The nightingale is trilling;
With feeling bliss, no less than his,
Her little heart is thrilling.

Yet ever and anon, a sigh
Peers through her lavish mirth;
For the lark's bold song is of the sky,
And hers is of the earth.
By night and day, she tunes her lay,
To drive away all sorrow;
For bliss, alas! to-night must pass,
And woe may come to-morrow.

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1840]

BIRD SONG

The robin sings of willow-buds,
Of snowflakes on the green;
The bluebird sings of Mayflowers,
The crackling leaves between;
The veery has a thousand tales
To tell to girl and boy;
But the oriole, the oriole,
Sings, "Joy! joy! joy!"

The pewee calls his little mate,
Sweet Phœbe, gone astray,
The warbler sings, "What fun, what fun,
To tilt upon the spray!"
The cuckoo has no song, but clucks,
Like any wooden toy;
But the oriole, the oriole,
Sings, "Joy! joy! joy!"

The grosbeak sings the rose's birth,
And paints her on his breast;
The sparrow sings of speckled eggs,
Soft brooded in the nest.
The wood-thrush sings of peace, "Sweet peace,
Sweet peace," without alloy;
But the oriole, the oriole,
Sings "Joy! joy! joy!"

Laura E. Richards [1850–

THE SONG THE ORIOLE SINGS

THERE is a bird that comes and sings
  In a professor's garden-trees;
Upon the English oak he swings,
  And tilts and tosses in the breeze.

I know his name, I know his note,
  That so with rapture takes my soul;
Like flame the gold beneath his throat,
  His glossy cope is black as coal.

O oriole, it is the song
  You sang me from the cottonwood,
Too young to feel that I was young,
  Too glad to guess if life were good.

And while I hark, before my door,
  Adown the dusty Concord Road,
The blue Miami flows once more
  As by the cottonwood it flowed.

And on the bank that rises steep,
  And pours a thousand tiny rills,
From death and absence laugh and leap
  My school-mates to their flutter-mills.

The blackbirds jangle in the tops
  Of hoary-antlered sycamores;
The timorous killdee starts and stops
  Among the drift-wood on the shores.

Below, the bridge—a noonday fear
  Of dust and shadow shot with sun—
Stretches its gloom from pier to pier,
  Far unto alien coasts unknown.

And on these alien coasts, above,
  Where silver ripples break the stream's
Long blue, from some roof-sheltering grove
  A hidden parrot scolds and screams.

Ah, nothing, nothing! Commonest things:
A touch, a glimpse, a sound, a breath—
It is a song the oriole sings—
And all the rest belongs to death.

But oriole, my oriole,
Were some bright seraph sent from bliss
With songs of heaven to win my soul
From simple memories such as this,

What could he tell to tempt my ear
From you? What high thing could there be,
So tenderly and sweetly dear
As my lost boyhood is to me?

William Dean Howells [1837–

TO AN ORIOLE

How falls it, oriole, thou hast come to fly
In tropic splendor through our Northern sky?

At some glad moment was it nature's choice
To dower a scrap of sunset with a voice?

Or did some orange tulip, flaked with black,
In some forgotten garden, ages back,

Yearning toward Heaven until its wish was heard,
Desire unspeakably to be a bird?

Edgar Fawcett [1847–1904]

SONG: THE OWL

When cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round;

Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

SWEET SUFFOLK OWL

Sweet Suffolk owl, so trimly dight
With feathers, like a lady bright;
Thou sing'st alone, sitting by night,
"Te whit! Te whoo!"

Thy note that forth so freely rolls
With shrill command the mouse controls;
And sings a dirge for dying souls.
"Te whit! Te whoo!"

Thomas Vautor [fl. 1616]

THE PEWEE

The listening Dryads hushed the woods;
The boughs were thick, and thin and few
The golden ribbons fluttering through;
Their sun-embroidered, leafy hoods
The lindens lifted to the blue:
Only a little forest-brook
The farthest hem of silence shook:
When in the hollow shades I heard,—
Was it a spirit, or a bird?
Or, strayed from Eden, desolate,
Some Peri calling to her mate,
Whom nevermore her mate would cheer?
"Pe-ri! pe-ri! peer!"

Through rocky clefts the brooklet fell
With plashy pour, that scarce was sound,
But only quiet less profound,
A stillness fresh and audible:
A yellow leaflet to the ground
Whirled noiselessly: with wing of gloss
A hovering sunbeam brushed the moss,
And, wavering brightly over it,
Sat like a butterfly alit:
The owlet in his open door
Stared roundly: while the breezes bore
The plaint to far-off places drear,—
"Pe-ree! pe-ree! peer!"

To trace it in its green retreat
I sought among the boughs in vain;
And followed still the wandering strain,
So melancholy and so sweet
The dim-eyed violets yearned with pain.
'Twas now a sorrow in the air,
Some nymph's immortalized despair
Haunting the woods and waterfalls;
And now, at long, sad intervals,
Sitting unseen in dusky shade,
His plaintive pipe some fairy played,
With long-drawn cadence thin and clear,—
"Pe-wee! pe-wee! peer!"

Long-drawn and clear its closes were,—
As if the hand of Music through
The somber robe of Silence drew
A thread of golden gossamer:
So pure a flute the fairy blew.
Like beggared princes of the wood,
In silver rags the birches stood;
The hemlocks, lordly counselors,
Were dumb; the sturdy servitors,
In beechen jackets patched and gray,
Seemed waiting spellbound all the day
That low, entrancing note to hear,—
"Pe-wee! pe-wee! peer!"

I quit the search, and sat me down
Beside the brook, irresolute,
And watched a little bird in suit
Of sober olive, soft and brown,
Perched in the maple-branches, mute:
With greenish gold its vest was fringed,
Its tiny cap was ebon-tinged,
With ivory pale its wings were barred,
And its dark eyes were tender-starred.
"Dear bird," I said, "what is thy name?"
And thrice the mournful answer came,
So faint and far, and yet so near,—
"Pe-wee! pe-wee! peer!"

For so I found my forest bird,—
The pewee of the loneliest woods,
Sole singer in these solitudes,
Which never robin's whistle stirred,
Where never bluebird's plume intrudes.
Quick darting through the dewy morn,
The redstart trilled his twittering horn,
And vanished in thick boughs: at even,
Like liquid pearls fresh showered from heaven,
The high notes of the lone wood-thrush
Fall on the forest's holy hush:
But thou all day complainest here,—
"Pe-wee! pe-wee! peer!"

Hast thou, too, in thy little breast,
Strange longings for a happier lot,—
For love, for life, thou know'st not what,—
A yearning, and a vague unrest,
For something still which thou hast not?—
Thou soul of some benighted child
That perished, crying in the wild!
Or lost, forlorn, and wandering maid,
By love allured, by love betrayed,
Whose spirit with her latest sigh
Arose, a little winged cry,
Above her chill and mossy bier!
"Dear me! dear me! dear!"

Ah, no such piercing sorrow mars
The pewee's life of cheerful ease!
He sings, or leaves his song to seize
An insect sporting in the bars
Of mild bright light that gild the trees.
A very poet he! For him
All pleasant places still and dim:
His heart, a spark of heavenly fire,
Burns with undying, sweet desire:
And so he sings; and so his song,
Though heard not by the hurrying throng,
Is solace to the pensive ear:
"Pewee! pewee! peer!"

John Townsend Trowbridge [1827–1916]

ROBIN REDBREAST

Sweet Robin, I have heard them say
That thou wert there upon the day
The Christ was crowned in cruel scorn
And bore away one bleeding thorn,—
That so the blush upon thy breast,
In shameful sorrow, was impressed;
And thence thy genial sympathy
With our redeemed humanity.

Sweet Robin, would that I might be
Bathed in my Saviour's blood, like thee;
Bear in my breast, whate'er the loss,
The bleeding blazon of the cross;
Live ever, with thy loving mind,
In fellowship with human-kind;
And take my pattern still from thee,
In gentleness and constancy.

George Washington Doane [1799–1859]

ROBIN REDBREAST

Good-by, good-by to Summer!
For Summer's nearly done;
The garden smiling faintly,
Cool breezes in the sun;

Our thrushes now are silent,
Our swallows flown away,—
But Robin's here in coat of brown,
And scarlet breast-knot gay.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear!
Robin sings so sweetly
In the falling of the year.

Bright yellow, red, and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts;
The trees are Indian princes,
But soon they'll turn to ghosts;
The scanty pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough;
It's Autumn, Autumn, Autumn late,
'Twill soon be Winter now.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear!
And what will this poor Robin do?
For pinching days are near.

The fireside for the cricket,
The wheat-stack for the mouse,
When trembling night-winds whistle
And moan all round the house.
The frosty ways like iron,
The branches plumed with snow,—
Alas! in Winter dead and dark,
Where can poor Robin go?
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear!
And a crumb of bread for Robin,
His little heart to cheer!

William Allingham [1824–1889]

THE SANDPIPER

Across the narrow beach we flit,
One little sandpiper and I,
And fast I gather, bit by bit,
The scattered driftwood bleached and dry.

The wild waves reach their hands for it,
  The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,—
  One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds
  Scud black and swift across the sky;
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
  Stand out the white lighthouses high.
Almost as far as eye can reach
  I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach,—
  One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along,
  Uttering his sweet and mournful cry.
He starts not at my fitful song,
  Or flash of fluttering drapery.
He has no thought of any wrong;
  He scans me with a fearless eye:
Staunch friends are we, well tried and strong,
  The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night
  When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!
  To what warm shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth
  The tempest rushes through the sky:
For are we not God's children both,
  Thou, little sandpiper, and I?

Celia Thaxter [1835–1894]

THE SEA-MEW

How joyously the young sea-mew
Lay dreaming on the waters blue,
Whereon our little bark had thrown
A little shade, the only one,—
But shadows ever man pursue.

Familiar with the waves and free
As if their own white foam were he,
His heart upon the heart of ocean
Lay learning all its mystic motion,
And throbbing to the throbbing sea.

And such a brightness in his eye,
As if the ocean and the sky
Within him had lit up and nursed
A soul God gave him not at first
To comprehend their majesty.

We were not cruel, yet did sunder
His white wing from the blue waves under,
And bound it, while his fearless eyes
Shone up to ours in calm surprise,
As deeming us some ocean wonder!

We bore our ocean bird unto
A grassy place, where he might view
The flowers that curtsey to the bees,
The waving of the tall green trees,
The falling of the silver dew.

But flowers of earth were pale to him
Who had seen the rainbow fishes swim;
And when earth's dew around him lay
He thought of ocean's wingèd spray,
And his eye waxèd sad and dim.

The green trees round him only made
A prison with their darksome shade;
And dropped his wing, and mournèd he
For his own boundless glittering sea—
Albeit he knew not they could fade.

Then One her gladsome face did bring,
Her gentle voice's murmuring,
In ocean's stead his heart to move
And teach him what was human love:
He thought it a strange, mournful thing.

He lay down in his grief to die
(First looking to the sea-like sky
That hath no waves!), because, alas!
Our human touch did on him pass,
And, with our touch, our agony.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

TO A SKYLARK

Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
For thy song, Lark, is strong;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds!
Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses dreary
And to-day my heart is weary;
Had I now the wings of a Fairy,
Up to thee would I fly.
There is madness about thee, and joy divine
In that song of thine;
Lift me, guide me high and high
To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning
Thou art laughing and scorning;
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest.
And, though little troubled with sloth,
Drunken Lark! thou would'st be loth
To be such a traveler as I.
Happy, happy Liver,
With a soul as strong as a mountain river
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,
Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind;
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,

I, with my fate contented, will plod on,
And hope for higher raptures, when life's day is done.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

TO A SKYLARK

Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted strain
—'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond—
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine,
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine:
Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam—
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE SKYLARK

Bird of the wilderness,
Blithesome and cumberless,
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
O to abide in the desert with thee!

Wild is thy lay and loud,
Far in the downy cloud,

Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.
Where, on thy dewy wing,
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!

Then, when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
O to abide in the desert with thee!

James Hogg [1770–1835]

THE SKYLARK

How the blithe Lark runs up the golden stair
That leans through cloudy gates from Heaven to Earth
And all alone in the empyreal air
Fills it with jubilant sweet songs of mirth;
How far he seems, how far
With the light upon his wings,
Is it a bird, or star
That shines, and sings?

What matter if the days be dark and frore,
That sunbeam tells of other days to be,
And singing in the light that floods him o'er
In joy he overtakes Futurity;
Under cloud-arches vast
He peeps, and sees behind
Great Summer coming fast
Adown the wind!

And now he dives into a rainbow's rivers,
In streams of gold and purple he is drowned,
Shrilly the arrows of his song he shivers,
As though the stormy drops were turned to sound;
And now he issues through,
He scales a cloudy tower,
Faintly, like falling dew,
His fast notes shower.

Let every wind be hushed, that I may hear
The wondrous things he tells the World below,
Things that we dream of he is watching near,
Hopes that we never dreamed he would bestow;
Alas! the storm hath rolled
Back the gold gates again,
Or surely he had told
All Heaven to men!

So the victorious Poet sings alone,
And fills with light his solitary home,
And through that glory sees new worlds foreshown,
And hears high songs, and triumphs yet to come;
He waves the air of Time
With thrills of golden chords,
And makes the world to climb
On linkèd words.

What if his hair be gray, his eyes be dim,
If wealth forsake him, and if friends be cold,
Wonder unbars her thousand gates to him,
Truth never fails, nor Beauty waxes old;
More than he tells his eyes
Behold, his spirit hears,
Of grief, and joy, and sighs
'Twixt joy and tears.

Blest is the man who with the sound of song
Can charm away the heartache, and forget
The frost of Penury, and the stings of Wrong,
And drown the fatal whisper of Regret!

Darker are the abodes
Of Kings, though his be poor,
While Fancies, like the Gods,
Pass through his door.

Singing thou scalest Heaven upon thy wings,
Thou liftest a glad heart into the skies;
He maketh his own sunrise, while he sings,
And turns the dusty Earth to Paradise;
I see thee sail along
Far up the sunny streams,
Unseen, I hear his song,
I see his dreams.

Frederick Tennyson [1807–1898]

TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher,
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves:

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chaunt,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

THE STORMY PETREL

A THOUSAND miles from land are we,
Tossing about on the roaring sea,—
From billow to bounding billow cast,
Like fleecy snow on the stormy blast.
The sails are scattered abroad like weeds;
The strong masts shake like quivering reeds;
The mighty cables and iron chains,
The hull, which all earthly strength disdains,—
They strain and they crack; and hearts like stone
Their natural, hard, proud strength disown.

Up and down!—up and down!
From the base of the wave to the billow's crown,
And amidst the flashing and feathery foam
The stormy petrel finds a home,—
A home, if such a place may be
For her who lives on the wide, wide sea,
On the craggy ice, in the frozen air,
And only seeketh her rocky lair

To warm her young, and to teach them to spring
At once o'er the waves on their stormy wing!

O'er the deep!—o'er the deep!
Where the whale and the shark and the swordfish sleep,—
Outflying the blast and the driving rain,
The petrel telleth her tale—in vain;
For the mariner curseth the warning bird
Which bringeth him news of the storm unheard!
Ah! thus does the prophet, of good or ill,
Meet hate from the creatures he serveth still;
Yet he ne'er falters,—so, petrel, spring
Once more o'er the waves on thy stormy wing!

Bryan Waller Procter [1787–1874]

THE FIRST SWALLOW

The gorse is yellow on the heath,
The banks with speedwell flowers are gay,
The oaks are budding, and, beneath,
The hawthorn soon will bear the wreath,
The silver wreath, of May.

The welcome guest of settled Spring,
The swallow, too, has come at last;
Just at sunset, when thrushes sing,
I saw her dash with rapid wing,
And hailed her as she passed.

Come, summer visitant, attach
To my reed roof your nest of clay,
And let my ear your music catch,
Low twittering underneath the thatch
At the gray dawn of day.

Charlotte Smith [1749–1806]

TO A SWALLOW BUILDING UNDER OUR EAVES

Thou too hast traveled, little fluttering thing,—
Hast seen the world, and now thy weary wing

Thou too must rest.
But much, my little bird, could'st thou but tell,
I'd give to know why here thou lik'st so well
To build thy nest.

For thou hast passed fair places in thy flight;
A world lay all beneath thee where to light;
And, strange thy taste,
Of all the varied scenes that met thine eye,
Of all the spots for building 'neath the sky,
To choose this waste!

Did fortune try thee?—was thy little purse
Perchance run low, and thou, afraid of worse,
Felt here secure?
Ah, no! thou need'st not gold, thou happy one!
Thou know'st it not. Of all God's creatures, man
Alone is poor.

What was it, then?—some mystic turn of thought,
Caught under German eaves, and hither brought,
Marring thine eye
For the world's loveliness, till thou art grown
A sober thing that dost but mope and moan,
Not knowing why?

Nay, if thy mind be sound, I need not ask,
Since here I see thee working at thy task
With wing and beak.
A well-laid scheme doth that small head contain,
At which thou work'st, brave bird, with might and main,
Nor more need'st seek.

In truth, I rather take it thou hast got
By instinct wise much sense about thy lot,
And hast small care
Whether an Eden or a desert be
Thy home, so thou remain'st alive, and free
To skim the air.

God speed thee, pretty bird! May thy small nest
With little ones all in good time be blest.

I love thee much;
For well thou managest that life of thine,
While I—oh, ask not what I do with mine!
Would I were such!

Jane Welsh Carlyle [1801–1866]

CHIMNEY SWALLOWS

I SLEPT in an old homestead by the sea:
And in their chimney nest,
At night the swallows told home-lore to me,
As to a friendly guest.

A liquid twitter, low, confiding, glad,
From many glossy throats,
Was all the voice; and yet its accents had
A poem's golden notes.

Quaint legends of the fireside and the shore,
And sounds of festal cheer,
And tones of those whose tasks of love are o'er,
Were breathed into mine ear;

And wondrous lyrics, felt but never sung,
The heart's melodious bloom;
And histories, whose perfumes long have clung
About each hallowed room.

I heard the dream of lovers, as they found
At last their hour of bliss,
And fear and pain and long suspense were drowned
In one heart-healing kiss.

I heard the lullaby of babes, that grew
To sons and daughters fair;
And childhood's angels, singing as they flew,
And sobs of secret prayer.

I heard the voyagers who seemed to sail
Into the sapphire sky,
And sad, weird voices in the autumn gale,
As the swift ships went by;

And sighs suppressed and converse soft and low
About the sufferer's bed,
And what is uttered when the stricken know
That the dear one is dead;

And steps of those who, in the Sabbath light,
Muse with transfigured face;
And hot lips pressing, through the long, dark night,
The pillow's empty place;

And fervent greetings of old friends, whose path
In youth had gone apart,
But to each other brought life's aftermath,
With uncorroded heart.

The music of the seasons touched the strain,
Bird-joy and laugh of flowers,
The orchard's bounty and the yellow grain,
Snow storm and sunny showers;

And secrets of the soul that doubts and yearns
And gropes in regions dim,
Till, meeting Christ with raptured eye, discerns
Its perfect life in Him.

So, thinking of the Master and his tears,
And how the birds are kept,
I sank in arms that folded me from fears,
And like an infant, slept.

Horatio Nelson Powers [1826–1890]

ITYLUS

Swallow, my sister, O sister swallow,
How can thine heart be full of the spring?
A thousand summers are over and dead.
What hast thou found in the spring to follow?
What hast thou found in thine heart to sing?
What wilt thou do when the summer is shed?

O swallow, sister, O fair swift swallow,
Why wilt thou fly after spring to the south,
The soft south whither thine heart is set?
Shall not the grief of the old time follow?
Shall not the song thereof cleave to thy mouth?
Hast thou forgotten ere I forget?

Sister, my sister, O fleet sweet swallow,
Thy way is long to the sun and the south;
But I, fulfilled of my heart's desire,
Shedding my song upon height, upon hollow,
From tawny body and sweet small mouth
Feed the heart of the night with fire.

I the nightingale all spring through,
O swallow, sister, O changing swallow,
All spring through till the spring be done,
Clothed with the light of the night on the dew,
Sing, while the hours and the wild birds follow,
Take flight and follow and find the sun.

Sister, my sister, O soft light swallow,
Though all things feast in the spring's guest-chamber,
How hast thou heart to be glad thereof yet?
For where thou fliest I shall not follow,
Till life forget and death remember,
Till thou remember and I forget.

Swallow, my sister, O singing swallow,
I know not how thou hast heart to sing.
Hast thou the heart? is it all passed over?
Thy lord the summer is good to follow,
And fair the feet of thy lover the spring:
But what wilt thou say to the spring thy lover?

O swallow, sister, O fleeting swallow,
My heart in me is a molten ember
And over my head the waves have met.
But thou wouldst tarry or I would follow
Could I forget or thou remember,
Couldst thou remember and I forget.

O sweet stray sister, O shifting swallow,
The heart's division divideth us.
Thy heart is light as a leaf of a tree;
But mine goes forth among sea-gulfs hollow
To the place of the slaying of Itylus,
The feast of Daulis, the Thracian sea.

O swallow, sister, O rapid swallow,
I pray thee sing not a little space.
Are not the roofs and the lintels wet?
The woven web that was plain to follow,
The small slain body, the flower-like face,
Can I remember if thou forget?

O sister, sister, thy first-begotten!
The hands that cling and the feet that follow,
The voice of the child's blood crying yet,
Who hath remembered me? who hath forgotten?
Thou hast forgotten, O summer swallow,
But the world shall end when I forget.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

THE THROSTLE

"Summer is coming, summer is coming,
I know it, I know it, I know it.
Light again, leaf again, life again, love again,"
Yes, my wild little Poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.
Last year you sang it as gladly.
"New, new, new, new!" Is it then *so* new
That you should carol so madly?

"Love again, song again, nest again, young again,"
Never a prophet so crazy!
And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,
See, there is hardly a daisy.

"Here again, here, here, here, happy year!"
O warble unchidden, unbidden!
Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,
And all the winters are hidden.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

OVERFLOW

Hush!
With sudden gush
As from a fountain, sings in yonder bush
The Hermit Thrush.

Hark!
Did ever Lark
With swifter scintillations fling the spark
That fires the dark?

Again,
Like April rain
Of mist and sunshine mingled, moves the strain
O'er hill and plain.

Strong
As love, O Song,
In flame or torrent sweep through Life along,
O'er grief and wrong.

John Banister Tabb [1845–1909]

JOY-MONTH

Oh, hark to the brown thrush! hear how he sings!
How he pours the dear pain of his gladness!
What a gush! and from out what golden springs!
What a rage of how sweet madness!

And golden the buttercup blooms by the way,
A song of the joyous ground;
While the melody rained from yonder spray
Is a blossom in fields of sound.

How glisten the eyes of the happy leaves!
  How whispers each blade, "I am blest!"
Rosy Heaven his lips to flowered earth gives,
  With the costliest bliss of his breast.

Pour, pour of the wine of thy heart, O Nature!
  By cups of field and of sky,
By the brimming soul of every creature!—
  Joy-mad, dear Mother, am I.

Tongues, tongues for my joy, for my joy! more tongues!—
  Oh, thanks to the thrush on the tree,
To the sky, and to all earth's blooms and songs!
  They utter the heart in me.

David Atwood Wasson [1823–1887]

MY THRUSH

All through the sultry hours of June,
From morning blithe to golden noon,
  And till the star of evening climbs
The gray-blue East, a world too soon,
  There sings a Thrush amid the limes.

God's poet, hid in foliage green,
Sings endless songs, himself unseen;
  Right seldom come his silent times.
Linger, ye summer hours serene!
  Sing on, dear Thrush, amid the limes!

Nor from these confines wander out,
Where the old gun, bucolic lout,
  Commits all day his murderous crimes:
Though cherries ripe are sweet, no doubt,
  Sweeter thy song amid the limes.

May I not dream God sends thee there,
Thou mellow angel of the air,
  Even to rebuke my earthlier rhymes
With music's soul, all praise and prayer?
  Is that thy lesson in the limes?

Closer to God art thou than I:
His minstrel thou, whose brown wings fly
Through silent ether's summer climes.
Ah, never may thy music die!
Sing on, dear Thrush, amid the limes!

Mortimer Collins [1827–1876]

"BLOW SOFTLY, THRUSH"

Blow softly, thrush, upon the hush
That makes the least leaf loud,
Blow, wild of heart, remote, apart
From all the vocal crowd,
Apart, remote, a spirit note
That dances meltingly afloat,
Blow faintly, thrush!
And build the green-hid waterfall
I hated for its beauty, and all
The unloved vernal rapture and flush,
The old forgotten lonely time,
Delicate thrush!
Spring's at the prime, the world's in chime,
And my love is listening nearly;
O lightly blow the ancient woe,
Flute of the wood, blow clearly!
Blow, she is here, and the world all dear,
Melting flute of the hush,
Old sorrow estranged, enriched, sea-changed,
Breathe it, veery thrush!

Joseph Russell Taylor [1868–

THE BLACK VULTURE

Aloof upon the day's immeasured dome,
He holds unshared the silence of the sky.
Far down his bleak, relentless eyes descry
The eagle's empire and the falcon's home—
Far down, the galleons of sunset roam;
His hazards on the sea of morning lie;
Serene, he hears the broken tempest sigh
Where cold sierras gleam like scattered foam.
And least of all he holds the human swarm—
Unwitting now that envious men prepare
To make their dream and its fulfillment one

When, poised above the caldrons of the storm,
Their hearts, contemptuous of death, shall dare
His roads between the thunder and the sun.

George Sterling [1869–

WILD GEESE

How oft against the sunset sky or moon
I watched that moving zigzag of spread wings
In unforgotten Autumns gone too soon,
In unforgotten Springs!
Creatures of desolation, far they fly
Above all lands bound by the curling foam;
In misty fens, wild moors and trackless sky
These wild things have their home.
They know the tundra of Siberian coasts.
And tropic marshes by the Indian seas;
They know the clouds and night and starry hosts
From Crux to Pleiades.
Dark flying rune against the western glow—
It tells the sweep and loneliness of things,
Symbol of Autumns vanished long ago.
Symbol of coming Springs!

Frederick Peterson [1859–

TO A WATERFOWL

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
The desert and illimitable air,—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

THE WOOD-DOVE'S NOTE

Meadows with yellow cowslips all aglow,
Glory of sunshine on the uplands bare,
And faint and far, with sweet elusive flow,
The Wood-dove's plaintive call,
"O where! where! where!"

Straight with old Omar in the almond grove
From whitening boughs I breathe the odors rare
And hear the princess mourning for her love
With sad unwearied plaint,
"O where! where! where!"

New madrigals in each soft pulsing throat—
New life upleaping to the brooding air—
Still the heart answers to that questing note,
"Soul of the vanished years,
O where! where! where!"

Emily Huntington Miller [1833–1913]

THE SEA

SONG FOR ALL SEAS, ALL SHIPS

I

To-day a rude brief recitative,
Of ships sailing the seas, each with its special flag or ship-signal,
Of unnamed heroes in the ships—of waves spreading and spreading far as the eye can reach,
Of dashing spray, and the winds piping and blowing,
And out of these a chant for the sailors of all nations,
Fitful, like a surge.

Of sea-captains young or old, and the mates, and of all intrepid sailors,
Of the few, very choice, taciturn, whom fate can never surprise nor death dismay,
Picked sparingly without noise by thee, old ocean, chosen by thee,
Thou sea that pickest and cullest the race in time, and unitest nations,
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse, embodying thee,
Indomitable, untamed as thee.

(Ever the heroes on water or on land, by ones or twos appearing,
Ever the stock preserved and never lost, though rare, enough for seed preserved.)

II

Flaunt out, O sea, your separate flags of nations!
Flaunt out visible as ever the various ship-signals!
But do you reserve especially for yourself and for the soul of man one flag above all the rest,
A spiritual woven signal for all nations, emblem of man elate above death,

Token of all brave captains and all intrepid sailors and mates,
And all that went down doing their duty,
Reminiscent of them, twined from all intrepid captains young or old,
A pennant universal, subtly waving all time, o'er all brave sailors,
All seas, all ships.

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

STANZAS

From "The Triumph of Time"

I WILL go back to the great sweet mother,—
Mother and lover of men, the Sea.
I will go down to her, I and none other,
Close with her, kiss her, and mix her with me;
Cling to her, strive with her, hold her fast;
O fair white mother, in days long past
Born without sister, born without brother,
Set free my soul as thy soul is free.

O fair green-girdled mother of mine,
Sea, that art clothed with the sun and the rain,
Thy sweet hard kisses are strong like wine,
Thy large embraces are keen like pain.
Save me and hide me with all thy waves,
Find me one grave of thy thousand graves,
Those pure cold populous graves of thine,
Wrought without hand in a world without stain.

I shall sleep, and move with the moving ships,
Change as the winds change, veer in the tide;
My lips will feast on the foam of thy lips,
I shall rise with thy rising, with thee subside;
Sleep, and not know if she be, if she were,
Filled full with life to the eyes and hair.
As a rose is fulfilled to the rose-leaf tips
With splendid summer and perfume and pride.

This woven raiment of nights and days,
  Were it once cast off and unwound from me,
Naked and glad would I walk in thy ways,
  Alive and aware of thy waves and thee;
Clear of the whole world, hidden at home,
Clothed with the green, and crowned with the foam,
A pulse of the life of thy straits and bays,
  A vein in the heart of the streams of the Sea.

Fair mother, fed with the lives of men,
  Thou art subtle and cruel of heart, men say;
Thou hast taken, and shalt not render again;
  Thou art full of thy dead, and cold as they.
But death is the worst that comes of thee;
Thou art fed with our dead, O Mother, O Sea,
But when hast thou fed on our hearts? or when
  Having given us love, hast thou taken away?

O tender-hearted, O perfect lover,
  Thy lips are bitter, and sweet thine heart.
The hopes that hurt and the dreams that hover,
  Shall they not vanish away and apart?
But thou, thou art sure, thou art older than earth;
Thou art strong for death and fruitful of birth;
Thy depths conceal and thy gulfs discover;
  From the first thou wert; in the end thou art.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

THE SEA

From "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean, roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin, his control
Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths, thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee and arbiter of war,—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee;—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou;
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play,
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow;
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed,—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime,—
The image of Eternity,—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward. From a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers,—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror, 'twas a pleasing fear;
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane,—as I do here.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

ON THE SEA

It keeps eternal whisperings around
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell
Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till the spell
Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,
That scarcely will the very smallest shell
Be moved for days from whence it sometime fell,
When last the winds of heaven were unbound.
Oh ye! who have your eye-balls vexed and tired,
Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea;
Oh ye! whose ears are dinned with uproar rude,
Or fed too much with cloying melody,—
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and brood
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quired!

John Keats [1795–1821]

"WITH SHIPS THE SEA WAS SPRINKLED"

With ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh,
Like stars in heaven, and joyously it showed;
Some lying fast at anchor in the road,
Some veering up and down, one knew not why.
A goodly vessel did I then espy
Come like a giant from a haven broad;
And lustily along the bay she strode,
Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.
This ship was naught to me, nor I to her,
Yet I pursued her with a lover's look;
This ship to all the rest did I prefer:
When will she turn, and whither? She will brook
No tarrying; where she comes the winds must stir:
On went she,—and due north her journey took.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

A SONG OF DESIRE

Thou dreamer with the million moods,
Of restless heart like me,
Lay thy white hands against my breast
And cool its pain, O Sea!

O wanderer of the unseen paths,
Restless of heart as I,
Blow hither, from thy caves of blue,
Wind of the healing sky!

O treader of the fiery way,
With passionate heart like mine,
Hold to my lips thy healthful cup
Brimmed with its blood-red wine!

O countless watchers of the night,
Of sleepless heart like me,
Pour your white beauty in my soul,
Till I grow calm as ye!

O sea, O sun, O wind and stars,
(O hungry heart that longs!)
Feed my starved lips with life, with love,
And touch my tongue with songs!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869–1905]

THE PINES AND THE SEA

Beyond the low marsh-meadows and the beach,
Seen through the hoary trunks of windy pines,
The long blue level of the ocean shines.
The distant surf, with hoarse, complaining speech,
Out from its sandy barrier seems to reach;
And while the sun behind the woods declines,
The moaning sea with sighing boughs combines,
And waves and pines make answer, each to each.
O melancholy soul, whom far and near,
In life, faith, hope, the same sad undertone
Pursues from thought to thought! thou needs must hear
An old refrain, too much, too long thine own:
'Tis thy mortality infects thine ear;
The mournful strain was in thyself alone.

Christopher Pearse Cranch [1813–1892]

SEA FEVER

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a gray mist on the sea's face, and a gray dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gipsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

John Masefield [1874–

HASTINGS MILL

As I went down by Hastings Mill I lingered in my going
To smell the smell of piled-up deals and feel the salt wind blowing,
To hear the cables fret and creak and the ropes stir and sigh
(Shipmate, my shipmate!) as in days gone by.

As I went down by Hastings Mill I saw a ship there lying,
About her tawny yards the little clouds of sunset flying;
And half I took her for the ghost of one I used to know
(Shipmate, my shipmate!) many years ago.

As I went down by Hastings Mill I saw while I stood dreaming
The flicker of her riding light along the ripples streaming,
The bollards where we made her fast and the berth where she did lie
(Shipmate, my shipmate!) in the days gone by.

As I went down by Hastings Mill I heard a fellow singing,
Chipping off the deep sea rust above the tide a-swinging,
And well I knew the queer old tune and well the song he sung
(Shipmate, my shipmate!) when the world was young.

And past the rowdy Union Wharf, and by the still tide sleeping,
To a randy dandy deep sea tune my heart in time was keeping,
To the thin far sound of a shadowy watch a-hauling,
And the voice of one I knew across the high tide calling
(Shipmate, my shipmate!) and the late dusk falling!

Cecily Fox-Smith [1882–

"A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA"

A WET sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail,
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind!
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my boys,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornèd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
And hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

Allan Cunningham [1784–1842]

THE SEA

THE sea! the sea! the open sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions round;
It plays with the clouds; it mocks the skies;
Or like a cradled creature lies.

I'm on the sea! I'm on the sea!
I am where I would ever be;

With the blue above, and the blue below,
And silence wheresoe'er I go;
If a storm should come and awake the deep,
What matter? *I* shall ride and sleep.

I love, O, how I love to ride
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,
When every mad wave drowns the moon
Or whistles aloft his tempest tune,
And tells how goeth the world below,
And why the sou'west blasts do blow.

I never was on the dull, tame shore,
But I loved the great sea more and more,
And backwards flew to her billowy breast,
Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest;
And a mother she was, and is, to me;
For I was born on the open sea!

The waves were white, and red the morn,
In the noisy hour when I was born;
And the whale it whistled, the porpoise rolled,
And the dolphins bared their backs of gold;
And never was heard such an outcry wild
As welcomed to life the ocean-child!

I've lived since then, in calm and strife,
Full fifty summers, a sailor's life,
With wealth to spend and a power to range,
But never have sought nor sighed for change;
And Death, whenever he comes to me,
Shall come on the wild, unbounded sea!

Bryan Waller Procter [1787–1874]

SAILOR'S SONG

From "Death's Jest-Book"

To sea, to sea! The calm is o'er;
The wanton water leaps in sport,
And rattles down the pebbly shore;
The dolphin wheels, the sea-cows snort,

And unseen mermaids' pearly song
Comes bubbling up, the weeds among.
Fling broad the sail, dip deep the oar;
To sea, to sea! the calm is o'er.

To sea, to sea! our wide-winged bark
Shall billowy cleave its sunny way,
And with its shadow, fleet and dark,
Break the caved Tritons' azure day,
Like mighty eagle soaring light
O'er antelopes on Alpine height.
The anchor heaves, the ship swings free,
The sails swell full. To sea, to sea!

Thomas Lovell Beddoes [1803–1849]

"A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE"

A LIFE on the ocean wave,
A home on the rolling deep,
Where the scattered waters rave,
And the winds their revels keep!
Like an eagle caged, I pine
On this dull, unchanging shore:
Oh! give me the flashing brine,
The spray and the tempest's roar!

Once more on the deck I stand
Of my own swift-gliding craft:
Set sail! farewell to the land!
The gale follows fair abaft.
We shoot through the sparkling foam
Like an ocean-bird set free;—
Like the ocean-bird, our home
We'll find far out on the sea.

The land is no longer in view,
The clouds have begun to frown;
But with a stout vessel and crew,
We'll say, Let the storm come down!

And the song of our hearts shall be,
While the winds and the waters rave,
A home on the rolling sea!
A life on the ocean wave!

Epes Sargent [1813–1880]

TACKING SHIP OFF SHORE

The weather-leech of the topsail shivers,
The bowlines strain, and the lee-shrouds slacken,
The braces are taut, the lithe boom quivers,
And the waves with the coming squall-cloud blacken.

Open one point on the weather-bow,
Is the lighthouse tall on Fire Island Head.
There's a shade of doubt on the captain's brow,
And the pilot watches the heaving lead.

I stand at the wheel, and with eager eye
To sea and to sky and to shore I gaze,
Till the muttered order of "Full and by!"
Is suddenly changed for "Full for stays!"

The ship bends lower before the breeze,
As her broadside fair to the blast she lays;
And she swifter springs to the rising seas,
As the pilot calls, "Stand by for stays!"

It is silence all, as each in his place,
With the gathered coil in his hardened hands,
By tack and bowline, by sheet and brace,
Waiting the watchword impatient stands.

And the light on Fire Island Head draws near,
As, trumpet-winged, the pilot's shout
From his post on the bowsprit's heel I hear,
With the welcome call of "Ready! About!"

No time to spare! It is touch and go;
And the captain growls, "Down helm! hard down!"
As my weight on the whirling spokes I throw,
While heaven grows black with the storm-cloud's frown.

High o'er the knight-heads flies the spray,
As we meet the shock of the plunging sea;
And my shoulder stiff to the wheel I lay,
As I answer, "Ay, ay, sir! Ha-a-rd a-lee!"

With the swerving leap of a startled steed
The ship flies fast in the eye of the wind,
The dangerous shoals on the lee recede,
And the headland white we have left behind.

The topsails flutter, the jibs collapse,
And belly and tug at the groaning cleats;
The spanker slats, and the mainsail flaps;
And thunders the order, "Tacks and sheets!"

Mid the rattle of blocks and the tramp of the crew,
Hisses the rain of the rushing squall:
The sails are aback from clew to clew,
And now is the moment for "Mainsail, haul!"

And the heavy yards, like a baby's toy,
By fifty strong arms are swiftly swung:
She holds her way, and I look with joy
For the first white spray o'er the bulwarks flung.

"Let go, and haul!" 'Tis the last command,
And the head-sails fill to the blast once more:
Astern and to leeward lies the land,
With its breakers white on the shingly shore.

What matters the reef, or the rain, or the squall?
I steady the helm for the open sea;
The first mate clamors, "Belay, there, all!"
And the captain's breath once more comes free.

And so off shore let the good ship fly;
Little care I how the gusts may blow,
In my fo'castle bunk, in a jacket dry.
Eight bells have struck, and my watch is below.

Walter Mitchell [1826–1908]

IN OUR BOAT

Stars trembling o'er us and sunset before us,
Mountains in shadow and forests asleep;
Down the dim river we float on forever,
Speak not, ah, breathe not—there's peace on the deep.

Come not, pale sorrow, flee till to-morrow;
Rest softly falling o'er eyelids that weep;
While down the river we float on forever,
Speak not, ah, breathe not—there's peace on the deep.

As the waves cover the depths we glide over,
So let the past in forgetfulness sleep,
While down the river we float on forever,
Speak not, ah, breathe not—there's peace on the deep.

Heaven shine above us, bless all that love us;
All whom we love in thy tenderness keep!
While down the river we float on forever,
Speak not, ah, breathe not—there's peace on the deep.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

POOR JACK

Go, patter to lubbers and swabs, do ye see,
'Bout danger, and fear, and the like;
A water-tight boat and good sea-room for me,
And it ain't to a little I'll strike.
Though the tempest topgallant-masts smack smooth should smite,
And shiver each splinter of wood,—
Clear the deck, stow the yards, and house everything tight,
And under reefed foresail we'll scud:
Avast! nor don't think me a milksop so soft
To be taken for trifles aback;
For they say there's a Providence sits up aloft,
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack!

I heard our good chaplain palaver one day
About souls, heaven, mercy, and such;
And, my timbers! what lingo he'd coil and belay;
Why, 'twas just all as one as High Dutch;
For he said how a sparrow can't founder, d'ye see,
Without orders that come down below;
And a many fine things that proved clearly to me
That Providence takes us in tow:
"For," says he, "do you mind me, let storms e'er so oft
Take the topsails of sailors aback,
There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack!"

I said to our Poll,—for, d'ye see, she would cry,
When last we weighed anchor for sea,—
"What argufies sniveling and piping your eye?
Why, what a blamed fool you must be!
Can't you see, the world's wide, and there's room for us all,
Both for seamen and lubbers ashore?
And if to old Davy I should go, friend Poll,
You never will hear of me more.
What then? All's a hazard: come, don't be so soft:
Perhaps I may laughing come back;
For, d'ye see, there's a cherub sits smiling aloft,
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack!"

D'ye mind me, a sailor should be every inch
All as one as a piece of the ship,
And with her brave the world, without offering to flinch
From the moment the anchor's a-trip.
As for me, in all weathers, all times, sides, and ends,
Naught's a trouble from duty that springs,
For my heart is my Poll's, and my rhino's my friend's,
And as for my will, 'tis the king's.
Even when my time comes, ne'er believe me so soft
As for grief to be taken aback;
For the same little cherub that sits up aloft
Will look out a good berth for poor Jack!

Charles Dibdin [1745–1814]

"ROCKED IN THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP"

Rocked in the cradle of the deep
I lay me down in peace to sleep;
Secure I rest upon the wave,
For Thou, O Lord! hast power to save.
I know Thou wilt not slight my call,
For Thou dost mark the sparrow's fall;
And calm and peaceful shall I sleep,
Rocked in the cradle of the deep.

When in the dead of night I lie
And gaze upon the trackless sky,
The star-bespangled heavenly scroll,
The boundless waters as they roll,—
I feel Thy wondrous power to save
From perils of the stormy wave:
Rocked in the cradle of the deep,
I calmly rest and soundly sleep.

And such the trust that still were mine,
Though stormy winds swept o'er the brine,
Or though the tempest's fiery breath
Roused me from sleep to wreck and death.
In ocean cave, still safe with Thee
The germ of immortality!
And calm and peaceful shall I sleep,
Rocked in the cradle of the deep.

Emma Hart Willard [1787–1870]

OUTWARD

Whither away, O Sailor! say?
Under the night, under the day,
Yearning sail and flying spray
Out of the black into the blue,
Where are the great Winds bearing you?

Never port shall lift for me
Into the sky, out of the sea!

Into the blue or into the black,
Onward, outward, never back!
Something mighty and weird and dim
Calls me under the ocean rim!

Sailor under sun and moon,
'Tis the ocean's fatal rune.
Under yon far rim of sky
Twice ten thousand others lie.
Love is sweet and home is fair,
And your mother calls you there.

Onward, outward I must go
Where the mighty currents flow.
Home is anywhere for me
On this purple-tented sea.
Star and Wind and Sun my brothers,
Ocean one of many mothers.
Onward under sun and star
Where the weird adventures are!
Never port shall lift for me—
I am Wind and Sky and Sea!

John G. Neihardt [1881–

A PASSER-BY

WHITHER, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,
That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding,
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest?
Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales oppressed,
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hurling,
Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before thee, in the country that well thou knowest,
Already arrived, am inhaling the odorous air:
I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goest,
And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,

Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts bare:
Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-capped grandest
Peak, that is over the feathery palms, more fair
Than thou, so upright, so stately and still thou standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhailed and nameless,
I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine
That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blameless,
Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.
But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is thine,
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails crowding.

Robert Bridges [1844–

OFF RIVIÈRE DU LOUP

O SHIP incoming from the sea
With all your cloudy tower of sail,
Dashing the water to the lee,
And leaning grandly to the gale,

The sunset pageant in the west
Has filled your canvas curves with rose,
And jeweled every toppling crest
That crashes into silver snows!

You know the joy of coming home,
After long leagues to France or Spain
You feel the clear Canadian foam
And the gulf water heave again.

Between these somber purple hills
That cool the sunset's molten bars,
You will go on as the wind wills,
Beneath the river's roof of stars.

You will toss onward toward the lights
That spangle over the lonely pier,
By hamlets glimmering on the heights,
By level islands black and clear.

You will go on beyond the tide,
Through brimming plains of olive sedge,
Through paler shadows light and wide,
The rapids piled along the ledge.

At evening off some reedy bay
You will swing slowly on your chain,
And catch the scent of dewy hay,
Soft blowing from the pleasant plain.

Duncan Campbell Scott [1862–

CHRISTMAS AT SEA

The sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand;
The decks were like a slide, where a seaman scarce could stand;
The wind was a nor'-wester, blowing squally off the sea;
And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break of day;
But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw how ill we lay.
We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a shout,
And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by to go about.

All day we tacked and tacked between the South Head and the North;
All day we hauled the frozen sheets, and got no further forth;
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,
For very life and nature we tacked from head to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide-race roared;
But every tack we made brought the North Head close aboard;
So's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers running high,
And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass against his eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam;
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'longshore home;
The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volleyed out;
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial cheer;
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the year)
This day of our adversity was blessèd Christmas morn,
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where I was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces there,
My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver hair;
And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of homely elves,
Go dancing round the china-plates that stand upon the shelves.

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of me,
Of the shadow on the household and the son that went to sea;
And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind of way,
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessèd Christmas Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to fall.
"All hands to loose topgallant sails," I heard the captain call.
"By the Lord, she'll never stand it," our first mate, Jackson, cried.
"It's the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson," he replied.

She staggered to her bearings, but the sails were new and good,
And the ship smelt up to windward, just as though she understood.
As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of the night,
We cleared the weary headland, and passed below the light.

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but me,
As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out to sea;
But all that I could think of, in the darkness and the cold,
Was just that I was leaving home and my folks were growing old.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

THE PORT O' HEART'S DESIRE

Down around the quay they lie, the ships that sail to sea,
On shore the brown-cheeked sailormen they pass the jest with me,
But soon their ships will sail away with winds that never tire,
And there's one that will be sailing to the Port o' Heart's Desire.

The Port o' Heart's Desire, and it's, oh, that port for me,
And that's the ship that I love best of all that sail the sea;
Its hold is filled with memories, its prow it points away
To the Port o' Heart's Desire, where I roamed a boy at play.

Ships that sail for gold there be, and ships that sail for fame,
And some were filled with jewels bright when from Cathay they came,
But give me still yon white sail in the sunset's mystic fire,
That the running tides will carry to the Port o' Heart's Desire.

It's you may have the gold and fame, and all the jewels, too,
And all the ships, if they were mine, I'd gladly give to you,
I'd give them all right gladly, with their gold and fame entire,
If you would set me down within the Port o' Heart's Desire.

Oh, speed you, white-winged ship of mine, oh, speed you to the sea,
Some other day, some other tide, come back again for me;
Come back with all the memories, the joys and e'en the pain,
And take me to the golden hills of boyhood once again.

John S. McGroarty [1862–

ON THE QUAY

I'VE never traveled for more'n a day,
I never was one to roam,
But I likes to sit on the busy quay,
Watchin' the ships that says to me—
"Always somebody goin' away,
Somebody gettin' home."

I likes to think that the world's so wide—
'Tis grand to be livin' there,
Takin' a part in its goin's on. . . .
Ah, now ye're laughin' at poor old John,
Talkin' o' works o' the world wi' pride
As if he was doin' his share!

But laugh if ye will! When ye're old as me
Ye'll find 'tis a rare good plan
To look at the world—an' love it too!—
Though never a job are ye fit to do. . . .
Oh! 'tisn't all sorrow an' pain to see
The work o' another man.

'Tis good when the heart grows big at last,
Too big for trouble to fill—
Wi' room for the things that was only stuff
When workin' an' winnin' seemed more'n enough—
Room for the world, the world so vast,
Wi' its peoples an' all their skill.

That's what I'm thinkin' on all the days
I'm loafin' an' smokin' here,

An' the ships do make me think the most
(Of readin' in books 'tis little I'd boast),—
But the ships, they carries me long, long ways,
An' draws far places near.

I sees the things that a sailor brings,
I hears the stories he tells. . . .
'Tis surely a wonderful world, indeed!
'Tis more'n the peoples can ever need!
An' I praises the Lord—to myself I sings—
For the world in which I dwells.

An' I loves the ships more every day
Though I never was one to roam.
Oh! the ships is comfortin' sights to see,
An' they means a lot when they says to me—
"Always somebody goin' away,
Somebody gettin' home."

John Joy Bell [1871–

THE FORGING OF THE ANCHOR

Come, see the Dolphin's anchor forged! 'tis at a white heat now—
The bellows ceased, the flames decreased; though, on the forge's brow,
The little flames still fitfully play through the sable mound,
And fitfully you still may see the grim smiths ranking round;
All clad in leathern panoply, their broad hands only bare,
Some rest upon their sledges here, some work the windlass there.

The windlass strains the tackle-chains—the black mold heaves below;
And red and deep, a hundred veins burst out at every throe.
It rises, roars, rends all outright—O Vulcan, what a glow!
'Tis blinding white, 'tis blasting bright—the high sun shines not so!
The high sun sees not, on the earth, such fiery fearful show!
The roof-ribs swarth, the candent hearth, the ruddy lurid row

Of smiths that stand, an ardent band, like men before the foe!
As, quivering through his fleece of flame, the sailing monster slow
Sinks on the anvil—all about, the faces fiery grow:
"Hurrah!" they shout, "leap out, leap out!" bang, bang! the sledges go;
Hurrah! the jetted lightnings are hissing high and low;
A hailing fount of fire is struck at every squashing blow;
The leathern mail rebounds the hail; the rattling cinders strow
The ground around; at every bound the sweltering fountains flow;
And, thick and loud, the swinking crowd at every stroke pant "ho!"

Leap out, leap out, my masters! leap out, and lay on load!
Let's forge a goodly anchor—a bower thick and broad;
For a heart of oak is hanging on every blow, I bode;
And I see the good ship riding, all in a perilous road,—
The low reef roaring on her lee; the roll of ocean poured
From stem to stern, sea after sea; the mainmast by the board;
The bulwarks down; the rudder gone; the boats stove at the chains;
But courage still, brave mariners—the bower yet remains!
And not an inch to flinch he deigns—save when ye pitch sky high;
Then moves his head, as though he said, "Fear nothing—here am I!"

Swing in your strokes in order; let foot and hand keep time;
Your blows make music sweeter far than any steeple's chime.
But while ye swing your sledges, sing, and let the burthen be—
The anchor is the anvil king, and royal craftsmen we!
Strike in, strike in!—the sparks begin to dull their rustling red;
Our hammers ring with sharper din—our work will soon be sped;

Our anchor soon must change his bed of fiery rich array
For a hammock at the roaring bows, or an oozy couch of clay;
Our anchor soon must change the lay of merry craftsmen here
For the yeo-heave-o, and the heave-away, and the sighing seamen's cheer—
When, weighing slow, at eve they go, far, far from love and home;
And sobbing sweethearts, in a row, wail o'er the ocean-foam.

In livid and obdurate gloom, he darkens down at last;
A shapely one he is, and strong, as e'er from cat was cast.
O trusted and trustworthy guard! if thou hadst life like me,
What pleasure would thy toils reward beneath the deep-green sea!
O deep sea-diver, who might then behold such sights as thou?—
The hoary monster's palaces!—Methinks what joy 'twere now
To go plumb-plunging down, amid the assembly of the whales,
And feel the churned sea round me boil beneath their scourging tails!
Then deep in tangle-woods to fight the fierce sea-unicorn,
And send him foiled and bellowing back, for all his ivory horn;
To leave the subtle sworder-fish of bony blade forlorn;
And for the ghastly-grinning shark, to laugh his jaws to scorn:
To leap down on the kraken's back, where 'mid Norwegian isles
He lies, a lubber anchorage for sudden shallowed miles—
Till, snorting like an under-sea volcano, off he rolls;
Meanwhile to swing, a-buffeting the far astonished shoals
Of his back-browsing ocean-calves; or, haply, in a cove
Shell-strown, and consecrate of old to some Undine's love,
To find the long-haired mermaidens; or, hard by icy lands,
To wrestle with the sea-serpent, upon cerulean sands.

O broad-armed fisher of the deep! whose sports can equal
thine?
The Dolphin weighs a thousand tons, that tugs thy cable-
line;
And night by night 'tis thy delight, thy glory day by day,
Through sable sea and breaker white the giant game to play.'
But, shamer of our little sports! forgive the name I gave:
A fisher's joy is to destroy—thine office is to save.
O lodger in the sea-kings' halls! couldst thou but understand
Whose be the white bones by thy side—or who that dripping
band,
Slow swaying in the heaving wave, that round about thee
bend,
With sounds like breakers in a dream blessing their ancient
friend—
Oh, couldst thou know what heroes glide with larger steps
round thee,
Thine iron side would swell with pride—thou'dst leap within
the sea!

Give honor to their memories who left the pleasant strand
To shed their blood so freely for the love of fatherland—
Who left their chance of quiet age and grassy churchyard
grave
So freely, for a restless bed amid the tossing wave!
Oh, though our anchor may not be all I have fondly sung,
Honor him for their memory whose bones he goes among!

Samuel Ferguson [1810–1886]

DRIFTING

My soul to-day
Is far away,
Sailing the Vesuvian Bay;
My wingèd boat,
A bird afloat,
Swings round the purple peaks remote:—

Round purple peaks
It sails, and seeks

Blue inlets and their crystal creeks,
Where high rocks throw,
Through deeps below,
A duplicated golden glow.

Far, vague, and dim,
The mountains swim;
While on Vesuvius' misty brim,
With outstretched hands,
The gray smoke stands
O'erlooking the volcanic lands.

Here Ischia smiles
O'er liquid miles;
And yonder, bluest of the isles,
Calm Capri waits,
Her sapphire gates
Beguiling to her bright estates.

I heed not, if
My rippling skiff
Float swift or slow from cliff to cliff;
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise.

Under the walls
Where swells and falls
The Bay's deep breast at intervals,
At peace I lie,
Blown softly by,
A cloud upon this liquid sky.

The day, so mild,
Is Heaven's own child,
With Earth and Ocean reconciled;
The airs I feel
Around me steal
Are murmuring to the murmuring keel.

Over the rail
My hand I trail
Within the shadow of the sail,
A joy intense,
The cooling sense
Glides down my drowsy indolence.

With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Where Summer sings and never dies,—
O'erveiled with vines
She glows and shines
Among her future oil and wines.

Her children, hid
The cliffs amid,
Are gamboling with the gamboling kid;
Or down the walls,
With tipsy calls,
Laugh on the rocks like waterfalls.

The fisher's child,
With tresses wild,
Unto the smooth, bright sand beguiled,
With glowing lips
Sings as she skips,
Or gazes at the far-off ships.

Yon deep bark goes
Where traffic blows,
From lands of sun to lands of snows;—
This happier one,
Its course is run
From lands of snow to lands of sun.

O happy ship,
To rise and dip,
With the blue crystal at your lip!
O happy crew,
My heart with you
Sails, and sails, and sings anew!

No more, no more
The worldly shore
Upbraids me with its loud uproar!
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise!

Thomas Buchanan Read [1822–1872]

"HOW'S MY BOY?"

"Ho, sailor of the sea!
How's my boy—my boy?"
"What's your boy's name, good wife,
And in what good ship sailed he?"

"My boy John—
He that went to sea—
What care I for the ship, sailor?
My boy's my boy to me.

"You come back from sea
And not know my John?
I might as well have asked some landsman
Yonder down in the town.
There's not an ass in all the parish
But he knows my John.

"How's my boy—my boy?
And unless you let me know,
I'll swear you are no sailor,
Blue jacket or no,
Brass button or no, sailor,
Anchor and crown or no!
Sure his ship was the Jolly Briton."—
"Speak low, woman, speak low!"

"And why should I speak low, sailor,
About my own boy John?
If I was loud as I am proud
I'd sing him o'er the town!

Why should I speak low, sailor?"
"That good ship went down."

"How's my boy—my boy?
What care I for the ship, sailor,
I never was aboard her.
Be she afloat, or be she aground,
Sinking or swimming, I'll be bound,
Her owners can afford her!
I say, how's my John?"
"Every man on board went down,
Every man aboard her."

"How's my boy—my boy?
What care I for the men, sailor?
I'm not their mother—
How's my boy—my boy?
Tell me of him and no other!
How's my boy—my boy?"

Sydney Dobell [1824–1874]

THE LONG WHITE SEAM

As I came round the harbor buoy,
The lights began to gleam,
No wave the land-locked water stirred,
The crags were white as cream;
And I marked my love by candlelight
Sewing her long white seam.
It's aye sewing ashore, my dear,
Watch and steer at sea,
It's reef and furl, and haul the line,
Set sail and think of thee.

I climbed to reach her cottage door;
O sweetly my love sings!
Like a shaft of light her voice breaks forth,
My soul to meet it springs
As the shining water leaped of old,
When stirred by angel wings.

Aye longing to list anew,
Awake and in my dream,
But never a song she sang like this,
Sewing her long white seam.

Fair fall the lights, the harbor lights,
That brought me in to thee,
And peace drop down on that low roof
For the sight that I did see,
And the voice, my dear, that rang so clear
All for the love of me.
For O, for O, with brows bent low
By the candle's flickering gleam,
Her wedding-gown it was she wrought,
Sewing the long white seam.

Jean Ingelow [1820–1897]

STORM SONG

The clouds are scudding across the moon;
A misty light is on the sea;
The wind in the shrouds has a wintry tune,
And the foam is flying free.

Brothers, a night of terror and gloom
Speaks in the cloud and gathering roar;
Thank God, He has given us broad sea-room,
A thousand miles from shore.

Down with the hatches on those who sleep!
The wild and whistling deck have we;
Good watch, my brothers, to-night we'll keep,
While the tempest is on the sea!

Though the rigging shriek in his terrible grip,
And the naked spars be snapped away,
Lashed to the helm, we'll drive our ship
In the teeth of the whelming spray!

Hark! how the surges o'erleap the deck!
Hark! how the pitiless tempest raves!
Ah, daylight will look upon many a wreck
Drifting over the desert waves.

Yet, courage, brothers! we trust the wave,
With God above us, our guiding chart.
So, whether to harbor or ocean-grave,
Be it still with a cheery heart!

Bayard Taylor [1825–1878]

THE MARINER'S DREAM

In slumbers of midnight the sailor-boy lay;
His hammock swung loose at the sport of the wind;
But watch-worn and weary, his cares flew away,
And visions of happiness danced o'er his mind.

He dreamed of his home, of his dear native bowers,
And pleasures that waited on life's merry morn;
While Memory stood sideways, half covered with flowers,
And restored every rose, but secreted its thorn.

Then Fancy her magical pinions spread wide,
And bade the young dreamer in ecstasy rise;
Now far, far behind him the green waters glide,
And the cot of his forefathers blesses his eyes.

The jessamine clambers in flowers o'er the thatch,
And the swallow sings sweet from her nest in the wall;
All trembling with transport he raises the latch,
And the voices of loved ones reply to his call.

A father bends o'er him with looks of delight;
His cheek is impearled with a mother's warm tear;
And the lips of the boy in a love-kiss unite
With the lips of the maid whom his bosom holds dear.

The heart of the sleeper beats high in his breast;
Joy quickens his pulses, his hardships seem o'er;
And a murmur of happiness steals through his rest,—
"O God! thou hast blessed me,—I ask for no more."

Ah! whence is that flame which now bursts on his eye?
Ah! what is that sound which now larums his ear?
'Tis the lightning's red glare, painting hell on the sky!
'Tis the crash of the thunder, the groan of the sphere!

He springs from his hammock, he flies to the deck;
Amazement confronts him with images dire;
Wild winds and mad waves drive the vessel a wreck;
The masts fly in splinters; the shrouds are on fire.

Like mountains the billows tremendously swell;
In vain the lost wretch calls on mercy to save;
Unseen hands of spirits are ringing his knell,
And the death-angel flaps his broad wing o'er the wave!

O sailor-boy, woe to thy dream of delight!
In darkness dissolves the gay frost-work of bliss.
Where now is the picture that Fancy touched bright,—
Thy parents' fond pressure, and love's honeyed kiss?

O sailor-boy! sailor-boy! never again
Shall home, love, or kindred thy wishes repay;
Unblessed and unhonored, down deep in the main,
Full many a fathom, thy frame shall decay.

No tomb shall e'er plead to remembrance for thee,
Or redeem form or fame from the merciless surge;
But the white foam of waves shall thy winding-sheet be,
And winds, in the midnight of winter, thy dirge!

On a bed of green sea-flowers thy limbs shall be laid,—
Around thy white bones the red coral shall grow;
Of thy fair yellow locks threads of amber be made,
And every part suit to thy mansion below.

Days, months, years, and ages shall circle away,
And still the vast waters above thee shall roll;
Earth loses thy pattern forever and aye,—
O sailor-boy! sailor-boy! peace to thy soul!

William Dimond [1780?–1837?]

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was still as she could be;
Her sails from Heaven received no motion,
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock,
The waves flowed over the Inchcape Rock;
So little they rose, so little they fell,
They did not move the Inchcape Bell.

The holy Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had placed that bell on the Inchcape Rock;
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the rock was hid by the surges' swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous Rock,
And blessed the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The Sun in heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day;
The sea-birds screamed as they wheeled around,
And there was joyance in their sound.

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen,
A darker speck on the ocean green;
Sir Ralph, the Rover, walked his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of spring,
It made him whistle, it made him sing;
His heart was mirthful to excess;
But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float;
Quoth he, "My men, put out the boat;
And row me to the Inchcape Rock,
And I'll plague the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

The boat is lowered, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And cut the Bell from the Inchcape float.

Down sank the Bell with a gurgling sound;
The bubbles rose, and burst around.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "The next who comes to the Rock
Will not bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

Sir Ralph, the Rover, sailed away,
He scoured the seas for many a day;
And now, grown rich with plundered store,
He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky
They cannot see the Sun on high;
The wind hath blown a gale all day;
At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the Rover takes his stand;
So dark it is they see no land.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising Moon."

"Canst hear," said one, "the breakers roar?
For yonder, methinks, should be the shore."
"Now where we are I cannot tell,
But I wish we could hear the Inchcape Bell."

They hear no sound; the swell is strong;
Though the wind hath fallen, they drift along,
Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock,—
"O Christ! it is the Inchcape Rock."

Sir Ralph, the Rover, tore his hair;
He cursed himself in his despair.
The waves rush in on every side;
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But, even in his dying fear,
One dreadful sound he seemed to hear,—
A sound as if, with the Inchcape Bell,
The Devil below was ringing his knell.

Robert Southey [1774–1843]

THE SEA

Through the night, through the night,
In the saddest unrest,
Wrapped in white, all in white,
With her babe on her breast,
Walks the mother so pale,
Staring out on the gale,
Through the night!

Through the night, through the night,
Where the sea lifts the wreck,
Land in sight, close in sight,
On the surf-flooded deck,
Stands the father so brave,
Driving on to his grave
Through the night!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825–1903]

THE SANDS OF DEE

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee!"
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land:
And never home came she.

"Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee."

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee!

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

THE THREE FISHERS

Three fishers went sailing away to the West,
Away to the West as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbor bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower
And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;
They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown.
But men must work, and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbor bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
For those who will never come home to the town;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep;
And good-by to the bar and its moaning.

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

BALLAD

In the summer even,
While yet the dew was hoar,
I went plucking purple pansies,
Till my love should come to shore.
The fishing-lights their dances
Were keeping out at sea,
And come, I sung, my true love!
Come hasten home to me!

But the sea, it fell a-moaning,
And the white gulls rocked thereon;
And the young moon dropped from heaven,
And the lights hid one by one.
All silently their glances
Slipped down the cruel sea,
And wait! cried the night and wind and storm,—
Wait, till I come to thee!

Harriet Prescott Spofford [1835–

THE NORTHERN STAR

A TYNEMOUTH SHIP

The Northern Star
Sailed over the bar
Bound to the Baltic Sea;
In the morning gray
She stretched away:—
'Twas a weary day to me!

For many an hour
In sleet and shower
By the lighthouse rock I stray;
And watch till dark
For the wingèd bark
Of him that is far away.

The castle's bound
I wander round,

Amidst the grassy graves:
But all I hear
Is the north wind drear,
And all I see are the waves.

The Northern Star
Is set afar!
Set in the Baltic Sea:
And the waves have spread
The sandy bed
That holds my Love from me.

Unknown

THE FISHER'S WIDOW

The boats go out and the boats come in
Under the wintry sky;
And the rain and foam are white in the wind,
And the white gulls cry.

She sees the sea when the wind is wild
Swept by a windy rain;
And her heart's a-weary of sea and land
As the long days wane.

She sees the torn sails fly in the foam,
Broad on the sky-line gray;
And the boats go out and the boats come in,
But there's one away.

Arthur Symons [1865–

CALLER HERRIN'

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're bonny fish and halesome farin';
Wha'll buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth?

When ye were sleepin' on your pillows,
Dreamed ye aught o' our puir fellows,

Darkling as they faced the billows,
A' to fill the woven willows?
Buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth!

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're no brought here without brave darin';
Buy my caller herrin',
Hauled through wind and rain.
Wha'll buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth?

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
Oh, ye may ca' them vulgar farin';
Wives and mithers, maist despairin',
Ca' them lives o' men.
Wha'll buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth?

When the creel o' herrin' passes,
Ladies, clad in silks and laces,
Gather in their braw pelisses,
Cast their heads, and screw their faces.
Wha'll buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth?

Caller herrin's no got lightly:—
Ye can trip the spring fu' tightlie;
Spite o' tauntin', flauntin', flingin',
Gow has set you a' a-singin'
"Wha'll buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth?"

Neebor wives! now tent my tellin':
When the bonny fish ye're sellin',
At ae word be, in ye're dealin'!
Truth will stand, when a' thing's failin'!
Wha'll buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth?

Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]

HANNAH BINDING SHOES

Poor lone Hannah,
Sitting at the window, binding shoes:
Faded, wrinkled,
Sitting, stitching, in a mournful muse.
Bright-eyed beauty once was she,
When the bloom was on the tree;—
Spring and winter,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Not a neighbor
Passing, nod or answer will refuse
To her whisper,
"Is there from the fishers any news?"
Oh, her heart's adrift with one
On an endless voyage gone;—
Night and morning,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Fair young Hannah,
Ben, the sunburnt fisher, gaily wooes;
Hale and clever,
For a willing heart and hand he sues.
May-day skies are all aglow,
And the waves are laughing so!
For her wedding
Hannah leaves her window and her shoes.

May is passing;
'Mid the apple-boughs a pigeon cooes:
Hannah shudders,
For the mild south-wester mischief brews.
Round the rocks of Marblehead,
Outward bound, a schooner sped;
Silent, lonesome,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

'Tis November:
Now no tear her wasted cheek bedews,
From Newfoundland
Not a sail returning will she lose,

Whispering hoarsely: "Fishermen,
Have you, have you heard of Ben?"
Old with watching,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Twenty winters
Bleak and drear the ragged shore she views.
Twenty seasons:—
Never one has brought her any news.
Still her dim eyes silently
Chase the white sails o'er the sea;—
Hopeless, faithful,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Lucy Larcom [1824–1893]

THE SAILOR

A ROMAIC BALLAD

Thou that hast a daughter
For one to woo and wed,
Give her to a husband
With snow upon his head;
Oh, give her to an old man,
Though little joy it be,
Before the best young sailor
That sails upon the sea!

How luckless is the sailor
When sick and like to die;
He sees no tender mother,
No sweetheart standing by.
Only the captain speaks to him,—
Stand up, stand up, young man,
And steer the ship to haven,
As none beside thee can.

Thou says't to me, "Stand, stand up";
I say to thee, take hold,
Lift me a little from the deck,
My hands and feet are cold.

And let my head, I pray thee,
With handkerchiefs be bound;
There, take my love's gold handkerchief,
And tie it tightly round.

Now bring the chart, the doleful chart;
See, where these mountains meet—
The clouds are thick around their head,
The mists around their feet:
Cast anchor here; 'tis deep and safe
Within the rocky cleft;
The little anchor on the right,
The great one on the left.

And now to thee, O captain,
Most earnestly I pray,
That they may never bury me
In church or cloister gray;—
But on the windy sea-beach,
At the ending of the land,
All on the surfy sea-beach,
Deep down into the sand.

For there will come the sailors,
Their voices I shall hear,
And at casting of the anchor
The yo-ho loud and clear;
And at hauling of the anchor
The yo-ho and the cheer,—
Farewell, my love, for to thy bay
I never more may steer!

William Allingham [1824–1889]

THE BURIAL OF THE DANE

Blue gulf all around us,
Blue sky overhead—
Muster all on the quarter,
We must bury the dead!

It is but a Danish sailor,
Rugged of front and form;
A common son of the forecastle,
Grizzled with sun and storm.

His name, and the strand he hailed from
We know, and there's nothing more!
But perhaps his mother is waiting
In the lonely Island of Fohr.

Still, as he lay there dying,
Reason drifting awreck,
" 'Tis my watch," he would mutter,
"I must go upon deck!"

Aye, on deck, by the foremast!
But watch and lookout are done;
The Union Jack laid o'er him,
How quiet he lies in the sun!

Slow the ponderous engine,
Stay the hurrying shaft;
Let the roll of the ocean
Cradle our giant craft;
Gather around the grating,
Carry your messmate aft!

Stand in order, and listen
To the holiest page of prayer!
Let every foot be quiet,
Every head be bare—
The soft trade-wind is lifting
A hundred locks of hair.

Our captain reads the service,
(A little spray on his cheeks)
The grand old words of burial,
And the trust a true heart seeks:—
"We therefore commit his body
To the deep"—and, as he speaks,

Launched from the weather railing,
Swift as the eye can mark,
The ghastly, shotted hammock
Plunges, away from the shark,
Down, a thousand fathoms,
Down into the dark!

A thousand summers and winters
The stormy Gulf shall roll
High o'er his canvas coffin;
But, silence to doubt and dole:—
There's a quiet harbor somewhere
For the poor aweary soul.

Free the fettered engine,
Speed the tireless shaft,
Loose to'gallant and topsail,
The breeze is fair abaft!

Blue sea all around us,
Blue sky bright o'erhead—
Every man to his duty,
We have buried our dead!

Henry Howard Brownell [1820–1872]

TOM BOWLING

Here, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
The darling of our crew;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
For death has broached him to.
His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft;
Faithful, below, he did his duty;
But now he's gone aloft.

Tom never from his word departed,
His virtues were so rare;
His friends were many and true-hearted,
His Poll was kind and fair:

And then he'd sing, so blithe and jolly,
Ah, many's the time and oft!
But mirth is turned to melancholy,
For Tom is gone aloft.

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He, who all commands,
Shall give, to call Life's crew together,
The word to "pipe all hands."
Thus Death, who Kings and Tars despatches,
In vain Tom's life has doffed;
For, though his body's under hatches,
His soul is gone aloft.

Charles Dibdin [1745–1814]

MESSMATES

He gave us all a good-by cheerily
At the first dawn of day;
We dropped him down the side full drearily
When the light died away.
It's a dead dark watch that he's a-keeping there,
And a long, long night that lags a-creeping there,
Where the Trades and the tides roll over him
And the great ships go by.

He's there alone with green seas rocking him
For a thousand miles around;
He's there alone with dumb things mocking him,
And we're homeward bound.
It's a long, lone watch that he's a-keeping there,
And a dead cold night that lags a-creeping there,
While the months and the years roll over him
And the great ships go by.

I wonder if the tramps come near enough,
As they thrash to and fro,
And the battleships' bells ring clear enough
To be heard down below;

If through all the lone watch that he's a-keeping there,
And the long, cold night that lags a-creeping there,
The voices of the sailor-men shall comfort him
When the great ships go by.

Henry Newbolt [1862–

THE LAST BUCCANEER

Oh, England is a pleasant place for them that's rich and high,
But England is a cruel place for such poor folks as I;
And such a port for mariners I ne'er shall see again
As the pleasant Isle of Avès, beside the Spanish main.

There were forty craft in Avès that were both swift and stout,
All furnished well with small arms and cannons round about;
And a thousand men in Avès made laws so fair and free
To choose their valiant captains and obey them loyally.

Thence we sailed against the Spaniard with his hoards of plate and gold,
Which he wrung with cruel tortures from Indian folk of old;
Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as hard as stone,
Who flog men and keelhaul them, and starve them to the bone.

Oh, the palms grew high in Avès, and fruits that shone like gold,
And the colibris and parrots they were gorgeous to behold;
And the negro maids to Avès from bondage fast did flee,
To welcome gallant sailors, a-sweeping in from sea.

Oh, sweet it was in Avès to hear the landward breeze,
A-swing with good tobacco in a net between the trees,
With a negro lass to fan you, while you listened to the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside, that never touched the shore.

But Scripture saith, an ending to all fine things must be;
So the King's ships sailed on Avès, and quite put down were we.

All day we fought like bulldogs, but they burst the booms at night;
And I fled in a piragua, sore wounded, from the fight.

Nine days I floated starving, and a negro lass beside,
Till for all I tried to cheer her, the poor young thing she died;
But as I lay a-gasping, a Bristol sail came by,
And brought me home to England here, to beg until I die.

And now I'm old and going—I'm sure I can't tell where;
One comfort is, this world's so hard, I can't be worse off there:
If I might but be a sea-dove, I'd fly across the main,
To the pleasant Isle of Avès, to look at it once again.

Charles Kingsley [1819–1875]

THE LAST BUCCANEER

The winds were yelling, the waves were swelling,
The sky was black and drear,
When the crew with eyes of flame brought the ship without a name
Alongside the last Buccaneer.

"Whence flies your sloop full sail before so fierce a gale,
When all others drive bare on the seas?
Say, come ye from the shore of the holy Salvador,
Or the gulf of the rich Caribbees?"

"From a shore no search hath found, from a gulf no line can sound,
Without rudder or needle we steer;
Above, below our bark dies the sea-fowl and the shark,
As we fly by the last Buccaneer.

"To-night there shall be heard on the rocks of Cape de Verde
A loud crash and a louder roar;
And to-morrow shall the deep with a heavy moaning sweep
The corpses and wreck to the shore."

The stately ship of Clyde securely now may ride
In the breath of the citron shades;
And Severn's towering mast securely now hies fast,
Through the seas of the balmy Trades.

From St. Jago's wealthy port, from Havannah's royal fort,
The seaman goes forth without fear;
For since that stormy night not a mortal hath had sight
Of the flag of the last Buccaneer.

Thomas Babington Macaulay [1800–1859]

THE LEADSMAN'S SONG

For England, when with favoring gale,
Our gallant ship up Channel steered,
And scudding, under easy sail,
The high blue western lands appeared,
To heave the lead the seaman sprang,
And to the pilot cheerly sang,
"By the deep—Nine."

And bearing up to gain the port,
Some well-known object kept in view,
An abbey tower, a ruined fort,
A beacon to the vessel true;
While oft the lead the seaman flung,
And to the pilot cheerly sung,
"By the mark—Seven."

And as the much-loved shore we near,
With transport we behold the roof
Where dwelt a friend or partner dear,
Of faith and love and matchless proof.
The lead once more the seaman flung,
And to the watchful pilot sung,
"Quarter less—Five."

Now to her berth the ship draws nigh,
With slackened sail she feels the tide,
Stand clear the cable is the cry,
The anchor's gone, we safely ride.

The watch is set, and through the night,
We hear the seaman with delight
Proclaim—"All's well."

Charles Dibdin [1745–1814]

HOMEWARD BOUND

HEAD the ship for England!
Shake out every sail!
Blithe leap the billows,
Merry sings the gale.
Captain, work the reckoning;
How many knots a day?—
Round the world and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

We've traded with the Yankees,
Brazilians and Chinese;
We've laughed with dusky beauties
In shade of tall palm-trees;
Across the line and Gulf-Stream—
Round by Table Bay—
Everywhere and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

Nightly stands the North Star
Higher on our bow;
Straight we run for England;
Our thoughts are in it now.
Jolly times with friends ashore,
When we've drawn our pay!—
All about and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

Tom will to his parents,
Jack will to his dear,
Joe to wife and children,
Bob to pipes and beer;
Dicky to the dancing-room,
To hear the fiddles play;—
Round the world and home again,
That's the sailor's way!

William Allingham [1824–1889]

THE SIMPLE LIFE

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
  And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
  And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
  Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
  And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always, night and day,
  I hear lake-water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
  I hear it in the deep heart's core.

William Butler Yeats [1865–

A WISH

MINE be a cot beside the hill;
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook that turns a mill,
With many a fall shall linger near.

The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing
In russet-gown and apron blue.

The village-church among the trees,
Where first our marriage-vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze
And point with taper spire to Heaven.

Samuel Rogers [1763–1855]

ODE ON SOLITUDE

Happy the man, whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire;
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter, fire.

Blest, who can unconcernedly find
Hours, days, and years, slide soft away
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day;

Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mixed, sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please,
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

Alexander Pope [1688–1744]

"THRICE HAPPY HE"

Thrice happy he, who by some shady grove,
Far from the clamorous world, doth live his own;
Though solitary, who is not alone,
But doth converse with that eternal love.

O how more sweet is birds' harmonious moan,
Or the soft sobbings of the widowed dove,
Than those smooth whisperings near a prince's throne,
Which good make doubtful, do the evil approve!
Or how more sweet is Zephyr's wholesome breath,
And sighs perfumed which do the flowers unfold,
Than that applause vain honor doth bequeath!
How sweet are streams to poison drunk in gold!
The world is full of horrors, falsehoods, slights;
Woods' silent shades have only true delights.

William Drummond [1585–1649]

"UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE"

From "As You Like It"

Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

CORIDON'S SONG

In "The Complete Angler"

Oh, the sweet contentment
The countryman doth find.
High trololie lollie loe,
High trololie lee,

That quiet contemplation
Possesseth all my mind:
Then care away,
And wend along with me.

For courts are full of flattery,
As hath too oft been tried;
High trololliе lollie loe,
High trololliе lee,
The city full of wantonness,
And both are full of pride:

But oh, the honest countryman
Speaks truly from his heart,
High trololliе lollie loe,
High trololliе lee,
His pride is in his tillage,
His horses and his cart:

Our clothing is good sheepskins,
Gray russet for our wives,
High trololliе lollie loe,
High trololliе lee,
'Tis warmth and not gay clothing
That doth prolong our lives:

The plowman, though he labor hard,
Yet on the holiday,
High trololliе lollie loe,
High trollolie lee,
No emperor so merrily
Does pass his time away:

To recompense our tillage
The heavens afford us showers;
High trololliе lollie loe,
High trololliе lee,
And for our sweet refreshments
The earth affords us bowers:

The cuckoo and the nightingale
Full merrily do sing,
  High trololliе lollie loe,
  High trololliе lee,
And with their pleasant roundelays
Bid welcome to the spring:

This is not half the happiness
The countryman enjoys;
  High trololliе lollie loe,
  High trololliе lee,
Though others think they have as much
Yet he that says so lies:
  Then come away, turn
  Countryman with me.

John Chalkhill [fl. 1648]

THE OLD SQUIRE

I LIKE the hunting of the hare
  Better than that of the fox;
I like the joyous morning air,
  And the crowing of the cocks.

I like the calm of the early fields,
  The ducks asleep by the lake,
The quiet hour which nature yields
  Before mankind is awake.

I like the pheasants and feeding things
  Of the unsuspicious morn;
I like the flap of the wood-pigeon's wings
  As she rises from the corn.

I like the blackbird's shriek, and his rush
  From the turnips as I pass by,
And the partridge hiding her head in a bush,
  For her young ones cannot fly.

I like these things, and I like to ride,
  When all the world is in bed,
To the top of the hill where the sky grows wide,
  And where the sun grows red.

The beagles at my horse-heels trot
In silence after me;
There's Ruby, Roger, Diamond, Dot,
Old Slut and Margery,—

A score of names well used, and dear,
The names my childhood knew;
The horn with which I rouse their cheer,
Is the horn my father blew.

I like the hunting of the hare
Better than that of the fox;
The new world still is all less fair
Than the old world it mocks.

I covet not a wider range
Than these dear manors give;
I take my pleasures without change,
And as I lived I live.

I leave my neighbors to their thought;
My choice it is, and pride,
On my own lands to find my sport,
In my own fields to ride.

The hare herself no better loves
The field where she was bred,
Than I the habit of these groves,
My own inherited.

I know my quarries every one,
The meuse where she sits low;
The road she chose to-day was run
A hundred years ago.

The lags, the gills, the forest ways,
The hedgerows one and all,
These are the kingdoms of my chase,
And bounded by my wall;

Nor has the world a better thing,
Though one should search it round,
Than thus to live one's own sole king,
Upon one's own sole ground.

I like the hunting of the hare;
It brings me, day by day,
The memory of old days as fair,
With dead men passed away.

To these, as homeward still I ply
And pass the churchyard gate,
Where all are laid as I must lie
I stop and raise my hat.

I like the hunting of the hare;
New sports I hold in scorn.
I like to be as my fathers were,
In the days ere I was born.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt [1840–

INSCRIPTION IN A HERMITAGE

Beneath this stony roof reclined,
I soothe to peace my pensive mind;
And while, to shade my lowly cave,
Embowering elms their umbrage wave;
And while the maple dish is mine—
The beechen cup, unstained with wine—
I scorn the gay licentious crowd,
Nor heed the toys that deck the proud.

Within my limits, lone and still,
The blackbird pipes in artless trill;
Fast by my couch, congenial guest,
The wren has wove her mossy nest;
From busy scenes and brighter skies,
To lurk with innocence, she flies,
Here hopes in safe repose to dwell,
Nor aught suspects the sylvan cell.

At morn I take my customed round,
To mark how buds yon shrubby mound,
And every opening primrose count,
That trimly paints my blooming mount;
Or o'er the sculptures, quaint and rude,
That grace my gloomy solitude,
I teach in winding wreaths to stray
Fantastic ivy's gadding spray.

At eve, within yon studious nook,
I ope my brass-embossèd book,
Portrayed with many a holy deed
Of martyrs, crowned with heavenly meed;
Then, as my taper waxes dim,
Chant, ere I sleep, my measured hymn,
And at the close, the gleams behold
Of parting wings, be-dropt with gold.

While such pure joys my bliss create,
Who but would smile at guilty state?
Who but would wish his holy lot
In calm oblivion's humble grot?
Who but would cast his pomp away,
To take my staff, and amice gray;
And to the world's tumultuous stage
Prefer the blameless hermitage?

Thomas Warton [1728–1790]

THE RETIREMENT

Farewell, thou busy world, and may
We never meet again;
Here I can eat and sleep and pray,
And do more good in one short day
Than he who his whole age outwears
Upon the most conspicuous theaters,
Where naught but vanity and vice appears.

Good God! how sweet are all things here!
How beautiful the fields appear!

How cleanly do we feed and lie!
Lord! what good hours do we keep!
How quietly we sleep!
What peace, what unanimity!
How innocent from the lewd fashion
Is all our business, all our recreation!

O, how happy here's our leisure!
O, how innocent our pleasure!
O ye valleys! O ye mountains!
O ye groves, and crystal fountains!
How I love, at liberty,
By turns to come and visit ye!
Dear solitude, the soul's best friend,
That man acquainted with himself dost make,
And all his Maker's wonders to attend,
With thee I here converse at will,
And would be glad to do so still,
For it is thou alone that keep'st the soul awake.

How calm and quiet a delight
Is it, alone,
To read and meditate and write,
By none offended, and offending none!
To walk, ride, sit, or sleep at one's own ease;
And, pleasing a man's self, none other to displease.

O my belovèd nymph, fair Dove,
Princess of rivers, how I love
Upon thy flowery banks to lie,
And view thy silver stream,
When gilded by a Summer's beam!
And in it all thy wanton fry
Playing at liberty,
And, with my angle, upon them
The all of treachery
I ever learned industriously to try!

Such streams Rome's yellow Tiber cannot show,
The Iberian Tagus, or Ligurian Po;

The Maese, the Danube, and the Rhine,
Are puddle-water, all, compared with thine;
And Loire's pure streams yet too polluted are
With thine, much purer, to compare;
The rapid Garonne and the winding Seine
Are both too mean,
    Belovèd Dove, with thee
    To vie priority;
Nay, Tame and Isis, when conjoined, submit,
And lay their trophies at thy silver feet.

O my belovèd rocks, that rise
To awe the earth and brave the skies!
From some aspiring mountain's crown
    How dearly do I love,
Giddy with pleasure to look down;
    And from the vales to view the noble heights above;
O my belovèd caves! from dog-star's heat,
And all anxieties, my safe retreat;
What safety, privacy, what true delight,
In the artificial light
    Your gloomy entrails make,
    Have I taken, do I take!
How oft, when grief has made me fly,
To hide me from society
E'en of my dearest friends, have I,
    In your recesses' friendly shade,
    All my sorrows open laid,
And my most secret woes intrusted to your privacy!

Lord! would men let me alone,
What an over-happy one
    Should I think myself to be—
Might I in this desert place,
(Which most men in discourse disgrace)
    Live but undisturbed and free!
Here, in this despised recess,
    Would I, maugre Winter's cold,
And the Summer's worst excess,
    Try to live out to sixty full years old;

And, all the while,
Without an envious eye
On any thriving under Fortune's smile,
Contented live, and then contented die.

Charles Cotton [1630–1687]

THE COUNTRY FAITH

HERE in the country's heart,
Where the grass is green,
Life is the same sweet life
As it e'er hath been.

Trust in a God still lives,
And the bell at morn
Floats with a thought of God
O'er the rising corn.

God comes down in the rain,
And the crop grows tall—
This is the country faith
And best of all!

Norman Gale [1862–

TRULY GREAT

MY walls outside must have some flowers,
My walls within must have some books;
A house that's small; a garden large,
And in it leafy nooks:

A little gold that's sure each week;
That comes not from my living kind,
But from a dead man in his grave,
Who cannot change his mind:

A lovely wife, and gentle too;
Contented that no eyes but mine
Can see her many charms, nor voice
To call her beauty fine:

Where she would in that stone cage live,
A self-made prisoner, with me;

While many a wild bird sang around,
On gate, on bush, on tree.

And she sometimes to answer them,
In her far sweeter voice than all;
Till birds, that loved to look on leaves,
Will doat on a stone wall.

With this small house, this garden large,
This little gold, this lovely mate,
With health in body, peace at heart—
Show me a man more great.

William H. Davies [1870–

EARLY MORNING AT BARGIS

Clear air and grassy lea,
Stream-song and cattle-bell—
Dear man, what fools are we
In prison-walls to dwell!

To live our days apart
From green things and wide skies,
And let the wistful heart
Be cut and crushed with lies!

Bright peaks!—And suddenly
Light floods the placid dell,
The grass-tops brush my knee:
A good crop it will be,
So all is well!
O man, what fools are we
In prison-walls to dwell!

Hermann Hagedorn [1882–

THE CUP

The cup I sing is a cup of gold
Many and many a century old,
Sculptured fair, and over-filled
With wine of a generous vintage, spilled

In crystal currents and foaming tides
All round its luminous, pictured sides.
Old Time enameled and embossed
This ancient cup at an infinite cost.
Its frame he wrought of metal that run
Red from the furnace of the sun.
Ages on ages slowly rolled
Before the glowing mass was cold,
And still he toiled at the antique mold,—
Turning it fast in his fashioning hand,
Tracing circle, layer, and band,
Carving figures quaint and strange,
Pursuing, through many a wondrous change,
The symmetry of a plan divine.
At last he poured the lustrous wine,
Crowned high the radiant wave with light,
And held aloft the goblet bright,
Half in shadow, and wreathed in mist
Of purple, amber, and amethyst.

This is the goblet from whose brink
All creatures that have life must drink:
Foemen and lovers, haughty lord,
And sallow beggar with lips abhorred.
The new-born infant, ere it gain
The mother's breast, this wine must drain.
The oak with its subtle juice is fed,
The rose drinks till her cheeks are red,
And the dimpled, dainty violet sips
The limpid stream with loving lips.
It holds the blood of sun and star,
And all pure essences that are:
No fruit so high on the heavenly vine,
Whose golden hanging clusters shine
On the far-off shadowy midnight hills,
But some sweet influence it distils
That slideth down the silvery rills.
Here Wisdom drowned her dangerous thought,
The early gods their secrets brought;

Beauty, in quivering lines of light,
Ripples before the ravished sight;
And the unseen mystic spheres combine
To charm the cup and drug the wine.

All day I drink of the wine, and deep
In its stainless waves my senses steep;
All night my peaceful soul lies drowned
In hollows of the cup profound;
Again each morn I clamber up
The emerald crater of the cup,
On massive knobs of jasper stand
And view the azure ring expand:
I watch the foam-wreaths toss and swim
In the wine that o'erruns the jeweled rim:—
Edges of chrysolite emerge,
Dawn-tinted, from the misty surge:
My thrilled, uncovered front I lave,
My eager senses kiss the wave,
And drain, with its viewless draught, the lore
That kindles the bosom's secret core,
And the fire that maddens the poet's brain
With wild sweet ardor and heavenly pain.

John Townsend Trowbridge [1827–1916]

A STRIP OF BLUE

I DO not own an inch of land,
  But all I see is mine,—
The orchards and the mowing-fields,
  The lawns and gardens fine.
The winds my tax-collectors are,
  They bring me tithes divine,—
Wild scents and subtle essences,
  A tribute rare and free;
And, more magnificent than all,
  My window keeps for me
A glimpse of blue immensity,—
  A little strip of sea.

Richer am I than he who owns
Great fleets and argosies;
I have a share in every ship
Won by the inland breeze
To loiter on yon airy road
Above the apple-trees.
I freight them with my untold dreams;
Each bears my own picked crew;
And nobler cargoes wait for them
Than ever India knew,—
My ships that sail into the East
Across that outlet blue.

Sometimes they seem like living shapes,—
The people of the sky,—
Guests in white raiment coming down
From Heaven, which is close by;
I call them by familiar names,
As one by one draws nigh,
So white, so light, so spirit-like,
From violet mists they bloom!
The aching wastes of the unknown
Are half reclaimed from gloom,
Since on life's hospitable sea
All souls find sailing-room.

The ocean grows a weariness
With nothing else in sight;
Its east and west, its north and south,
Spread out from morn to night;
We miss the warm, caressing shore,
Its brooding shade and light.
A part is greater than the whole;
By hints are mysteries told.
The fringes of eternity,—
God's sweeping garment-fold,
In that bright shred of glittering sea,
I reach out for, and hold.

The sails, like flakes of roseate pearl,
Float in upon the mist;

The waves are broken precious stones,—
  Sapphire and amethyst,
Washed from celestial basement walls
  By suns unsetting kissed.
Out through the utmost gates of space,
  Past where the gray stars drift,
To the widening Infinite, my soul
  Glides on, a vessel swift;
Yet loses not her anchorage
  In yonder azure rift.

Here sit I, as a little child:
  The threshold of God's door
Is that clear band of chrysoprase;
  Now the vast temple floor,
The blinding glory of the dome
  I bow my head before:
Thy universe, O God, is home,
  In height or depth, to me;
Yet here upon thy footstool green
  Content am I to be;
Glad, when is opened unto my need
  Some sea-like glimpse of thee.

Lucy Larcom [1824–1893]

AN ODE TO MASTER ANTHONY STAFFORD

TO HASTEN HIM INTO THE COUNTRY

Come, spur away,
I have no patience for a longer stay,
  But must go down
And leave the chargeable noise of this great town:
  I will the country see,
  Where old simplicity,
    Though hid in gray,
    Doth look more gay
Than foppery in plush and scarlet clad.
  Farewell, you city wits, that are
    Almost at civil war—
'Tis time that I grow wise, when all the world grows mad.

More of my days
I will not spend to gain an idiot's praise;
Or to make sport
For some slight Puisne of the Inns of Court.
Then, worthy Stafford, say,
How shall we spend the day?
With what delights
Shorten the nights?
When from this tumult we are got secure,
Where mirth with all her freedom goes,
Yet shall no finger lose;
Where every word is thought, and every thought is pure?

There from the tree
We'll cherries pluck, and pick the strawberry;
And every day
Go see the wholesome country girls make hay,
Whose brown hath lovelier grace
Than any painted face
That I do know
Hyde Park can show:
Where I had rather gain a kiss than meet
(Though some of them in greater state
Might court my love with plate)
The beauties of the Cheap, and wives of Lombard Street.

But think upon
Some other pleasures: these to me are none.
Why do I prate
Of women, that are things against my fate!
I never mean to wed
That torture to my bed:
My Muse is she
My love shall be.
Let clowns get wealth and heirs: when I am gone
And that great bugbear, grisly Death,
Shall take this idle breath,
If I a poem leave, that poem is my son.

Of this no more!
We'll rather taste the bright Pomona's store.

No fruit shall 'scape
Our palates, from the damson to the grape.
Then, full, we'll seek a shade,
And hear what music's made;
How Philomel
Her tale doth tell,
And how the other birds do fill the choir;
The thrush and blackbird lend their throats,
Warbling melodious notes;
We will all sports enjoy which others but desire.

Ours is the sky,
Where at what fowl we please our hawk shall fly:
Nor will we spare
To hunt the crafty fox or timorous hare;
But let our hounds run loose
In any ground they'll choose;
The buck shall fall,
The stag, and all.
Our pleasures must from their own warrants be,
For to my Muse, if not to me,
I'm sure all game is free:
Heaven, earth, are all but parts of her great royalty.

And when we mean
To taste of Bacchus' blessings now and then,
And drink by stealth
A cup or two to noble Barkley's health,
I'll take my pipe and try
The Phrygian melody;
Which he that hears,
Lets through his ears
A madness to distemper all the brain:
Then I another pipe will take
And Doric music make,
To civilize with graver notes our wits again.

Thomas Randolph [1605–1635]

"THE MIDGES DANCE ABOON THE BURN"

THE midges dance aboon the burn;
The dews begin to fa';
The paitricks doun the rushy holm
Set up their e'ening ca'.
Now loud and clear the blackbird's sang
Rings through the briery shaw,
While, flitting gay, the swallows play
Around the castle wa'.

Beneath the golden gloamin' sky
The mavis mends her lay;
The redbreast pours his sweetest strains
To charm the lingering day;
While weary yeldrins seem to wail
Their little nestlings torn,
The merry wren, frae den to den,
Gaes jinking through the thorn.

The roses fauld their silken leaves,
The foxglove shuts its bell;
The honeysuckle and the birk
Spread fragrance through the dell.—
Let others crowd the giddy court
Of mirth and revelry,
The simple joys that Nature yields
Are dearer far to me.

Robert Tannahill [1774–1810]

THE PLOW

ABOVE yon somber swell of land
Thou seest the dawn's grave orange hue,
With one pale streak like yellow sand,
And over that a vein of blue.

The air is cold above the woods;
All silent is the earth and sky,
Except with his own lonely moods
The blackbird holds a colloquy.

Over the broad hill creeps a beam,
Like hope that gilds a good man's brow;
And now ascends the nostril-steam
Of stalwart horses come to plow.

Ye rigid plowmen, bear in mind
Your labor is for future hours!
Advance—spare not—nor look behind—
Plow deep and straight with all your powers.

Richard Hengist Horne [1803–1884]

THE USEFUL PLOW

A COUNTRY life is sweet!
In moderate cold and heat,
To walk in the air how pleasant and fair!
In every field of wheat,
The fairest of flowers adorning the bowers,
And every meadow's brow;
So that I say, no courtier may
Compare with them who clothe in gray,
And follow the useful plow.

They rise with the morning lark,
And labor till almost dark,
Then, folding their sheep, they hasten to sleep
While every pleasant park
Next morning is ringing with birds that are singing
On each green, tender bough.
With what content and merriment
Their days are spent, whose minds are bent
To follow the useful plow.

Unknown

"TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT"

To one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.

Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—and eye
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
He mourns that day so soon has glided by,
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE QUIET LIFE

What pleasure have great princes
More dainty to their choice
Than herdsmen wild, who careless
In quiet life rejoice,
And fortune's fate not fearing
Sing sweet in summer morning?

Their dealings plain and rightful,
Are void of all deceit;
They never know how spiteful
It is to kneel and wait
On favorite, presumptuous,
Whose pride is vain and sumptuous.

All day their flocks each tendeth;
At night, they take their rest;
More quiet than who sendeth
His ship unto the East,
Where gold and pearl are plenty;
But getting, very dainty.

For lawyers and their pleading,
They 'steem it not a straw;
They think that honest meaning
Is of itself a law:
Whence conscience judgeth plainly,
They spend no money vainly.

O happy who thus liveth!
Not caring much for gold;
With clothing which sufficeth
To keep him from the cold.
Though poor and plain his diet
Yet merry it is, and quiet.

William Byrd [1538?–1623]

THE WISH

Well then, I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree;
The very honey of all earthly joy
Does, of all meats, the soonest cloy;
And they, methinks, deserve my pity
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd, and buzz, and murmurings
Of this great hive, the city!

Ah, yet, ere I descend to the grave,
May I a small house and large garden have;
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!
And since Love ne'er will from me flee,—
A mistress moderately fair,
And good as guardian-angels are,
Only beloved, and loving me!

O fountains! when in you shall I
Myself eased of unpeaceful thoughts espy?
O fields! O woods! when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade?
Here's the spring-head of pleasure's flood!
Here's wealthy Nature's treasury,
Where all the riches lie, that she
Has coined and stamped for good.

Pride and ambition here
Only in far-fetched metaphors appear;
Here naught but winds can hurtful murmurs scatter,
And naught but echo flatter.

The gods, when they descended, hither
From heaven did always choose their way;
And therefore we may boldly say
That 'tis the way too thither.

How happy here should I
And one dear She live, and embracing die!
She who is all the world, and can exclude
In deserts solitude.
I should have then this only fear:
Lest men, when they my pleasures see,
Should hither throng to live like me,
And so make a city here.

Abraham Cowley [1618–1667]

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

"Why, William, on that old gray stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

"Where are your books?—that light bequeathed
To beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake
And thus I made reply:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I dream that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

"—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT

Up! up! my friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening luster mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

SIMPLE NATURE

Be it not mine to steal the cultured flower
From any garden of the rich and great,
Nor seek with care, through many a weary hour,
Some novel form of wonder to create.
Enough for me the leafy woods to rove,
And gather simple cups of morning dew,
Or, in the fields and meadows that I love,
Find beauty in their bells of every hue.
Thus round my cottage floats a fragrant air,
And though the rustic plot be humbly laid,
Yet, like the lilies gladly growing there,
I have not toiled, but take what God has made.
My Lord Ambition passed, and smiled in scorn;
I plucked a rose, and, lo! it had no thorn.

George John Romanes [1848–1894]

"I FEAR NO POWER A WOMAN WIELDS"

I FEAR no power a woman wields
While I can have the woods and fields,
With comradeship alone of gun,
Gray marsh-wastes and the burning sun.

For aye the heart's most poignant pain
Will wear away 'neath hail and rain,
And rush of winds through branches bare
With something still to do and dare,—

The lonely watch beside the shore,
The wild-fowl's cry, the sweep of oar,
The paths of virgin sky to scan
Untrod, and so uncursed by man.

Gramercy, for thy haunting face,
Thy charm of voice and lissome grace,
I fear no power a woman wields
While I can have the woods and fields.

Ernest McGaffey [1861-

A RUNNABLE STAG

WHEN the pods went pop on the broom, green broom,
And apples began to be golden-skinned,
We harbored a stag in the Priory coomb,
And we feathered his trail up-wind, up-wind,
We feathered his trail up-wind—
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag, a kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
A stag, a runnable stag.

Then the huntsman's horn rang yap, yap, yap,
And "Forwards" we heard the harborer shout;
But 'twas only a brocket that broke a gap
In the beechen underwood, driven out,
From the underwood antlered out

By warrant and might of the stag, the stag,
The runnable stag, whose lordly mind
Was bent on sleep, though beamed and tined
He stood, a runnable stag.

So we tufted the covert till afternoon
With Tinkerman's Pup and Bell-of-the-North;
And hunters were sulky and hounds out of tune
Before we tufted the right stag forth,
Before we tufted him forth,
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
The royal and runnable stag.

It was Bell-of-the-North and Tinkerman's Pup
That stuck to the scent till the copse was drawn.
"Tally ho! tally ho!" and the hunt was up,
The tufters whipped and the pack laid on,
The resolute pack laid on,
And the stag of warrant away at last,
The runnable stag, the same, the same,
His hoofs on fire, his horns like flame,
A stag, a runnable stag.

"Let your gelding be: if you check or chide
He stumbles at once and you're out of the hunt;
For three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
On hunters accustomed to bear the brunt,
Accustomed to bear the brunt,
Are after the runnable stag, the stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
The right, the runnable stag."

By perilous paths in coomb and dell,
The heather, the rocks, and the river-bed,
The pace grew hot, for the scent lay well,
And a runnable stag goes right ahead,
The quarry went right ahead—
Ahead, ahead, and fast and far;
His antlered crest, his cloven hoof,

Brow, bay and tray and three aloof,
The stag, the runnable stag.

For a matter of twenty miles and more,
By the densest hedge and the highest wall,
Through herds of bullocks he baffled the lore
Of harborer, huntsman, hounds and all,
Of harborer, hounds and all—
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
He ran, and he never was caught alive,
This stag, this runnable stag.

When he turned at bay in the leafy gloom,
In the emerald gloom where the brook ran deep,
He heard in the distance the rollers boom,
And he saw in a vision of peaceful sleep,
In a wonderful vision of sleep,
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag in a jewelled bed,
Under the sheltering ocean dead,
A stag, a runnable stag.

So a fateful hope lit up his eye,
And he opened his nostrils wide again,
And he tossed his branching antlers high
As he headed the hunt down the Charloch glen,
As he raced down the echoing glen—
For five miles more, the stag, the stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
Not to be caught now, dead or alive,
The stag, the runnable stag.

Three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
Three hundred horses as gallant and free,
Beheld him escape on the evening tide,
Far out till he sank in the Severn Sea,
Till he sank in the depths of the sea—
The stag, the buoyant stag, the stag
That slept at last in a jewelled bed
Under the sheltering ocean spread,
The stag, the runnable stag.

John Davidson [1857–1909]

HUNTING–SONG

From "King Arthur"

Oh, who would stay indoor, indoor,
When the horn is on the hill? (*Bugle:* Tarantara!
With the crisp air stinging, and the huntsmen singing,
And a ten-tined buck to kill!

Before the sun goes down, goes down,
We shall slay the buck of ten; (*Bugle:* Tarantara!
And the priest shall say benison, and we shall ha'e venison,
When we come home again.

Let him that loves his ease, his ease,
Keep close and house him fair; (*Bugle:* Tarantara!
He'll still be a stranger to the merry thrill of danger
And the joy of the open air.

But he that loves the hills, the hills,
Let him come out to-day! (*Bugle:* Tarantara!
For the horses are neighing, and the hounds are baying,
And the hunt's up, and away!

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

"A-HUNTING WE WILL GO"

From "Don Quixote in England"

The dusky night rides down the sky,
And ushers in the morn;
The hounds all join in glorious cry,
The huntsman winds his horn.
And a-hunting we will go.

The wife around her husband throws
Her arms to make him stay;
"My dear, it rains, it hails, it blows;
You cannot hunt to-day."
Yet a-hunting we will go.

Away they fly to 'scape the rout,
  Their steeds they soundly switch;
Some are thrown in, and some thrown out,
  And some thrown in the ditch.
    Yet a-hunting we will go.

Sly Reynard now like lightning flies,
  And sweeps across the vale;
And when the hounds too near he spies,
  He drops his bushy tail.
    Then a-hunting we will go.

Fond Echo seems to like the sport,
  And join the jovial cry;
The woods, the hills, the sound retort,
  And music fills the sky,
    When a-hunting we do go.

At last his strength to faintness worn,
  Poor Reynard ceases flight;
Then hungry, homeward we return,
  To feast away the night.
    And a-drinking we do go.

Ye jovial hunters, in the morn
  Prepare then for the chase;
Rise at the sounding of the horn
  And health with sport embrace,
    When a-hunting we do go.

Henry Fielding [1707–1754]

THE ANGLER'S INVITATION

Come when the leaf comes, angle with me,
Come when the bee hums over the lea,
    Come with the wild flowers—
    Come with the wild showers—
Come when the singing bird calleth for thee!

Then to the stream side, gladly we'll hie,
Where the gray trout glide silently by,
    Or in some still place
    Over the hill face
Hurrying onward, drop the light fly.

Then, when the dew falls, homeward we'll speed
To our own loved walls down on the mead,
There, by the bright hearth,
Holding our night mirth,
We'll drink to sweet friendship in need and in deed.

Thomas Tod Stoddart [1810–1880]

THE ANGLER'S WISH

From "The Complete Angler"

I IN these flowery meads would be,
These crystal streams should solace me;
To whose harmonious bubbling noise
I, with my angle, would rejoice,
Sit here, and see the turtle-dove
Court his chaste mate to acts of love;

Or, on that bank, feel the west-wind
Breathe health and plenty; please my mind,
To see sweet dewdrops kiss these flowers,
And then washed off by April showers;
Here, hear my Kenna sing a song:
There, see a blackbird feed her young,

Or a laverock build her nest;
Here, give my weary spirits rest,
And raise my low-pitched thoughts above
Earth, or what poor mortals love:
Thus, free from lawsuits, and the noise
Of princes' courts, I would rejoice;

Or, with my Bryan and a book,
Loiter long days near Shawford brook;
There sit by him, and eat my meat;
There see the sun both rise and set;
There bid good morning to next day;
There meditate my time away;
And angle on; and beg to have
A quiet passage to a welcome grave.

Izaac Walton [1593–1683]

THE ANGLER

In "The Complete Angler"

O THE gallant fisher's life,
It is the best of any!
'Tis full of pleasure, void of strife,
And 'tis beloved by many;
Other joys
Are but toys;
Only this
Lawful is;
For our skill
Breeds no ill,
But content and pleasure.

In a morning, up we rise,
Ere Aurora's peeping;
Drink a cup to wash our eyes,
Leave the sluggard sleeping;
Then we go
To and fro,
With our knacks
At our backs,
To such streams
As the Thames,
If we have the leisure.

When we please to walk abroad
For our recreation,
In the fields is our abode,
Full of delectation,
Where, in a brook,
With a hook,—
Or a lake,—
Fish we take;
There we sit,
For a bit,
Till we fish entangle.

We have gentles in a horn,
  We have paste and worms too;
We can watch both night and morn,
  Suffer rain and storms too;
    None do here
    Use to swear:
    Oaths do fray
    Fish away;
    We sit still,
    Watch our quill:
  Fishers must not wrangle.

If the sun's excessive heat
  Make our bodies swelter,
To an osier hedge we get,
  For a friendly shelter;
    Where, in a dike,
    Perch or pike,
    Roach or dace,
    We do chase,
    Bleak or gudgeon,
    Without grudging;
  We are still contented.

Or we sometimes pass an hour
  Under a green willow,
That defends us from a shower,
  Making earth our pillow;
    Where we may
    Think and pray,
    Before death
    Stops our breath;
    Other joys
    Are but toys,
  And to be lamented.

John Chalkhill [fl. 1648]

WANDERLUST

TO JANE: THE INVITATION

Best and Brightest, come away!
Fairer far than this fair day,
Which, like thee, to those in sorrow,
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
To the rough year just awake
In its cradle on the brake.
The brightest hour of unborn Spring
Through the winter wandering,
Found, it seems, the halcyon morn
To hoar February born;
Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,
It kissed the forehead of the earth,
And smiled upon the silent sea,
And bade the frozen streams be free,
And waked to music all their fountains,
And breathed upon the frozen mountains,
And like a prophetess of May
Strewed flowers upon the barren way,
Making the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, Dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs—
To the silent wilderness
Where the soul need not repress
Its music, lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind,
While the touch of Nature's art
Harmonizes heart to heart.

I leave this notice on my door
For each accustomed visitor:—

"I am gone into the fields
To take what this sweet hour yields;—
Reflection, you may come to-morrow,
Sit by the fireside with Sorrow.—
You with the unpaid bill, Despair,—
You tiresome verse-reciter, Care,—
I will pay you in the grave,—
Death will listen to your stave.
Expectation too, be off!
To-day is for itself enough;
Hope, in pity mock not Woe
With smiles, nor follow where I go;
Long having lived on thy sweet food,
At length I find one moment's good
After long pain—with all your love,
This you never told me of."

Radiant Sister of the Day
Awake! arise! and come away!
To the wild woods and the plains,
To the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves,
Where the pine its garland weaves
Of sapless green, and ivy dun,
Round stems that never kiss the sun,
Where the lawns and pastures be,
And the sandhills of the sea;—
Where the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy-star that never sets,
And wind-flowers, and violets,
Which yet join not scent to hue,
Crown the pale year weak and new;
When the night is left behind
In the deep east, dun and blind,
And the blue noon is over us,
And the multitudinous
Billows murmur at our feet,
Where the earth and ocean meet,
And all things seem only one
In the universal sun.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

"MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS"

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birthplace of valor, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Farewell to the mountains high covered with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer,
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"AFAR IN THE DESERT"

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side.
When the sorrows of life the soul o'ercast,
And, sick of the present, I cling to the past;
When the eye is suffused with regretful tears,
From the fond recollections of former years;
And shadows of things that have long since fled
Flit over the brain, like the ghosts of the dead:
Bright visions of glory that vanished too soon;
Day-dreams that departed ere manhood's noon;
Attachments by fate or falsehood reft;
Companions of early days lost or left—
And my native land—whose magical name
Thrills to the heart like electric flame;

The home of my childhood; the haunts of my prime;
All the passions and scenes of that rapturous time
When the feelings were young, and the world was new,
Like the fresh bowers of Eden unfolding to view;
All—all now forsaken—forgotten—foregone!
And I—a lone exile remembered of none—
My high aims abandoned,—my good acts undone—
Aweary of all that is under the sun—
With that sadness of heart which no stranger may scan,
I fly to the desert afar from man.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side,
When the wild turmoil of this wearisome life,
With its scenes of oppression, corruption, and strife—
The proud man's frown, and the base man's fear—
The scorner's laugh, and the sufferer's tear—
And malice, and meanness, and falsehood, and folly,
Dispose me to musing and dark melancholy;
When my bosom is full, and my thoughts are high,
And my soul is sick with the bondman's sigh—
Oh! then there is freedom, and joy, and pride,
Afar in the desert alone to ride!
There is rapture to vault on the champing steed,
And to bound away with the eagle's speed,
With the death-fraught firelock in my hand—
The only law of the Desert Land!

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side.
Away—away from the dwellings of men,
By the wild deer's haunt, by the buffalo's glen;
By valleys remote where the oribi plays,
Where the gnu, the gazelle, and the hartebeest graze,
And the kudu and eland unhunted recline
By the skirts of gray forest o'erhung with wild vine:
Where the elephant browses at peace in his wood,
And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood,
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
In the fen where the wild ass is drinking his fill.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side,
O'er the brown karroo, where the bleating cry
Of the springbok's fawn sounds plaintively:
And the timorous quagga's shrill whistling neigh
Is heard by the fountain at twilight gray;
Where the zebra wantonly tosses his mane,
With wild hoof scouring the desolate plain;
And the fleet-footed ostrich over the waste
Speeds like a horseman who travels in haste,
Hieing away to the home of her rest,
Where she and her mate have scooped their nest,
Far hid from the pitiless plunderer's view
In the pathless depths of the parched karroo.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side.
Away—away—in the wilderness vast
Where the white man's foot hath never passed,
And the quivered Coranna or Bechuan
Hath rarely crossed with his roving clan:
A region of emptiness, howling and drear,
Which man hath abandoned from famine and fear;
Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
With the twilight bat from the yawning stone;
Where grass, nor herb, nor shrub takes root,
Save poisonous thorns that pierce the foot;
And the bitter melon, for food and drink,
Is the pilgrim's fare by the salt-lake's brink;
A region of drought, where no river glides,
Nor rippling brook with osiered sides;
Where sedgy pool, nor bubbling fount,
Nor tree, nor cloud, nor misty mount,
Appears, to refresh the aching eye;
But the barren earth and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon, round and round,
Spread—void of living sight or sound.
And here, while the night-winds round me sigh,
And the stars burn bright in the midnight sky,

As I sit apart by the desert stone,
Like Elijah at Horeb's cave, alone,
"A still small voice" comes through the wild,
Like a father consoling his fretful child,
Which banishes bitterness, wrath, and fear,
Saying—Man is distant, but God is near!

Thomas Pringle [1789–1834]

SPRING SONG IN THE CITY

Who remains in London,
In the streets with me,
Now that Spring is blowing
Warm winds from the sea;
Now that trees grow green and tall,
Now the sun shines mellow,
And with moist primroses all
English lanes are yellow?

Little barefoot maiden,
Selling violets blue,
Hast thou ever pictured
Where the sweetlings grew?
Oh, the warm wild woodland ways,
Deep in dewy grasses,
Where the wind-blown shadow strays,
Scented as it passes!

Peddler breathing deeply,
Toiling into town,
With the dusty highway
You are dusky brown;
Hast thou seen by daisied leas,
And by rivers flowing,
Lilac-ringlets which the breeze
Loosens lightly blowing?

Out of yonder wagon
Pleasant hay-scents float,
He who drives it carries
A daisy in his coat:

Oh, the English meadows, fair
  Far beyond all praises!
Freckled orchids everywhere
  Mid the snow of daisies!

Now in busy silence
  Broods the nightingale,
Choosing his love's dwelling
  In a dimpled dale;
Round the leafy bower they raise
  Rose-trees wild are springing;
Underneath, through the green haze,
  Bounds the brooklet singing.

And his love is silent
  As a bird can be,
For the red buds only
  Fill the red rose-tree;
Just as buds and blossoms blow
  He'll begin his tune,
When all is green and roses glow
  Underneath the moon.

Nowhere in the valleys
  Will the wind be still,
Everything is waving,
  Wagging at his will:
Blows the milkmaid's kirtle clean
  With her hand pressed on it;
Lightly o'er the hedge so green
  Blows the plowboy's bonnet.

Oh, to be a-roaming
  In an English dell!
Every nook is wealthy,
  All the world looks well,
Tinted soft the Heavens glow,
  Over Earth and Ocean,
Waters flow, breezes blow,
  All is light and motion!

Robert Buchanan [1841–1901]

IN CITY STREETS

YONDER in the heather there's a bed for sleeping,
Drink for one athirst, ripe blackberries to eat;
Yonder in the sun the merry hares go leaping,
And the pool is clear for travel-wearied feet.

Sorely throb my feet, a-tramping London highways,
(Ah! the springy moss upon a northern moor!)
Through the endless streets, the gloomy squares and by-ways,
Homeless in the City, poor among the poor!

London streets are gold—ah, give me leaves a-glinting
'Midst gray dykes and hedges in the autumn sun!
London water's wine, poured out for all unstinting—
God! For the little brooks that tumble as they run!

Oh, my heart is fain to hear the soft wind blowing,
Soughing through the fir-tops up on northern fells!
Oh, my eye's an ache to see the brown burns flowing
Through the peaty soil and tinkling heather-bells.

Ada Smith [18 –

THE VAGABOND

(To an Air of Schubert)

GIVE to me the life I love,
Let the lave go by me,
Give the jolly heaven above
And the byway nigh me.
Bed in the bush with stars to see,
Bread I dip in the river—
There's the life for a man like me,
There's the life for ever.

Let the blow fall soon or late,
Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
And the road before me.

Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,
  Nor a friend to know me;
All I seek, the heaven above
  And the road below me.

Or let autumn fall on me
  Where afield I linger,
Silencing the bird on tree,
  Biting the blue finger.
White as meal the frosty field—
  Warm the fireside haven—
Not to autumn will I yield,
  Not to winter even!

Let the blow fall soon or late,
  Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around,
  And the road before me.
Wealth I ask not, hope nor love,
  Nor a friend to know me;
All I ask, the heaven above
  And the road below me.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

IN THE HIGHLANDS

In the highlands, in the country places,
Where the old plain men have rosy faces,
And the young fair maidens
Quiet eyes;
Where essential silence cheers and blesses
And for ever in the hill-recesses
Her more lovely music
Broods and dies.—

O to mount again where erst I haunted;
Where the old red hills are bird-enchanted,
And the low green meadows
Bright with sward;

And when even dies, the million-tinted,
And the night has come, and planets glinted,
Lo, the valley hollow
Lamp-bestarred!

O to dream, O to awake and wander
There, and with delight to take and render,
Through the trance of silence,
Quiet breath!
Lo! for there, among the flowers and grasses,
Only the mightier movement sounds and passes;
Only winds and rivers,
Life and Death.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

THE SONG MY PADDLE SINGS

West wind, blow from your prairie nest,
Blow from the mountains, blow from the west.
The sail is idle, the sailor too;
O wind of the west, we wait for you!
Blow, blow!
I have wooed you so,
But never a favor you bestow.
You rock your cradle the hills between,
But scorn to notice my white lateen.

I stow the sail and unship the mast:
I wooed you long, but my wooing's past;
My paddle will lull you into rest:
O drowsy wind of the drowsy west,
Sleep, sleep!
By your mountains steep,
Or down where the prairie grasses sweep,
Now fold in slumber your laggard wings,
For soft is the song my paddle sings.

Be strong, O paddle! be brave, canoe!
The reckless waves you must plunge into.

Reel, reel,
On your trembling keel,
But never a fear my craft will feel.

We've raced the rapids; we're far ahead:
The river slips through its silent bed.
Sway, sway,
As the bubbles spray
And fall in tinkling tunes away.

And up on the hills against the sky,
A fir tree rocking its lullaby
Swings, swings,
Its emerald wings,
Swelling the song that my paddle sings.

E. Pauline Johnson [1862–1913]

THE GIPSY TRAIL

The white moth to the closing vine,
  The bee to the open clover,
And the gipsy blood to the gipsy blood
  Ever the wide world over.

Ever the wide world over, lass,
  Ever the trail held true,
Over the world and under the world,
  And back at the last to you.

Out of the dark of the gorgio camp,
  Out of the grime and the gray
(Morning waits at the end of the world),
  Gipsy, come away!

The wild boar to the sun-dried swamp,
  The red crane to her reed,
And the Romany lass to the Romany lad
  By the tie of a roving breed.

Morning waits at the end of the world
  Where winds unhaltered play,
Nipping the flanks of their plunging ranks,
  Till the white sea-horses neigh.

The pied snake to the rifted rock,
  The buck to the stony plain,
And the Romany lass to the Romany lad,
  And both to the road again.

Both to the road again, again!
  Out of a clean sea-track—
Follow the cross of the gipsy trail
  Over the world and back!

Follow the Romany patteran
  North where the blue bergs sail,
And the bows are gray with the frozen spray,
  And the masts are shod with mail.

Follow the Romany patteran
  Sheer to the Austral Light,
Where the besom of God is the wild west wind,
  Sweeping the sea-floors white.

Follow the Romany patteran
  West to the sinking sun,
Till the junk-sails lift through the houseless drift,
  And the east and the west are one.

Follow the Romany patteran
  East where the silence broods
By a purple wave on an opal beach
  In the hush of the Mahim woods.

The wild hawk to the wind-swept sky,
  The deer to the wholesome wold,
And the heart of a man to the heart of a maid,
  As it was in the days of old.

The heart of a man to the heart of a maid—
Light of my tents, be fleet!
Morning waits at the end of the world,
And the world is all at our feet!

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

WANDERLUST

Beyond the East the sunrise, beyond the West the sea,
And East and West the wanderlust that will not let me be;
It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say good-by!
For the seas call and the stars call, and oh, the call of the sky!

I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue hills are,
But man can have the sun for friend, and for his guide a star;
And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is heard,
For the river calls and the road calls, and oh, the call of a bird!

Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day
The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail away;
And come I may, but go I must, and if men ask you why,
You may put the blame on the stars and the sun and the white road and the sky!

Gerald Gould [1885–1916]

THE FOOTPATH WAY

The winding road lies white and bare,
Heavy in dust that takes the glare;
The thirsty hedgerows and parched grass
Dream of a time when no road was.

Beyond, the fields are full in view,
Heavy in herbage and in dew;
The great-eyed kine browse thankfully;
Come, take the footpath way with me!

This stile, where country lovers tryst,
Where many a man and maid have kissed,
Invites us sweetly, and the wood
Beckons us to her solitude.

Leave men and lumbering wains behind,
And dusty roads, all blank and blind;
Come tread on velvet and on silk,
Damasked with daisies, white as milk.

Those dryads of the wood, that some
Call the wild hyacinths, now are come,
And hold their revels in a night
Of emerald flecked with candle-light.

The fountains of the meadows play,
This is the wild bee's holiday;
When summer-snows have sweetly dressed
The pasture like a wedding-guest,

By fields of beans that shall eclipse
The honey on the rose's lips,
With woodruff and the new hay's breath,
And wild thyme sweetest in her death,

Skirting the rich man's lawn and hall,
The footpath way is free to all;
For us his pinks and roses blow:
Fling him thanksgiving ere we go!

By orchards yet in rosy veils,
By hidden nests of nightingales,
Through lonesome valleys where all day
The rabbit people scurry and play,

The footpath sets her tender lure.
This is the country for the poor;
The high-road seeks the crowded sea;
Come, take the footpath way with me!

Katherine Tynan [1861–

A MAINE TRAIL

Come follow, heart upon your sleeve,
The trail, a-teasing by,
Past tasseled corn and fresh-mown hay,
Trim barns and farm-house shy,
Past hollyhocks and white well-sweep,
Through pastures bare and wild,
Oh come, let's fare to the heart-o'-the-wood
With the faith of a little child.

Strike in by the gnarled way through the swamp
Where late the laurel shone,
An intimate close where you meet yourself
And come unto your own,
By bouldered brook to the hidden spring
Where breath of ferns blows sweet
And swift birds break the silence as
Their shadows cross your feet.

Stout-hearted thrust through gold-green copse
To garner the woodland glee,
To weave a garment of warm delight,
Of sunspun ecstasy;
'Twill shield you all winter from frosty eyes,
'Twill shield your heart from cold;
Such greens!—how the Lord Himself loves green!
Such sun!—how He loves the gold!

Then on till flaming fireweed
Is quenched in forest deep;
Tread soft! The sumptuous paven moss
Is spread for Dryads' sleep;
And list ten thousand thousand spruce
Lift up their voice to God—
We can a little understand,
Born of the self-same sod.

Oh come, the welcoming trees lead on,
Their guests are we to-day;
Shy violets smile, proud branches bow,
Gay mushrooms mark the way;

The silence is a courtesy,
The well-bred calm of kings;
Come haste! the hour sets its face
Unto great Happenings.

Gertrude Huntington McGiffert [18

AFOOT

Comes the lure of green things growing,
Comes the call of waters flowing—
And the wayfarer desire
Moves and wakes and would be going.

Hark the migrant hosts of June
Marching nearer noon by noon!
Hark the gossip of the grasses
Bivouacked beneath the moon!

Long the quest and far the ending
When my wayfarer is wending—
When desire is once afoot,
Doom behind and dream attending!

In his ears the phantom chime
Of incommunicable rhyme,
He shall chase the fleeting camp-fires
Of the Bedouins of Time.

Farer by uncharted ways,
Dumb as death to plaint or praise,
Unreturning he shall journey,
Fellow to the nights and days;

Till upon the outer bar
Stilled the moaning currents are,
Till the flame achieves the zenith,
Till the moth attains the star,

Till through laughter and through tears
Fair the final peace appears,
And about the watered pastures
Sink to sleep the nomad years!

Charles G. D. Roberts [1860–

FROM ROMANY TO ROME

Upon the road to Romany
It's stay, friend, stay!
There's lots o' love and lots o' time
To linger on the way;
Poppies for the twilight,
Roses for the noon,
It's happy goes as lucky goes
To Romany in June.

But on the road to Rome—oh,
It's march, man, march!
The dust is on the chariot wheels,
The sere is on the larch,
Helmets and javelins
And bridles flecked with foam—
The flowers are dead, the world's ahead
Upon the road to Rome.

But on the road to Rome—ah,
It's fight, man, fight!
Footman and horseman
Treading left and right,
Camp-fires and watch-fires
Ruddying the gloam—
The fields are gray and worn away
Along the road to Rome.

Upon the road to Romany
It's sing, boys, sing!
Though rag and pack be on our back
We'll whistle to the King.
Wine is in the sunshine,
Madness in the moon,
And de'il may care the road we fare
To Romany in June.

Along the road to Rome, alas!
The glorious dust is whirled,
Strong hearts are fierce to see
The City of the World;

Yet footfall or bugle-call
Or thunder as ye will,
Upon the road to Romany
The birds are calling still!

Wallace Irwin [1875–

THE TOIL OF THE TRAIL

WHAT have I gained by the toil of the trail?
I know and know well.
I have found once again the lore I had lost
In the loud city's hell.

I have broadened my hand to the cinch and the axe,
I have laid my flesh to the rain;
I was hunter and trailer and guide;
I have touched the most primitive wildness again.

I have threaded the wild with the stealth of the deer,
No eagle is freer than I;
No mountain can thwart me, no torrent appall,
I defy the stern sky.
So long as I live these joys will remain,
I have touched the most primitive wildness again.

Hamlin Garland [1860–

DO YOU FEAR THE WIND?

Do you fear the force of the wind,
The slash of the rain?
Go face them and fight them,
Be savage again.
Go hungry and cold like the wolf,
Go wade like the crane:
The palms of your hands will thicken,
The skin of your cheek will tan,
You'll grow ragged and weary and swarthy,
But you'll walk like a man!

Hamlin Garland [1860–

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

"El Camino Real"

All in the golden weather, forth let us ride to-day,
You and I together, on the King's Highway,
The blue skies above us, and below the shining sea;
There's many a road to travel, but it's this road for me.

It's a long road and sunny, and the fairest in the world—
There are peaks that rise above it in their snowy mantles curled,
And it leads from the mountains through a hedge of chaparral,
Down to the waters where the sea gulls call.

It's a long road and sunny, it's a long road and old,
And the brown padres made it for the flocks of the fold;
They made it for the sandals of the sinner-folk that trod
From the fields in the open to the shelter-house of God.

They made it for the sandals of the sinner-folk of old;
Now the flocks they are scattered and death keeps the fold;
But you and I together we will take the road to-day,
With the breath in our nostrils, on the King's Highway.

We will take the road together through the morning's golden glow,
And we'll dream of those who trod it in the mellowed long ago;
We will stop at the Missions where the sleeping padres lay,
And we'll bend a knee above them for their souls' sake to pray.

We'll ride through the valleys where the blossom's on the tree,
Through the orchards and the meadows with the bird and the bee,
And we'll take the rising hills where the manzanitas grow,
Past the gray tails of waterfalls where blue violets blow.

Old Conquistadores, O brown priests and all,
Give us your ghosts for company when night begins to fall;
There's many a road to travel, but it's this road to-day,
With the breath of God about us on the King's Highway.

John S. McGroarty [1862–

THE FORBIDDEN LURE

"Leave all and follow—follow!"
Lure of the sun at dawn,
Lure of a wind-paced hollow,
Lure of the stars withdrawn;
Lure of the brave old singing
Brave perished minstrels knew;
Of dreams like sea-fog clinging
To boughs the night sifts through:

"Leave all and follow—follow!"
The sun goes up the day;
Flickering wing of swallow,
Blossoms that blow away,—
What would you, luring, luring,
When I must bide at home?
My heart will break her mooring
And die in reef-flung foam!

Oh, I must never listen,
Call not outside my door.
Green leaves, you must not glisten
Like water, any more.
Oh, Beauty, wandering Beauty,
Pass by; speak not. For see,
By bed and board stands Duty
To snatch my dreams from me!

Fannie Stearns Davis [1884–

THE WANDER-LOVERS

Down the world with Marna!
That's the life for me!
Wandering with the wandering wind,
Vagabond and unconfined!

Roving with the roving rain
Its unboundaried domain!
Kith and kin of wander-kind,
Children of the sea!

Petrels of the sea-drift!
Swallows of the lea!
Arabs of the whole wide girth
Of the wind-encircled earth!
In all climes we pitch our tents,
Cronies of the elements,
With the secret lords of birth
Intimate and free.

All the seaboard knows us
From Fundy to the Keys;
Every bend and every creek
Of abundant Chesapeake;
Ardise hills and Newport coves
And the far-off orange groves,
Where Floridian oceans break,
Tropic tiger seas.

Down the world with Marna,
Tarrying there and here!
Just as much at home in Spain
As in Tangier or Touraine!
Shakespeare's Avon knows us well,
And the crags of Neufchâtel;
And the ancient Nile is fain
Of our coming near.

Down the world with Marna,
Daughter of the air!
Marna of the subtle grace,
And the vision in her face!
Moving in the measures trod
By the angels before God!
With her sky-blue eyes amaze
And her sea-blue hair!

Marna with the trees' life
In her veins a-stir!
Marna of the aspen heart
Where the sudden quivers start!
Quick-responsive, subtle, wild!
Artless as an artless child,
Spite of all her reach of art!
Oh, to roam with her!

Marna with the wind's will,
Daughter of the sea!
Marna of the quick disdain,
Starting at the dream of stain!
At a smile with love aglow,
At a frown a statued woe,
Standing pinnacled in pain
Till a kiss sets free!

Down the world with Marna,
Daughter of the fire!
Marna of the deathless hope,
Still alert to win new scope
Where the wings of life may spread
For a flight unhazarded!
Dreaming of the speech to cope
With the heart's desire!

Marna of the far quest
After the divine!
Striving ever for some goal
Past the blunder-god's control!
Dreaming of potential years
When no day shall dawn in fears!
That's the Marna of my soul,
Wander-bride of mine!

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

THE SEA GIPSY

I AM fevered with the sunset,
I am fretful with the bay,
For the wander-thirst is on me
And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,
With her topsails shot with fire,
And my heart has gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again to-morrow!
With the sunset I must be
Hull down on the trail of rapture
In the wonder of the Sea.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

A VAGABOND SONG

THERE is something in the autumn that is native to my blood—
Touch of manner, hint of mood;
And my heart is like a rhyme,
With the yellow and the purple and the crimson keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry
Of bugles going by.
And my lonely spirit thrills
To see the frosty asters like a smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gipsy blood astir;
We must rise and follow her,
When from every hill of flame
She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

Bliss Carman [1861–

SPRING SONG

MAKE me over, Mother April,
When the sap beings to stir!
When thy flowery hand delivers
All the mountain-prisoned rivers,
And thy great heart beats and quivers
To revive the days that were,
Make me over, Mother April,
When the sap begins to stir!

Take my dust and all my dreaming,
Count my heart-beats one by one,
Send them where the winters perish;
Then some golden noon recherish
And restore them in the sun,
Flower and scent and dust and dreaming,
With their heart-beats every one!

Set me in the urge and tide-drift
Of the streaming hosts a-wing!
Breast of scarlet, throat of yellow,
Raucous challenge, wooings mellow—
Every migrant is my fellow,
Making northward with the spring.
Set me in the urge and tide-drift
Of the streaming hosts a-wing!

Shrilling pipe or fluting whistle,
In the valleys come again;
Fife of frog and call of tree-toad,
All my brothers, five or three-toed,
With their revel no more vetoed,
Making music in the rain;
Shrilling pipe or fluting whistle,
In the valleys come again.

Make me of thy seed to-morrow,
When the sap begins to stir!
Tawny light-foot, sleepy bruin,
Bright-eyes in the orchard ruin,
Gnarl the good life goes askew in,
Whiskey-jack, or tanager,—
Make me anything to-morrow,
When the sap begins to stir!

Make me even (How do I know?)
Like my friend the gargoyle there;
It may be the heart within him
Swells that doltish hands should pin him
Fixed forever in mid-air.
Make me even sport for swallows,
Like the soaring gargoyle there!

Give me the old clue to follow,
Through the labyrinth of night!
Clod of clay with heart of fire,
Things that burrow and aspire,
With the vanishing desire,
For the perishing delight,—
Only the old clue to follow,
Through the labyrinth of night!

Make me over, Mother April,
When the sap begins to stir!
Fashion me from swamp or meadow,
Garden plot or ferny shadow,
Hyacinth or humble burr!
Make me over, Mother April,
When the sap begins to stir!

Let me hear the far, low summons,
When the silver winds return;
Rills that run and streams that stammer,
Goldenwing with his loud hammer,
Icy brooks that brawl and clamor,
Where the Indian willows burn;
Let me hearken to the calling,
When the silver winds return,

Till recurring and recurring,
Long since wandered and come back,
Like a whim of Grieg's or Gounod's,
This same self, bird, bud, or Bluenose,
Some day I may capture (Who knows?)
Just the one last joy I lack,
Waking to the far new summons,
When the old spring winds come back.

For I have no choice of being,
When the sap begins to climb,—
Strong insistence, sweet intrusion,
Vasts and verges of illusion,—
So I win, to time's confusion,
The one perfect pearl of time,

Joy and joy and joy forever,
Till the sap forgets to climb!

Make me over in the morning
From the rag-bag of the world!
Scraps of dream and duds of daring,
Home-brought stuff from far sea-faring,
Faded colors once so flaring,
Shreds of banners long since furled!
Hues of ash and glints of glory,
In the rag-bag of the world!

Let me taste the old immortal
Indolence of life once more;
Not recalling nor foreseeing,
Let the great slow joys of being
Well my heart through as of yore!
Let me taste the old immortal
Indolence of life once more!

Give me the old drink for rapture,
The delirium to drain,
All my fellows drank in plenty
At the Three Score Inns and Twenty
From the mountains to the main!
Give me the old drink for rapture,
The delirium to drain!

Only make me over, April,
When the sap begins to stir!
Make me man or make me woman,
Make me oaf or ape or human,
Cup of flower or cone of fir;
Make me anything but neuter
When the sap begins to stir!

Bliss Carman [1861–

THE MENDICANTS

We are as mendicants who wait
Along the roadside in the sun.
Tatters of yesterday and shreds
Of morrow clothe us every one.

And some are dotards, who believe
And glory in the days of old;
While some are dreamers, harping still
Upon an unknown age of gold.

Hopeless or witless! Not one heeds,
As lavish Time comes down the way
And tosses in the suppliant hat
One great new-minted gold To-day.

Ungrateful heart and grudging thanks,
His beggar's wisdom only sees
Housing and bread and beer enough;
He knows no other things than these.

O foolish ones, put by your care!
Where wants are many, joys are few;
And at the wilding springs of peace,
God keeps an open house for you.

But that some Fortunatus' gift
Is lying there within his hand,
More costly than a pot of pearls,
His dullness does not understand.

And so his creature heart is filled;
His shrunken self goes starved away.
Let him wear brand-new garments still,
Who has a threadbare soul, I say.

But there be others, happier few,
The vagabondish sons of God,
Who know the by-ways and the flowers,
And care not how the world may plod.

They idle down the traffic lands,
And loiter through the woods with spring;
To them the glory of the earth
Is but to hear a bluebird sing.

They too receive each one his Day;
But their wise heart knows many things
Beyond the sating of desire,
Above the dignity of kings.

One I remember kept his coin,
And laughing flipped it in the air;
But when two strolling pipe-players
Came by, he tossed it to the pair.

Spendthrift of joy, his childish heart
Danced to their wild outlandish bars;
Then supperless he laid him down
That night, and slept beneath the stars.

Bliss Carman [1861–

THE JOYS OF THE ROAD

Now the joys of the road are chiefly these:
A crimson touch on the hard-wood trees;

A vagrant's morning wide and blue,
In early fall, when the wind walks, too;

A shadowy highway cool and brown
Alluring up and enticing down

From rippled water to dappled swamp,
From purple glory to scarlet pomp;

The outward eye, the quiet will,
And the striding heart from hill to hill;

The tempter apple over the fence;
The cobweb bloom on the yellow quince;

The palish asters along the wood,—
A lyric touch of the solitude;

An open hand, an easy shoe,
And a hope to make the day go through,—

Another to sleep with, and a third
To wake me up at the voice of a bird;

The resonant far-listening morn,
And the hoarse whisper of the corn;

The crickets mourning their comrades lost,
In the night's retreat from the gathering frost;

(Or is it their slogan, plaintive and shrill,
As they beat on their corselets, valiant still?)

A hunger fit for the kings of the sea,
And a loaf of bread for Dickon and me;

A thirst like that of the Thirsty Sword,
And a jug of cider on the board;

An idle noon, a bubbling spring,
The sea in the pine-tops murmuring;

A scrap of gossip at the ferry;
A comrade neither glum nor merry,

Asking nothing, revealing naught,
But minting his words from a fund of thought,

A keeper of silence eloquent,
Needy, yet royally well content,

Of the mettled breed, yet abhorring strife,
And full of the mellow juice of life,

A taster of wine, with an eye for a maid,
Never too bold, and never afraid,

Never heart-whole, never heart-sick,
(These are the things I worship in Dick)

No fidget and no reformer, just
A calm observer of ought and must,

A lover of books, but a reader of man,
No cynic and no charlatan,

Who never defers and never demands,
But, smiling, takes the world in his hands,—

Seeing it good as when God first saw
And gave it the weight of his will for law.

And O the joy that is never won,
But follows and follows the journeying sun,

By marsh and tide, by meadow and stream,
A will-o'-the-wind, a light-o'-dream,

Delusion afar, delight anear,
From morrow to morrow, from year to year,

A jack-o'-lantern, a fairy fire,
A dare, a bliss, and a desire!

The racy smell of the forest loam,
When the stealthy, sad-heart leaves go home;

(O leaves, O leaves, I am one with you,
Of the mould and the sun and the wind and the dew!)

The broad gold wake of the afternoon;
The silent fleck of the cold new moon;

The sound of the hollow sea's release
From stormy tumult to starry peace;

With only another league to wend;
And two brown arms at the journey's end!

These are the joys of the open road—
For him who travels without a load.

Bliss Carman [1861–

THE SONG OF THE FOREST RANGER

Oh, to feel the fresh breeze blowing
From lone ridges yet untrod!
Oh, to see the far peak growing
Whiter as it climbs to God!

Where the silver streamlet rushes
I would follow—follow on
Till I heard the happy thrushes
Piping lyrics to the dawn.

I would hear the wild rejoicing
Of the wind-blown cedar tree,
Hear the sturdy hemlock voicing
Ancient epics of the sea.

Forest aisles would I be winding,
Out beyond the gates of Care;
And, in dim cathedrals, finding
Silence at the shrine of Prayer.

When the mystic night comes stealing
Through my vast, green room afar,
Never king had richer ceiling—
Bended bough and yellow star!

Ah, to list the sacred preaching
Of the forest's faithful fir,
With his strong arms upward reaching—
Mighty, trustful worshipper!

Come and learn the joy of living!
Come and you will understand
How the sun his gold is giving
With a great, impartial hand!

How the patient pine is climbing,
Year by year to gain the sky;
How the rill makes sweetest rhyming,
Where the deepest shadows lie.

I am nearer the great Giver,
Where His handiwork is crude;
Friend am I of peak and river,
Comrade of old Solitude.

Not for me the city's riot!
Not for me the towers of Trade!
I would seek the house of Quiet,
That the Master Workman made!

Herbert Bashford [1871–

A DROVER

To Meath of the pastures,
From wet hills by the sea,
Through Leitrim and Longford,
Go my cattle and me.

I hear in the darkness
Their slipping and breathing—
I name them the bye-ways
They're to pass without heeding;

Then the wet, winding roads,
Brown bogs with black water;
And my thoughts on white ships
And the King o' Spain's daughter.

O! farmer, strong farmer!
You can spend at the fair;
But your face you must turn
To your crops and your care.

And soldiers—red soldiers!
You've seen many lands;
But you walk two by two,
And by captain's commands.

O! the smell of the beasts,
The wet wind in the morn;
And the proud and hard earth
Never broken for corn;

And the crowds at the fair,
The herds loosened and blind,
Loud words and dark faces
And the wild blood behind.

(O! strong men, with your best
I would strive breast to breast,
I could quiet your herds
With my words, with my words.)

I will bring you, my kine,
Where there's grass to the knee;
But you'll think of scant croppings
Harsh with salt of the sea.

Padriac Colum [1881–

BALLAD OF LOW-LIE-DOWN

John-a-dreams and Harum-Scarum
Came a-riding into town:
At the Sign o' the Jug-and-Jorum
There they met with Low-lie-down.

Brave in shoes of Romany leather,
Bodice blue and gypsy gown,
And a cap of fur and feather,
In the inn sat Low-lie-down.

Harum-Scarum kissed her lightly;
Smiled into her eyes of brown:
Clasped her waist and held her tightly,
Laughing, "Love me, Low-lie-down!"

Then with many an oath and swagger,
As a man of great renown,
On the board he clapped his dagger,
Called for sack and sat him down.

So a while they laughed together;
Then he rose and with a frown
Sighed, "While still 'tis pleasant weather,
I must leave thee, Low-lie-down."

So away rode Harum-Scarum;
With a song rode out of town;
At the Sign o' the Jug-and-Jorum
Weeping tarried Low-lie-down.

Then this John-a-dreams, in tatters,
In his pocket ne'er a crown,
Touched her, saying, "Wench, what matters!
Dry your eyes and, come, sit down.

"Here's my hand: we'll roam together,
Far away from thorp and town.
Here's my heart,—for any weather,—
And my dreams, too, Low-lie-down.

"Some men call me dreamer, poet:
Some men call me fool and clown—
What I am but you shall know it,
Only you, sweet Low-lie-down."

For a little while she pondered:
Smiled: then said, "Let care go drown!"
Up and kissed him. . . . Forth they wandered,
John-a-dreams and Low-lie-down.

Madison Cawein [1865–1914]

THE GOOD INN

From "The Inn of the Silver Moon."

What care if the day
Be turned to gray,
What care if the night come soon!
We may choose the pace
Who bow for grace
At the Inn of the Silver Moon.

Ah, hurrying Sirs,
Drive deep your spurs,
For it's far to the steepled town
Where the wallet's weight
Shall fix your state
And buy for ye smile or frown.
Through our tiles of green
Do the stars between
Laugh down from the skies of June,
And there's naught to pay
For a couch of hay
At the Inn of the Silver Moon.

You laboring lout,
Pull out, pull out,
With a hand to the creaking tire,
For it's many a mile
By path and stile
To the old wife crouched by the fire.
But the door is wide
In the hedgerow side,
And we ask not bowl nor spoon
Whose draught of must
Makes soft the crust
At the Inn of the Silver Moon.

Then, here's to the Inn
Of the empty bin,
To the Host of the trackless dune!
And here's to the friend
Of the journey's end
At the Inn of the Silver Moon.

Herman Knickerbocker Vielé [1856–1908]

NIGHT FOR ADVENTURES

Sometimes when fragrant summer dusk comes in with scent of rose and musk
And scatters from their sable husk the stars like yellow grain,
Oh, then the ancient longing comes that lures me like a roll of drums
To follow where the cricket strums his banjo in the lane.

And when the August moon comes up and like a shallow, silver cup
Pours out upon the fields and roads her amber-colored beams,
A leafy whisper mounts and calls from out the forest's moss-grown halls
To leave the city's somber walls and take the road of dreams.

A call that bids me rise and strip, and, naked all from toe to lip,

To wander where the dewdrops drip from off the silent trees,
And where the hairy spiders spin their nets of silver, fragile-thin,
And out to where the fields begin, like down upon the breeze.

Into a silver pool to plunge, and like a great trout wheel and lunge
Among the lily-bonnets and the stars reflected there;
With face upturned to lie afloat, with moonbeams rippling round my throat,
And from the slimy grasses plait a chaplet for my hair.

Then, leaping from my rustic bath, to take some winding meadow-path:
Across the fields of aftermath to run with flying feet,
And feel the dewdrop-weighted grass that bends beneath me as I pass,
Where solemn trees in shadowy mass beyond the high-way meet.

And, plunging deep within the woods, among the leaf-hung solitudes
Where scarce one timid star intrudes into the breathless gloom,
Go leaping down some fern-hid way to scare the rabbits in their play,
And see the owl, a fantom gray, drift by on silent plume.

To fling me down at length and rest upon some damp and mossy nest,
And hear the choir of surpliced frogs strike up a bubbling tune;
And watch, above the dreaming trees, Orion and the Hyades
And all the stars, like golden bees, around the lily-moon.

Then who can say if I have gone a-gipsying from dusk till dawn
In company with fay and faun, where firefly-lanterns gleam?

And have I danced on cobwebs thin to Master Locust's
mandolin—
Or I have spent the night in bed, and was it all a dream?

Victor Starbuck [1887–

SONG

From "The Way of Perfect Love"

Something calls and whispers, along the city street,
Through shrill cries of children and soft stir of feet,
And makes my blood to quicken and makes my flesh to pine.
The mountains are calling; the winds wake the pine.

Past the quivering poplars that tell of water near
The long road is sleeping, the white road is clear.
Yet scent and touch can summon, afar from brook and tree,
The deep boom of surges, the gray waste of sea.

Sweet to dream and linger, in windless orchard close,
On bright brows of ladies to garland the rose,
But all the time are glowing, beyond this little world,
The still light of planets and the star-swarms whirled.

Georgiana Goddard King [1871–

THE FORELOPER

The gull shall whistle in his wake, the blind wave break in
fire,
He shall fulfill God's utmost will unknowing His desire;
And he shall see old planets pass and alien stars arise,
And give the gale his reckless sail in shadow of new skies.
Strong lust of gear shall drive him out and hunger arm his
hand
To wring his food from a desert nude, his foothold from the
sand.
His neighbors' smoke shall vex his eyes, their voices break
his rest,
He shall go forth till South is North, sullen and dispossessed.

And he shall desire loneliness, and his desire shall bring
Hard on his heels a thousand wheels, a people, and a king;
And he shall come back in his own track, and by his scarce-
cool camp;

There he shall meet the roaring street, the derrick, and the stamp;
For he must blaze a nation's ways with hatchet and with brand,
Till on his last-won wilderness an Empire's bulwarks stand.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

THE LONG TRAIL

THERE'S a whisper down the field where the year has shot her yield,
And the ricks stand gray to the sun,
Singing: "Over then, come over, for the bee has quit the clover,
And your English summer's done."
You have heard the beat of the off-shore wind,
And the thresh of the deep-sea rain;
You have heard the song—how long! how long!
Pull out on the trail again!

Ha' done with the Tents of Shem, dear lass,
We've seen the seasons through,
And it's time to turn on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
Pull out, pull out, on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new!

It's North you may run to the rime-ringed sun,
Or South to the blind Horn's hate;
Or East all the way into Mississippi Bay,
Or West to the Golden Gate;
Where the blindest bluffs hold good, dear lass,
And the wildest tales are true,
And the men bulk big on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
And life runs large on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

The days are sick and cold, and the skies are gray and old,
And the twice-breathed airs blow damp;
And I'd sell my tired soul for the bucking beam-sea roll
Of a black Bilbao tramp;

With her load-line over her hatch, dear lass,
And a drunken Dago crew,
And her nose held down on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
From Cadiz Bar on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

There be triple ways to take, of the eagle or the snake,
Or the way of a man with a maid;
But the sweetest way to me is a ship's upon the sea
In the heel of the North-East Trade.
Can you hear the crash on her bows, dear lass,
And the drum of the racing screw,
As she ships it green on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
As she lifts and 'scends on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new?

See the shaking funnels roar, with the Peter at the fore,
And the fenders grind and heave,
And the derricks clack and grate, as the tackle hooks the crate,
And the fall-rope whines through the sheave;
It's "Gang-plank up and in," dear lass,
It's "Hawsers warp her through!"
And it's "All clear aft" on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
We're backing down on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

O the mutter overside, when the port-fog holds us tied,
And the sirens hoot their dread!
When foot by foot we creep o'er the hueless viewless deep
To the sob of the questing lead!
It's down by the Lower Hope, dear lass,
With the Gunfleet Sands in view,
Till the Mouse swings green on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
And the Gull Light lifts on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

O the blazing tropic night, when the wake's a welt of light
That holds the hot sky tame,
And the steady fore-foot snores through the planet-powdered floors
Where the scared whale flukes in flame!
Her plates are scarred by the sun, dear lass,
And her ropes are taut with the dew,
For we're booming down on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
We're sagging south on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

Then home, get her home, where the drunken rollers comb,
And the shouting seas drive by,
And the engines stamp and ring, and the wet bows reel and swing,
And the Southern Cross rides high!
Yes, the old lost stars wheel back, dear lass,
That blaze in the velvet blue.
They're all old friends on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
They're God's own guides on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new.

Fly forward, O my heart, from the Foreland to the Start—
We're steaming all too slow,
And it's twenty thousand mile to our little lazy isle
Where the trumpet-orchids blow!
You have heard the call of the off-shore wind
And the voice of the deep-sea rain;
You have heard the song—how long—how long?
Pull out on the trail again!

The Lord knows what we may find, dear lass,
And the Deuce knows what we may do—
But we're back once more on the old trail, our own trail, the out trail,
We're down, hull down, on the Long Trail—the trail that is always new!

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

PART IV

FAMILIAR VERSE, AND POEMS HUMOROUS AND SATIRIC

BALLADE OF THE PRIMITIVE JEST

"What did the dark-haired Iberian laugh at before the tall blonde Aryan drove him into the corners of Europe?"—BRANDER MATTHEWS

I AM an ancient Jest!
Palæolithic man
In his arboreal nest
The sparks of fun would fan;
My outline did he plan,
And laughed like one possessed,
'Twas thus my course began,
I am a Merry Jest!

I am an early Jest!
Man delved, and built, and span;
Then wandered South and West
The peoples Aryan,
I journeyed in their van;
The Semites, too, confessed,—
From Beersheba to Dan,—
I am a Merry Jest!

I am an ancient Jest!
Through all the human clan,
Red, black, white, free, oppressed,
Hilarious I ran!
I'm found in Lucian,
In Poggio, and the rest,
I'm dear to Moll and Nan!
I am a Merry Jest!

ENVOY

Prince, you may storm and ban—
Joe Millers *are* a pest,
Suppress me if you can!
I am a Merry Jest!

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

THE KINDLY MUSE

TIME TO BE WISE

Yes; I write verses now and then,
But blunt and flaccid is my pen,
No longer talked of by young men
As rather clever:
In the last quarter are my eyes,
You see it by their form and size;
Is it not time then to be wise?
Or now or never.

Fairest that ever sprang from Eve!
While Time allows the short reprieve,
Just look at me! would you believe
'Twas once a lover?
I cannot clear the five-bar gate;
But, trying first its timber's state,
Climb stiffly up, take breath, and wait
To trundle over.

Through gallopade I cannot swing
The entangling blooms of Beauty's spring:
I cannot say the tender thing,
Be't true or false,
And am beginning to opine
Those girls are only half-divine
Whose waists yon wicked boys entwine
In giddy waltz.

I fear that arm above that shoulder;
I wish them wiser, graver, older,
Sedater, and no harm if colder,

1709

And panting less.
Ah! people were not half so wild
In former days, when, starchly mild,
Upon her high-heeled Essex smiled
The brave Queen Bess.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

UNDER THE LINDENS

Under the lindens lately sat
A couple, and no more, in chat;
I wondered what they would be at
Under the lindens.

I saw four eyes and four lips meet,
I heard the words, "How sweet! how sweet!"
Had then the Fairies given a treat
Under the lindens?

I pondered long and could not tell
What dainty pleased them both so well:
Bees! bees! was it your hydromel
Under the lindens?

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

ADVICE

To write as your sweet mother does
Is all you wish to do.
Play, sing, and smile for others, Rose!
Let others write for you.

Or mount again your Dartmoor gray,
And I will walk beside,
Until we reach that quiet bay
Which only hears the tide.

Then wave at me your pencil, then
At distance bid me stand,
Before the caverned cliff, again
The creature of your hand.

And bid me then go past the nook
To sketch me less in size;
There are but few content to look
So little in your eyes.

Delight us with the gifts you have,
And wish for none beyond:
To some be gay, to some be grave,
To one (blest youth!) be fond.

Pleasures there are how close to Pain
And better unpossessed!
Let poetry's too throbbing vein
Lie quiet in your breast.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

TO FANNY

Never mind how the pedagogue proses,
You want not antiquity's stamp;
The lip, that such fragrance discloses,
Oh! never should smell of the lamp.

Old Chloe, whose withering kisses
Have long set the Loves at defiance,
Now, done with the science of blisses,
May fly to the blisses of science!

Young Sappho, for want of employments,
Alone o'er her Ovid may melt,
Condemned but to read of enjoyments,
Which wiser Corinna had felt.

But for *you* to be buried in books—
Oh, Fanny! they're pitiful sages;
Who could not in *one* of your looks
Read more than in millions of pages!

Astronomy finds in your eyes
Better light than she studies above,
And Music must borrow your sighs
As the melody fittest for Love.

In Ethics—'tis you that can check,
In a minute, their doubts and their quarrels;
Oh! show but that mole on your neck,
And 'twill soon put an end to their morals.

Your Arithmetic only can trip
When to kiss and to count you endeavor;
But eloquence glows on your lip
When you swear that you'll love me for ever.

Thus you see what a brilliant alliance
Of arts is assembled in you,—
A course of more exquisite science
Man never need wish to pursue.

And, oh!—if a Fellow like me
May confer a diploma of hearts,
With my lip thus I seal your degree,
My divine little Mistress of Arts!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"I'D BE A BUTTERFLY"

I'd be a Butterfly born in a bower,
Where roses and lilies and violets meet;
Roving for ever from flower to flower,
And kissing all buds that are pretty and sweet!
I'd never languish for wealth, or for power,
I'd never sigh to see slaves at my feet:
I'd be a Butterfly born in a bower,
Kissing all buds that are pretty and sweet.

O could I pilfer the wand of a fairy,
I'd have a pair of those beautiful wings;
Their summer days' ramble is sportive and airy,
They sleep in a rose when the nightingale sings.
Those who have wealth must be watchful and wary;
Power, alas! naught but misery brings!
I'd be a Butterfly, sportive and airy,
Rocked in a rose when the nightingale sings!

What, though you tell me each gay little rover
Shrinks from the breath of the first autumn day:
Surely 'tis better when summer is over
To die when all fair things are fading away.
Some in life's winter may toil to discover
Means of procuring a weary delay—
I'd be a butterfly; living, a rover,
Dying when fair things are fading away!

Thomas Haynes Bayly [1797-1839]

"I'M NOT A SINGLE MAN"

LINES WRITTEN IN A YOUNG LADY'S ALBUM

A pretty task, Miss S——, to ask
A Benedictine pen,
That cannot quite at freedom write
Like those of other men.
No lover's plaint my Muse must paint
To fill this page's span,
But be correct and recollect
I'm not a single man.

Pray only think, for pen and ink
How hard to get along,
That may not turn on words that burn,
Or Love, the life of song!
Nine Muses, if I chooses, I
May woo all in a clan;
But one Miss S—— I daren't address—
I'm not a single man.

Scribblers unwed, with little head,
May eke it out with heart,
And in their lays it often plays
A rare first-fiddle part.
They make a kiss to rhyme with bliss,
But if *I* so began,
I have my fears about my ears—
I'm not a single man.

Upon your cheek I may not speak,
Nor on your lip be warm,
I must be wise about your eyes,
And formal with your form;
Of all that sort of thing, in short,
On T. H. Bayly's plan,
I must not twine a single line—
I'm not a single man.

A watchman's part compels my heart
To keep you off its beat,
And I might dare as soon to swear
At *you*, as at your feet.
I can't expire in passion's fire
As other poets can—
My life (she's by) won't let me die—
I'm not a single man.

Shut out from love, denied a dove,
Forbidden bow and dart;
Without a groan to call my own,
With neither hand nor heart;
To Hymen vowed, and not allowed
To flirt e'en with your fan,
Here end, as just a friend, I must—
I'm not a single man.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

TO ——

We met but in one giddy dance,
Good-night joined hands with greeting;
And twenty thousand things may chance
Before our second meeting;
For oh! I have been often told
That all the world grows older,
And hearts and hopes to-day so cold,
To-morrow must be colder.

If I have never touched the string
Beneath your chamber, dear one,
And never said one civil thing
When you were by to hear one,—

If I have made no rhymes about
Those looks which conquer Stoics,
And heard those angel tones, without
One fit of fair heroics,—

Yet do not, though the world's cold school
Some bitter truths has taught me,
Oh, do not deem me quite the fool
Which wiser friends have thought me!
There is one charm I still could feel,
If no one laughed at feeling;
One dream my lute could still reveal,—
If it were worth revealing.

But Folly little cares what name
Of friend or foe she handles,
When merriment directs the game,
And midnight dims the candles;
I know that Folly's breath is weak
And would not stir a feather;
But yet I would not have her speak
Your name and mine together.

Oh no! this life is dark and bright,
Half rapture and half sorrow;
My heart is very full to-night,
My cup shall be to-morrow!
But they shall never know from me,
On any one condition,
Whose health made bright my Burgundy,
Whose beauty was my vision!

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802–1839]

THE VICAR

Some years ago, ere Time and Taste
Had turned our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste,
And roads as little known as scurvy,

The man who lost his way between
St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket,
Was always shown across the Green,
And guided to the Parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath;
Fair Margaret, in her tidy kirtle,
Led the lorn traveller up the path
Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle;
And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
Upon the parlor steps collected,
Wagged all their tails, and seemed to say,
"Our master knows you; you're expected!"

Up rose the Reverend Doctor Brown,
Up rose the Doctor's "winsome marrow";
The lady laid her knitting down,
Her husband clasped his ponderous Barrow;
Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
Pundit or papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
And welcome for himself, and dinner.

If, when he reached his journey's end,
And warmed himself in court or college,
He had not gained an honest friend,
And twenty curious scraps of knowledge;—
If he departed as he came,
With no new light on love or liquor,—
Good sooth, the traveller was to blame,
And not the Vicarage, nor the Vicar.

His talk was like a stream which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses;
It slipped from politics to puns;
It passed from Mahomet to Moses;
Beginning with the laws which keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For dressing eels or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound divine,
Of loud Dissent the mortal terror;
And when, by dint of page and line,
He 'stablished Truth, or startled Error,
The Baptist found him far too deep,
The Deist sighed with saving sorrow,
And the lean Levite went to sleep
And dreamed of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or showed
That Earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,
Without refreshment on the road
From Jerome, or from Athanasius;
And sure a righteous zeal inspired
The hand and head that penned and planned them,
For all who understood, admired,
And some who did not understand them.

He wrote, too, in a quiet way,
Small treatises, and smaller verses,
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
And hints to noble lords and nurses;
True histories of last year's ghost;
Lines to a ringlet or a turban;
And trifles to the Morning Post,
And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
Although he had a knack of joking;
He did not make himself a bear,
Although he had a taste for smoking;
And when religious sects ran mad,
He held, in spite of all his learning,
That if a man's belief is bad,
It will not be improved by burning.

And he was kind, and loved to sit
In the low hut or garnished cottage,
And praise the farmer's homely wit,
And share the widow's homelier pottage.

At his approach complaint grew mild,
And when his hand unbarred the shutter,
The clammy lips of Fever smiled
The welcome which they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
Of Julius Caesar or of Venus;
From him I learned the rule of three,
Cat's-cradle, leap-frog, and *Quæ genus*.
I used to singe his powdered wig,
To steal the staff he put such trust in,
And make the puppy dance a jig
When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack, the change! In vain I look
For haunts in which my boyhood trifled;
The level lawn, the trickling brook,
The trees I climbed, the beds I rifled.
The church is larger than before,
You reach it by a carriage entry:
It holds three hundred people more,
And pews are fitted up for gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat; you'll hear
The doctrine of a gentle Johnian,
Whose hand is white, whose voice is clear,
Whose phrase is very Ciceronian.
Where is the old man laid? Look down,
And construe on the slab before you:
"*Hic jacet Gulielmus Brown,*
Vir nullâ non donandus lauru."

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802–1839]

THE BELLE OF THE BALL-ROOM

Years, years ago, ere yet my dreams
Had been of being wise or witty;
Ere I had done with writing themes,
Or yawned o'er this infernal Chitty;—

Years, years ago, while all my joy
  Were in my fowling-piece and filly;
In short, while I was yet a boy,
  I fell in love with Laura Lilly.

I saw her at the County Ball;
  There, when the sounds of flute and fiddle
Gave signal sweet in that old hall
  Of hands across and down the middle,
Hers was the subtlest spell by far
  Of all that sets young hearts romancing:
She was our queen, our rose, our star;
  And then she danced,—oh, heaven, her dancing!

Dark was her hair, her hand was white;
  Her voice was exquisitely tender;
Her eyes were full of liquid light;
  I never saw a waist so slender;
Her every look, her every smile,
  Shot right and left a score of arrows;
I thought 'twas Venus from her isle,
  And wondered where she'd left her sparrows.

She talked of politics or prayers,—
  Of Southey's prose, or Wordsworth's sonnets,
Of danglers or of dancing bears,
  Of battles, or the last new bonnets;
By candle-light, at twelve o'clock,
  To me it mattered not a tittle,
If those bright lips had quoted Locke,
  I might have thought they murmured Little.

Through sunny May, through sultry June,
  I loved her with a love eternal;
I spoke her praises to the moon,
  I wrote them to the Sunday Journal.
My mother laughed; I soon found out
  That ancient ladies have no feeling:
My father frowned; but how should gout
  See any happiness in kneeling?

She was the daughter of a dean,
Rich, fat, and rather apoplectic;
She had one brother just thirteen,
Whose color was extremely hectic;
Her grandmother, for many a year,
Had fed the parish with her bounty;
Her second cousin was a peer,
And lord-lieutenant of the county.

But titles and the three-per-cents,
And mortgages, and great relations,
And India bonds, and tithes and rents,
Oh, what are they to love's sensations?
Black eyes, fair forehead, clustering locks,—
Such wealth, such honors, Cupid chooses;
He cares as little for the stocks,
As Baron Rothschild for the Muses.

She sketched; the vale, the wood, the beach,
Grew lovelier from her pencil's shading;
She botanized; I envied each
Young blossom in her boudoir fading:
She warbled Handel; it was grand,—
She made the Catilina jealous;
She touched the organ; I could stand
For hours and hours to blow the bellows.

She kept an album, too, at home,
Well filled with all an album's glories;
Paintings of butterflies and Rome,
Patterns for trimmings, Persian stories,
Soft songs to Julia's cockatoo,
Fierce odes to famine and to slaughter,
And autographs of Prince Lèboo,
And recipes for elder-water.

And she was flattered, worshipped, bored;
Her steps were watched, her dress was noted;
Her poodle-dog was quite adored;
Her sayings were extremely quoted.

She laughed, and every heart was glad,
  As if the taxes were abolished;
She frowned, and every look was sad,
  As if the opera were demolished.

She smiled on many just for fun,—
  I knew that there was nothing in it;
I was the first, the only one
  Her heart had thought of for a minute.
I knew it, for she told me so,
  In phrase which was divinely moulded;
She wrote a charming hand, and oh,
  How sweetly all her notes were folded!

Our love was like most other loves,—
  A little glow, a little shiver,
A rosebud and a pair of gloves,
  And "Fly Not Yet," upon the river;
Some jealousy of some one's heir,
  Some hopes of dying broken-hearted;
A miniature, a lock of hair,
  The usual vows,—and then we parted.

We parted: months and years rolled by;
  We met again four summers after.
Our parting was all sob and sigh,—
  Our meeting was all mirth and laughter;
For, in my heart's most secret cell,
  There had been many other lodgers;
And she was not the ball-room's belle,
  But only Mrs.—Something—Rogers!

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802–1839]

THE FINE OLD ENGLISH GENTLEMAN

I'll sing you a good old song,
  Made by a good old pate,
Of a fine old English gentleman
  Who had an old estate,

And who kept up his old mansion
At a bountiful old rate;
With a good old porter to relieve
The old poor at his gate,
Like a fine old English gentleman
All of the olden time.

His hall so old was hung around
With pikes and guns and bows,
And swords, and good old bucklers,
That had stood some tough old blows;
'Twas there "his worship" held his state
In doublet and trunk hose,
And quaffed his cup of good old sack,
To warm his good old nose,
Like a fine old English gentleman
All of the olden time.

When winter's cold brought frost and snow,
He opened house to all;
And though threescore and ten his years,
He featly led the ball;
Nor was the houseless wanderer
E'er driven from his hall;
For while he feasted all the great,
He ne'er forgot the small;
Like a fine old English gentleman
All of the olden time.

But time, though old, is strong in flight,
And years rolled swiftly by;
And Autumn's falling leaves proclaimed
This good old man must die!
He laid him down right tranquilly,
Gave up life's latest sigh;
And mournful stillness reigned around,
And tears bedewed each eye,
For this fine old English gentleman
All of the olden time.

Now surely this is better far
  Than all the new parade
Of theaters and fancy balls,
  "At home" and masquerade:
And much more economical,
  For all his bills were paid,
Then leave your new vagaries quite,
  And take up the old trade
Of a fine old English gentleman,
  All of the olden time.

Unknown

A TERNARIE OF LITTLES, UPON A PIPKIN OF JELLY SENT TO A LADY

A LITTLE Saint best fits a little Shrine,
A little Prop best fits a little Vine,
As my small Cruse best fits my little Wine.

A little Seed best fits a little Soil,
A little Trade best fits a little Toil,
As my small Jar best fits my little Oil.

A little Bin best fits a little Bread,
A little Garland fits a little Head,
As my small Stuff best fits my little Shed.

A little Hearth best fits a little Fire,
A little Chapel fits a little Quire,
As my small Bell best fits my little Spire.

A little Stream best fits a little Boat,
A little Lead best fits a little Float,
As my small Pipe best fits my little Note.

A little Meat best fits a little Belly,
As sweetly, lady, give me leave to tell ye,
This little Pipkin fits this little Jelly.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

CHIVALRY AT A DISCOUNT

FAIR cousin mine! the golden days
Of old romance are over;
And minstrels now care naught for bays,
Nor damsels for a lover;
And hearts are cold, and lips are mute
That kindled once with passion,
And now we've neither lance nor lute,
And tilting's out of fashion.

Yet weeping Beauty mourns the time
When Love found words in flowers;
When softest sighs were breathed in rhyme,
And sweetest songs in bowers;
Now wedlock is a sober thing—
No more of chains or forges!—
A plain young man—a plain gold ring—
The curate—and St. George's.

Then every cross-bow had a string,
And every heart a fetter;
And making love was quite the thing,
And making verses better;
And maiden-aunts were never seen,
And gallant beaux were plenty;
And lasses married at sixteen,
And died at one-and-twenty.

Then hawking was a noble sport,
And chess a pretty science;
And huntsmen learned to blow a *morte*,
And heralds a defiance;
And knights and spearmen showed their might,
And timid hinds took warning;
And hypocras was warmed at night,
And coursers in the morning.

Then plumes and pennons were prepared,
And patron-saints were lauded;
And noble deeds were bravely dared,
And noble dames applauded.

And Beauty played the leech's part,
  And wounds were healed with syrup;
And warriors sometimes lost a heart,
  But never lost a stirrup.

Then there was no such thing as Fear,
  And no such word as Reason;
And Faith was like a pointed spear,
  And Fickleness was treason;
And hearts were soft, though blows were hard;
  But when the fight was over,
A brimming goblet cheered the board,
  His Lady's smile the lover.

Ay, those were golden days! The moon
  Had then her true adorers;
And there were lyres and lutes in tune,
  And no such thing as snorers;
And lovers swam, and held at naught
  Streams broader than the Mersey;
And fifty thousand would have fought
  For a smile from Lady Jersey.

Then people wore an iron vest,
  And had no use for tailors;
And the artizans who lived the best
  Were armorers and nailers;
And steel was measured by the ell,
  And trousers lined with leather;
And jesters wore a cap and bell,
  And knights a cap and feather.

Then single folks might live at ease,
  And married ones might sever;
Uncommon doctors had their fees,
  But Doctor's Commons never;
O! had we in those times been bred,
  Fair cousin, for thy glances,
Instead of breaking Priscian's head,
  I had been breaking lances!

Edward Fitzgerald [1809–1883]

THE BALLAD OF BOUILLABAISSE

A STREET there is in Paris famous,
For which no rhyme our language yields,
Rue Neuve des Petits Champs its name is—
The New Street of the Little Fields;
And there's an inn, not rich and splendid,
But still in comfortable case—
The which in youth I oft attended,
To eat a bowl of Bouillabaisse.

This Bouillabaisse a noble dish is—
A sort of soup, or broth, or brew,
Or hotchpotch of all sorts of fishes,
That Greenwich never could outdo;
Green herbs, red peppers, mussels, saffern,
Soles, onions, garlic, roach, and dace:
All these you eat at Terré's tavern,
In that one dish of Bouillabaisse.

Indeed, a rich and savory stew 'tis;
And true philosophers, methinks,
Who love all sorts of natural beauties,
Should love good victuals and good drinks.
And Cordelier or Benedictine
Might gladly, sure, his lot embrace,
Nor find a fast-day too afflicting,
Which served him up a Bouillabaisse.

I wonder if the house still there is?
Yes, here the lamp is as before;
The smiling, red-cheeked écaillère is
Still opening oysters at the door.
Is Terré still alive and able?
I recollect his droll grimace;
He'd come and smile before your table
And hope you liked your Bouillabaisse.

We enter; nothing's changed or older.
"How's Monsieur Terré, waiter, pray?"
The waiter stares and shrugs his shoulder;—
"Monsieur is dead this many a day."

"It is the lot of saint and sinner.
So honest Terré's run his race!"
"What will Monsieur require for dinner?"
"Say, do you still cook Bouillabaisse?"

"Oh, oui, Monsieur," 's the waiter's answer;
"Quel vin Monsieur désire-t-il?"
"Tell me a good one." "That I can, Sir;
The Chambertin with yellow seal."
"So Terré's gone," I say, and sink in
My old accustomed corner-place;
"He's done with feasting and with drinking,
With Burgundy and Bouillabaisse."

My old accustomed corner here is,—
The table still is in the nook;
Ah! vanished many a busy year is,
This well-known chair since last I took,
When first I saw ye, *cari luoghi*,
I'd scarce a beard upon my face,
And now a grizzled, grim old fogy,
I sit and wait for Bouillabaisse.

Where are you, old companions trusty
Of early days here met to dine?
Come, waiter! quick, a flagon crusty—
I'll pledge them in the good old wine.
The kind old voices and old faces
My memory can quick retrace;
Around the board they take their places,
And share the wine and Bouillabaisse.

There's Jack has made a wondrous marriage;
There's laughing Tom is laughing yet;
There's brave Augustus drives his carriage;
There's poor old Fred in the *Gazette*;
On James's head the grass is growing:
Good Lord! the world has wagged apace
Since here we set the Claret flowing,
And drank, and ate the Bouillabaisse.

Ah me! how quick the days are flitting!
I mind me of a time that's gone,
When here I'd sit, as now I'm sitting,
In this same place—but not alone.
A fair young form was nestled near me,
A dear, dear face looked fondly up,
And sweetly spoke and smiled to cheer me.
—There's no one now to share my cup. . . .

I drink it as the Fates ordain it.
Come, fill it, and have done with rhymes;
Fill up the lonely glass, and drain it
In memory of dear old times.
Welcome the wine, whate'er the seal is;
And sit you down and say your grace
With thankful heart, whate'er the meal is.
—Here comes the smoking Bouillabaisse!

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

TO MY GRANDMOTHER

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE BY MR. ROMNEY

Under the elm a rustic seat
Was merriest Susan's pet retreat
To merry-make

This Relative of mine
Was she seventy-and-nine
When she died?
By the canvas may be seen
How she looked at seventeen,
As a Bride.

Beneath a summer tree
Her maiden reverie
Has a charm;
Her ringlets are in taste;
What an arm! and what a waist
For an arm!

With her bridal-wreath, bouquet,
Lace farthingale, and gay

Falbala,—
If Romney's touch be true,
What a lucky dog were you,
Grandpapa!

Her lips are sweet as love;
They are parting! Do they move?
Are they dumb?
Her eyes are blue, and beam
Beseechingly, and seem
To say, "Come!"

What funny fancy slips
From atween these cherry lips?
Whisper me,
Fair Sorceress in paint,
What canon says I mayn't
Marry thee?

That good-for-nothing Time
Has a confidence sublime!
When I first
Saw this Lady, in my youth,
Her winters had, forsooth,
Done their worst.

Her locks, as white as snow,
Once shamed the swarthy crow;
By-and-by
That fowl's avenging sprite
Set his cruel foot for spite
Near her eye.

Her rounded form was lean,
And her silk was bombazine:
Well I wot
With her needles would she sit,
And for hours would she knit,—
Would she not?

Ah perishable clay!
Her charms had dropped away
One by one:
But if she heaved a sigh
With a burden, it was, "Thy
Will be done."

In travail, as in tears,
With the fardel of her years
Overpressed,
In mercy she was borne
Where the weary and the worn
Are at rest.

Oh, if you now are there,
And sweet as once you were,
Grandmamma,
This nether world agrees
You'll all the better please
Grandpapa.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

MY MISTRESS'S BOOTS

She has dancing eyes and ruby lips,
Delightful boots—and away she skips

They nearly strike me dumb,—
I tremble when they come
Pit-a-pat:
This palpitation means
These Boots are Geraldine's—
Think of that!

O, where did hunter win
So delicate a skin
For her feet?
You lucky little kid,
You perished, so you did,
For my Sweet.

The fairy stitching gleams
On the sides, and in the seams,

And reveals
That the Pixies were the wags
Who tipped these funny tags,
And these heels.

What soles to charm an elf!—
Had Crusoe, sick of self,
Chanced to view
One printed near the tide,
O, how hard he would have tried
For the two!

For Gerry's debonair,
And innocent and fair
As a rose;
She's an Angel in a frock,—
She's an Angel with a clock
To her hose!

The simpletons who squeeze
Their pretty toes to please
Mandarins,
Would positively flinch
From venturing to pinch
Geraldine's.

Cinderella's *lefts and rights*
To Geraldine's were frights:
And I trow
The Damsel, deftly shod,
Has dutifully trod
Until now.

Come, Gerry, since it suits
Such a pretty Puss (in Boots)
These to don,
Set your dainty hand awhile
On my shoulder, Dear, and I'll
Put them on.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

A GARDEN LYRIC

GERALDINE AND I

Dite, Damasippe, deæque
Verum ob consilium donent tonsore.

We have loitered and laughed in the flowery croft,
We have met under wintry skies;
Her voice is the dearest voice, and soft
Is the light in her wistful eyes;
It is bliss in the silent woods, among
Gay crowds, or in any place,
To mould her mind, to gaze in her young
Confiding face.

For ever may roses divinely blow,
And wine-dark pansies charm
By that prim box path where I felt the glow
Of her dimpled, trusting arm,
And the sweep of her silk as she turned and smiled
A smile as pure as her pearls;
The breeze was in love with the darling Child,
And coaxed her curls.

She showed me her ferns and woodbine sprays,
Foxglove and jasmine stars,
A mist of blue in the beds, a blaze
Of red in the celadon jars:
And velvety bees in convolvulus bells,
And roses of bountiful Spring.
But I said—"Though roses and bees have spells,
They have thorn, and sting."

She showed me ripe peaches behind a net
As fine as her veil, and fat
Goldfish a-gape, who lazily met
For her crumbs—I grudged them that!
A squirrel, some rabbits with long lop ears,
And guinea-pigs, tortoise-shell—wee;
And I told her that eloquent truth inheres
In all we see.

I lifted her doe by its lops, quoth I,
"Even here deep meaning lies,—
Why have squirrels these ample tails, and why
Have rabbits these prominent eyes?"
She smiled and said, as she twirled her veil,
"For some nice little cause, no doubt—
If you lift a guinea-pig up by the tail
His eyes drop out!"

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

MRS. SMITH

Heigh-ho! they're wed. The cards are dealt,
Our frolic games are o'er;
I've laughed, and fooled, and loved. I've felt—
As I shall feel no more!
Yon little thatch is where she lives,
Yon spire is where she met me;—
I think that if she quite forgives,
She cannot quite forget me.

Last year I trod these fields with Di,—
Fields fresh with clover and with rye;
They now seem arid:
Then Di was fair and single; how
Unfair it seems on me, for now
Di's fair,—and married!

A blissful swain,—I scorned the song
Which tells us though young Love is strong,
The Fates are stronger:
Then breezes blew a boon to men,
Then buttercups were bright, and then
The grass was longer.

That day I saw, and much esteemed,
Di's ankles, that the clover seemed
Inclined to smother:
It twitched, and soon untied (for fun)
The ribbons of her shoes, first one,
And then the other.

I'm told that virgins augur some
Misfortune if their shoe-strings come

To grief on *Friday:*
And so did Di,—and then her pride
Decreed that shoe-strings so untied,
Are "so untidy!"

Of course I knelt; with fingers deft
I tied the right, and tied the left:
Says Di, "This stubble
Is very stupid!—as I live
I'm quite ashamed!—I'm shocked to give
You so much trouble!"

For answer I was fain to sink
To what we all would say and think
Were Beauty present:
"Don't mention such a simple act—
A trouble? not the least! In fact
It's rather pleasant!"

I trust that Love will never tease
Poor little Di, or prove that he's
A graceless rover.
She's happy now as *Mrs. Smith*—
But less polite when walking with
Her chosen lover!

Heigh-ho! Although no moral clings
To Di's blue eyes, and sandal strings,
We had our quarrels.
I think that Smith is thought an ass,—
I know that when they walk in grass
She wears *balmorals.*

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

THE SKELETON IN THE CUPBOARD

The characters of great and small
Come ready made, we can't bespeak one;
Their sides are many, too, and all
(Except ourselves) have got a weak one.

Some sanguine people love for life,
  Some love their hobby till it flings them.
How many love a pretty wife
  For love of the *éclat* she brings them! . . .

A little to relieve my mind
  I've thrown off this disjointed chatter,
But more because I'm disinclined
  To enter on a painful matter:
Once I was bashful; I'll allow
  I've blushed for words untimely spoken;
I still am rather shy, and now . . .
  And now the ice is fairly broken.

We all have secrets: you have one
  Which may n't be quite your charming spouse's;
We all lock up a Skeleton
  In some grim chamber of our houses;
Familiars who exhaust their days
  And nights in probing where our smart is,
And who, for all their spiteful ways,
  Are "silent, unassuming *Parties*."

We hug this Phantom we detest,
  Rarely we let it cross our portals:
It is a most exacting guest,
  And we are much afflicted mortals.
Your neighbor Gay, that jovial wight,
  As *Dives* rich, and brave as Hector,
Poor Gay steals twenty times a night,
  On shaking knees, to see his Specter.

Old *Dives* fears a pauper fate,
  So hoarding is his ruling passion:—
Some gloomy souls anticipate
  A waistcoat, straiter than the fashion!
She childless pines, that lonely wife,
  And secret tears are bitter shedding;
Hector may tremble all his life,
  And die,—but not of that he's dreading. . . .

Ah me, the World! How fast it spins!
The beldams dance, the caldron bubbles;
They shriek, they stir it for our sins,
And we must drain it for our troubles.
We toil, we groan; the cry for love
Mounts up from this poor seething city,
And yet I know we have above
A FATHER, infinite in pity.

When Beauty smiles, when Sorrow weeps,
Where sunbeams play, where shadows darken,
One inmate of our dwelling keeps
Its ghastly carnival; but hearken!
How dry the rattle of the bones!
That sound was not to make *you* start meant:
Stand by! Your humble servant owns
The Tenant of this Dark Apartment.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

A TERRIBLE INFANT

I RECOLLECT a nurse called Ann,
Who carried me about the grass,
And one fine day a fine young man
Came up, and kissed the pretty lass:
She did not make the least objection!
Thinks I, "Aha!
When I can talk, I'll tell Mamma."
—And that's my earliest recollection.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

COMPANIONS

A TALE OF A GRANDFATHER

I KNOW not of what we pondered
Or made pretty pretence to talk,
As, her hand within mine, we wandered
Toward the pool by the lime-tree walk,
While the dew fell in showers from the passion flowers
And the blush-rose bent on her stalk.

I cannot recall her figure:
  Was it regal as Juno's own?
Or only a trifle bigger
  Than the elves who surround the throne
Of the Fairy Queen, and are seen, I ween,
  By mortals in dreams alone?

What her eyes were like I know not:
  Perhaps they were blurred with tears;
And perhaps in yon skies there glow not
  (On the contrary) clearer spheres.
No! as to her eyes I am just as wise
  As you or the cat, my dears.

Her teeth, I presume, were "pearly":
  But which was she, brunette or blonde?
Her hair, was it quaintly curly,
  Or as straight as a beadle's wand?
That I failed to remark: it was rather dark
  And shadowy round the pond.

Then the hand that reposed so snugly
  In mine,—was it plump or spare?
Was the countenance fair or ugly?
  Nay, children, you have me there!
My eyes were p'haps blurred; and besides I'd heard
  That it's horribly rude to stare.

And I,—was I brusque and surly?
  Or oppressively bland and fond?
Was I partial to rising early?
  Or why did we twain abscond,
When nobody knew, from the public view
  To prowl by a misty pond?

What passed, what was felt or spoken,—
  Whether anything passed at all,—
And whether the heart was broken
  That beat under that sheltering shawl,—
(If shawl she had on, which I doubt),—has gone,
  Yes, gone from me past recall.

Was I haply the lady's suitor?
Or her uncle? I can't make out;
Ask your governess, dears, or tutor.
For myself, I'm in hopeless doubt
As to why we were there, who on earth we were,
And what this is all about.

Charles Stuart Calverley [1831–1884]

DOROTHY Q

A FAMILY PORTRAIT

GRANDMOTHER'S mother: her age, I guess,
Thirteen summers, or something less;
Girlish bust, but womanly air;
Smooth, square forehead with uprolled hair;
Lips that lover has never kissed;
Taper fingers and slender wrist;
Hanging sleeves of stiff brocade;
So they painted the little maid.

On her hand a parrot green
Sits unmoving and broods serene.
Hold up the canvas full in view,—
Look! there's a rent the light shines through,
Dark with a century's fringe of dust,—
That was a Red-Coat's rapier-thrust!
Such is the tale the lady old,
Dorothy's daughter's daughter, told.

Who the painter was none may tell,—
One whose best was not over well;
Hard and dry, it must be confessed,
Flat as a rose that has long been pressed;
Yet in her cheek the hues are bright,
Dainty colors of red and white,
And in her slender shape are seen
Hint and promise of stately mien.

Look not on her with eyes of scorn,—
Dorothy Q. was a lady born!

Ay! since the galloping Normans came,
England's annals have known her name;
And still to the three-hilled rebel town
Dear is that ancient name's renown,
For many a civic wreath they won,
The youthful sire and the gray-haired son.

O Damsel Dorothy! Dorothy Q.!
Strange is the gift that I owe to you;
Such a gift as never a king
Save to daughter or son might bring,—
All my tenure of heart and hand,
All my title to house and land;
Mother and sister and child and wife
And joy and sorrow and death and life!

What if a hundred years ago
Those close-shut lips had answered No,
When forth the tremulous question came
That cost the maiden her Norman name,
And under the folds that look so still
The bodice swelled with the bosom's thrill?
Should I be I, or would it be
One tenth another, to nine tenths me?

Soft is the breath of a maiden's YES:
Not the light gossamer stirs with less;
But never a cable that holds so fast
Through all the battles of wave and blast,
And never an echo of speech or song
That lives in the babbling air so long!
There were tones in the voice that whispered then
You may hear to-day in a hundred men.

O lady and lover, how faint and far
Your images hover,—and here we are
Solid and stirring in flesh and bone,—
Edward's and Dorothy's—all their own,—
A goodly record for Time to show
Of a syllable spoken so long ago!—

Shall I bless you, Dorothy, or forgive
For the tender whisper that bade me live?

It shall be a blessing, my little maid!
I will heal the stab of the Red-Coat's blade,
And freshen the gold of the tarnished frame,
And gild with a rhyme your household name;
So you shall smile on us brave and bright
As first you greeted the morning's light,
And live untroubled by woes and fears
Through a second youth of a hundred years.

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

MY AUNT

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
Long years have o'er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her,—though she looks
As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
For life is but a span.

My aunt! my poor deluded aunt!
Her hair is almost gray;
Why will she train that winter curl
In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
And say she reads as well,
When, through a double convex lens,
She just makes out to spell?

Her father,—grandpapa! forgive
This erring lip its smiles,—
Vowed she should make the finest girl
Within a hundred miles;
He sent her to a stylish school;
'Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
"Two towels and a spoon."

They braced my aunt against a board,
To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
They screwed it up with pins;—
Oh, never mortal suffered more
In penance for her sins.

So, when my precious aunt was done,
My grandsire brought her back;
(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
Might follow on the track;)
"Ah!" said my grandsire, as he shook
Some powder in his pan,
"What could this lovely creature do
Against a desperate man!"

Alas! nor chariot, nor barouche,
Nor bandit cavalcade,
Tore from the trembling father's arms
His all-accomplished maid.
For her how happy had it been!
And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
On my ancestral tree.

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE LAST LEAF

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time

Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has pressed
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

My grandmamma has said,—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago,—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow:

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

CONTENTMENT

"Man wants but little here below"

Little I ask; my wants are few;
I only wish a hut of stone,
(A *very plain* brown stone will do,)
That I may call my own;—
And close at hand is such a one,
In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me;
Three courses are as good as ten;—
If Nature can subsist on three,
Thank Heaven for three. Amen!
I always thought cold victual nice;—
My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land;—
Give me a mortgage here and there,—
Some good bank-stock, some note of hand,
Or trifling railroad share,—
I only ask that Fortune send
A *little* more than I shall spend.

Honors are silly toys, I know,
And titles are but empty names;
I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—
But only near St. James;
I'm very sure I should not care
To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles; 'tis a sin
To care for such unfruitful things;—
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
A ruby, and a pearl, or so,
Will do for me;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire;
(Good heavy silks are never dear;)—
I own perhaps I *might* desire
Some shawls of true Cashmere,—
Some marrowy crapes of China silk,
Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
So fast that folks must stop and stare;
An easy gait—two forty-five—
Suits me; I do not care;—
Perhaps, for just a *single spurt*,
Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own
Titians and Raphaels three or four,—
I love so much their style and tone,—
One Turner, and no more,
(A landscape,—foreground golden dirt,—
The sunshine painted with a squirt.)

Of books but few,—some fifty score
For daily use, and bound for wear;
The rest upon an upper floor;—
Some *little* luxury *there*
Of red morocco's gilded gleam,
And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,
Which others often show for pride,
I value for their power to please,
And selfish churls deride;—
One Stradivarius, I confess,
Two meerschaums, I would fain possess.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,
Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—
Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
But *all* must be of buhl?
Give grasping pomp its double share,—
I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,
Nor long for Midas' golden touch;
If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
I shall not miss them *much*,—
Too grateful for the blessing lent
Of simple tastes and mind content!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE BOYS

HAS there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
If there has, take him out, without making a noise.
Hang the Almanac's cheat and the Catalogue's spite!
Old Time is a liar! We're twenty to-night!

We're twenty! We're twenty! Who says we are more?
He's tipsy,—young jackanapes!—show him the door!
"Gray temples at twenty?"—Yes! *white* if we please!
Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's nothing can freeze!

Was it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mistake!
Look close,—you will not see a sign of a flake!
We want some new garlands for those we have shed,—
And these are white roses in place of the red.

We've a trick, we young fellows, you may have been told,
Of talking (in public) as if we were old:—
That boy we call "Doctor," and this we call "Judge;"
It's a neat little fiction,—of course it's all fudge.

That fellow's the "Speaker,"—the one on the right;
"Mr. Mayor," my young one, how are you to-night?

That's our "Member of Congress," we say when we chaff;
There's the "Reverend" What's his name?—don't make me
laugh.

That boy with the grave mathematical look
Made believe he had written a wonderful book,
And the ROYAL SOCIETY thought it was *true!*
So they chose him right in; a good joke it was, too!

There's a boy, we pretend, with a three-decker brain,
That could harness a team with a logical chain;
When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
We called him "The Justice," but now he's "The Squire."

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith,—
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,—
Just read on his medal, "My country," "of thee!"

You hear that boy laughing?—You think he's all fun;
But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done;
The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all!

Yes, we're boys,—always playing with tongue or with pen,—
And I sometimes have asked,—Shall we ever be men?
Shall we always be youthful, and laughing, and gay,
Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray!
The stars of its winter, the dews of its May!
And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,
Dear Father, take care of thy children, THE BOYS!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE JOLLY OLD PEDAGOGUE

'TWAS a jolly old pedagogue, long ago,
Tall and slender, and sallow and dry;
His form was bent, and his gait was slow,
His long, thin hair was as white as snow,

But a wonderful twinkle shone in his eye;
And he sang every night as he went to bed,
"Let us be happy down here below:
The living should live, though the dead be dead,"
Said the jolly old pedagogue, long ago.

He taught his scholars the rule of three,
Writing, and reading, and history, too;
He took the little ones up on his knee,
For a kind old heart in his breast had he,
And the wants of the littlest child he knew:
"Learn while you're young," he often said,
"There is much to enjoy, down here below;
Life for the living, and rest for the dead!"
Said the jolly old pedagogue, long ago.

With the stupidest boys he was kind and cool,
Speaking only in gentlest tones;
The rod was hardly known in his school . . . .
Whipping, to him, was a barbarous rule,
And too hard work for his poor old bones;
Besides, it was painful, he sometimes said:
"We should make life pleasant, down here below,
The living need charity more than the dead,"
Said the jolly old pedagogue, long ago.

He lived in the house by the hawthorn lane,
With roses and woodbine over the door;
His rooms were quiet, and neat, and plain,
But a spirit of comfort there held reign,
And made him forget he was old and poor;
"I need so little," he often said;
"And my friends and relatives here below
Won't litigate over me when I am dead,"
Said the jolly old pedagogue, long ago.

But the pleasantest times that he had, of all,
Were the sociable hours he used to pass,
With his chair tipped back to a neighbor's wall,
Making an unceremonious call,
Over a pipe and a friendly glass:

This was the finest picture, he said,
Of the many he tasted, here below;
"Who has no cronies, had better be dead!"
Said the jolly old pedagogue, long ago.

Then the jolly old pedagogue's wrinkled face
Melted all over in sunshiny smiles;
He stirred his glass with an old-school grace,
Chuckled, and sipped, and prattled apace,
Till the house grew merry, from cellar to tiles:
"I'm a pretty old man," he gently said,
"I've lingered a long while, here below;
But my heart is fresh, if my youth is fled!"
Said the jolly old pedagogue, long ago.

He smoked his pipe in the balmy air,
Every night when the sun went down,
While the soft wind played in his silvery hair,
Leaving its tenderest kisses there,
On the jolly old pedagogue's jolly old crown:
And, feeling the kisses, he smiled and said,
'Twas a glorious world, down here below;
"Why wait for happiness till we are dead?"
Said the jolly old pedagogue, long ago.

He sat at his door, one midsummer night,
After the sun had sunk in the west,
And the lingering beams of golden light
Made his kindly old face look warm and bright,
While the odorous night-wind whispered "Rest!"
Gently, gently, he bowed his head.
There were angels waiting for him, I know;
He was sure of happiness, living or dead,
This jolly old pedagogue, long ago!

George Arnold [1834–1865]

ON AN INTAGLIO HEAD OF MINERVA

Beneath the warrior's helm, behold
The flowing tresses of the woman!
Minerva, Pallas, what you will—
A winsome creature, Greek or Roman.

Minerva? No! 'tis some sly minx
In cousin's helmet masquerading;
If not—then Wisdom was a dame
For sonnets and for serenading!

I thought the goddess cold, austere,
Not made for love's despairs and blisses:
Did Pallas wear her hair like that?
Was Wisdom's mouth so shaped for kisses?

The Nightingale should be her bird,
And not the Owl, big-eyed and solemn:
How very fresh she looks, and yet
She's older far than Trajan's Column!

The magic hand that carved this face,
And set this vine-work round it running,
Perhaps ere mighty Phidias wrought,
Had lost its subtle skill and cunning.

Who was he? Was he glad or sad,
Who knew to carve in such a fashion?
Perchance he graved the dainty head
For some brown girl that scorned his passion.

Perchance, in some still garden-place,
Where neither fount nor tree to-day is,
He flung the jewel at the feet
Of Phryne, or perhaps 'twas Laïs.

But he is dust; we may not know
His happy or unhappy story:
Nameless, and dead these centuries,
His work outlives him,—there's his glory!

Both man and jewel lay in earth
Beneath a lava-buried city;
The countless summers came and went,
With neither haste, nor hate, nor pity.

Years blotted out the man, but left
The jewel fresh as any blossom,
Till some Visconti dug it up,—
To rise and fall on Mabel's bosom!

O nameless brother! see how Time
Your gracious handiwork has guarded:
See how your loving, patient art
Has come, at last, to be rewarded.

Who would not suffer slights of men,
And pangs of hopeless passion also,
To have his carven agate-stone
On such a bosom rise and fall so!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

THALIA

A MIDDLE-AGED LYRICAL POET IS SUPPOSED TO BE TAKING FINAL LEAVE OF THE MUSE OF COMEDY. SHE HAS BROUGHT HIM HIS HAT AND GLOVES, AND IS ABSTRACTEDLY PICKING A THREAD OF GOLD HAIR FROM HIS COAT SLEEVE AS HE BEGINS TO SPEAK:

I SAY it under the rose—
oh, thanks!—yes, under the laurel,
We part lovers, not foes;
we are not going to quarrel.

We have too long been friends
on foot and in gilded coaches,
Now that the whole thing ends,
to spoil our kiss with reproaches.

I leave you; my soul is wrung;
I pause, look back from the portal—
Ah, I no more am young,
and you, child, you are immortal!

Mine is the glacier's way,
yours is the blossom's weather—
When were December and May
known to be happy together?

Before my kisses grow tame,
before my moodiness grieve you,
While yet my heart is flame,
and I all lover, I leave you.

So, in the coming time,
when you count the rich years over,
Think of me in my prime,
and not as a white-haired lover,

Fretful, pierced with regret,
the wraith of a dead Desire
Thrumming a cracked spinet
by a slowly dying fire.

When, at last, I am cold—
years hence, if the gods so will it—
Say, "He was true as gold,"
and wear a rose in your fillet!

Others, tender as I,
will come and sue for caresses,
Woo you, win you, and die—
mind you, a rose in your tresses!

Some Melpomene woo,
some hold Clio the nearest;
You, sweet Comedy—you
were ever sweetest and dearest!

Nay, it is time to go.
When writing your tragic sister
Say to that child of woe
how sorry I was I missed her.

Really, I cannot stay,
though "parting is such sweet sorrow" . . .
Perhaps I will, on my way
down-town, look in to-morrow!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

PAN IN WALL STREET

A. D. 1867

Just where the Treasury's marble front
Looks over Wall Street's mingled nations;
Where Jews and Gentiles most are wont
To throng for trade and last quotations;

Where, hour by hour, the rates of gold
  Outrival, in the ears of people,
The quarter-chimes, serenely tolled
  From Trinity's undaunted steeple,—

Even there I heard a strange, wild strain
  Sound high above the modern clamor,
Above the cries of greed and gain,
  The curbstone war, the auction's hammer;
And swift, on Music's misty ways,
  It led, from all this strife for millions,
To ancient, sweet-to-nothing days
  Among the kirtle-robed Sicilians.

And as it stilled the multitude,
  And yet more joyous rose, and shriller,
I saw the minstrel, where he stood
  At ease against a Doric pillar:
One hand a droning organ played,
  The other held a Pan's-pipe (fashioned
Like those of old) to lips that made
  The reeds give out that strain impassioned.

'Twas Pan himself had wandered here
  A-strolling through this sordid city,
And piping to the civic ear
  The prelude of some pastoral ditty!
The demigod had crossed the seas,—
  From haunts of shepherd, nymph, and satyr,
And Syracusan times,—to these
  Far shores and twenty centuries later.

A ragged cap was on his head;
  But—hidden thus—there was no doubting
That, all with crispy locks o'erspread,
  His gnarlèd horns were somewhere sprouting;
His club-feet, cased in rusty shoes,
  Were crossed, as on some frieze you see them,
And trousers, patched of divers hues,
  Concealed his crooked shanks beneath them.

He filled the quivering reeds with sound,
And o'er his mouth their changes shifted,
And with his goat's-eyes looked around
Where'er the passing current drifted;
And soon, as on Trinacrian hills
The nymphs and herdsmen ran to hear him,
Even now the tradesmen from their tills,
With clerks and porters, crowded near him.

The bulls and bears together drew
From Jauncey Court and New Street Alley,
As erst, if pastorals be true,
Came beasts from every wooded valley;
The random passers stayed to list,—
A boxer Ægon, rough and merry,
A Broadway Daphnis, on his tryst
With Nais at the Brooklyn Ferry.

A one-eyed Cyclops halted long
In tattered cloak of army pattern,
And Galatea joined the throng,—
A blowsy, apple-vending slattern;
While old Silenus staggered out
From some new-fangled lunch-house handy,
And bade the piper, with a shout,
To strike up Yankee Doodle Dandy!

A newsboy and a peanut-girl
Like little Fauns began to caper:
His hair was all in tangled curl,
Her tawny legs were bare and taper;
And still the gathering larger grew,
And gave its pence and crowded nigher,
While aye the shepherd-minstrel blew
His pipe, and struck the gamut higher.

O heart of Nature, beating still
With throbs her vernal passion taught her,—
Even here, as on the vine-clad hill,
Or by the Arethusan water!

New forms may fold the speech, new lands
Arise within these ocean-portals,
But Music waves eternal wands,—
Enchantress of the souls of mortals!

So thought I,—but among us trod
A man in blue, with legal baton,
And scoffed the vagrant demigod,
And pushed him from the step I sat on.
Doubting I mused upon the cry,
"Great Pan is dead!"—and all the people
Went on their ways:—and clear and high
The quarter sounded from the steeple.

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

UPON LESBIA—ARGUING

My Lesbia, I will not deny,
Bewitches me completely;
She has the usual beaming eye,
And smiles upon me sweetly:
But she has an unseemly way
Of contradicting what I say.

And, though I am her closest friend
And find her fascinating,
I cannot cordially commend
Her method of debating:
Her logic, though she is divine,
Is singularly feminine.

Her reasoning is full of tricks,
And butterfly suggestions,
I know no point to which she sticks,
She begs the simplest questions;
And, when her premises are strong,
She always draws her inference wrong.

Broad, liberal views on men and things
She will not hear a word of;
To prove herself correct she brings
Some instance she has heard of;

The argument *ad hominem*
Appears her favorite strategem.

Old Socrates, with sage replies
To questions put to suit him,
Would not, I think, have looked so wise
With Lesbia to confute him;
He would more probably have bade
Xantippe hasten to his aid.

Ah! well, my fair philosopher,
With clear brown eyes that glisten
So sweetly, that I much prefer
To look at them than listen,
Preach me your sermon: have your way,
The voice is yours, whate'er you say.

Alfred Cochrane [1865–

TO ANTHEA, WHO MAY COMMAND HIM ANYTHING

(NEW STYLE)

Am I sincere? I say I dote
On everything that Browning wrote;
I know some bits by heart to quote·
But then She reads him.
I say—and is it strictly true?—
How I admire her cockatoo;
Well! in a way of course I do:
But then She feeds him.

And I become, at her command,
The sternest Tory in the land;
The Grand Old Man is far from grand;
But then She states it.
Nay! worse than that, I am so tame,
I once admitted—to my shame—
That football was a brutal game:
Because She hates it.

My taste in Art she hailed with groans,
And I, once charmed with bolder tones,
Now love the yellows of Burne-Jones:
But then She likes them.
My tuneful soul no longer hoards
Stray jewels from the Empire boards;
I revel now in Dvorak's chords:
But then She strikes them.

Our age distinctly cramps a knight;
Yet, though debarred from tilt and fight,
I can admit that black is white,
If She asserts it.
Heroes of old were luckier men
Than I—I venture now and then
To hint—retracting meekly when
She controverts it.

Alfred Cochrane [1865–

THE EIGHT-DAY CLOCK

The days of Bute and Grafton's fame,
Of Chatham's waning prime,
First heard your sounding gong proclaim
Its chronicle of Time;
Old days when Dodd confessed his guilt,
When Goldsmith drave his quill,
And genial gossip Horace built
His house on Strawberry Hill.

Now with a grave unmeaning face
You still repeat the tale,
High-towering in your somber case,
Designed by Chippendale;
Without regret for what is gone,
You bid old customs change,
As year by year you travel on
To scenes and voices strange.

We might have mingled with the crowd
Of courtiers in this hall,
The fans that swayed, the wigs that bowed,
But you have spoiled it all;
We might have lingered in the train
Of nymphs that Reynolds drew,
Or stared spell-bound in Drury Lane
At Garrick—but for you.

We might in Leicester Fields have swelled
The throng of beaux and cits,
Or listened to the concourse held
Among the Kitcat wits;
Have strolled with Selwyn in Pall Mall,
Arrayed in gorgeous silks,
Or in Great George Street raised a yell
For Liberty and Wilkes.

This is the life which you have known,
Which you have ticked away,
In one unmoved unfaltering tone
That ceased not day by day,
While ever round your dial moved
Your hands from span to span,
Through drowsy hours and hours that proved
Big with the fate of man.

A steady tick for fatal creeds,
For youth on folly bent,
A steady tick for worthy deeds,
And moments wisely spent;
No warning note of emphasis,
No whisper of advice,
To ruined rake or flippant miss,
For coquetry or dice.

You might, I think, have hammered out
With meaning doubly clear,
The midnight of a Vauxhall rout
In Evelina's ear;

Or when the night was almost gone,
You might, the deals between,
Have startled those who looked upon
The cloth when it was green.

But no, in all the vanished years
Down which your wheels have run,
Your message borne to heedless ears
Is one and only one—
No wit of men, no power of kings,
Can stem the overthrow
Wrought by this pendulum that swings
Sedately to and fro.

Alfred Cochrane [1865–

A PORTRAIT

In sunny girlhood's vernal life
She caused no small sensation,
But now the modest English wife
To others leaves flirtation.
She's young still, lovely, debonair,
Although sometimes her features
Are clouded by a thought of care
For those two tiny creatures.

Each tiny, toddling, mottled mite
Asserts with voice emphatic,
In lisping accents, "Mite is right,"
Their rule is autocratic:
The song becomes, that charmed mankind,
Their musical narcotic,
And baby lips than Love, she'll find,
Are even more despotic.

Soft lullaby when singing there,
And castles ever building,
Their destiny she'll carve in air,
Bright with maternal gilding:

Young Guy, a clever advocate,
So eloquent and able!
A powdered wig upon his pate,
A coronet for Mabel!

Joseph Ashby-Sterry [1838–1917]

"OLD BOOKS ARE BEST"

Old Books are best! With what delight
Does "Faithorne fecit" greet our sight
On frontispiece or title-page
Of that old time, when on the stage
"Sweet Nell" set "Rowley's" heart alight!

And you, O Friend, to whom I write,
Must not deny, e'en though you might,
Through fear of modern pirates' rage,
Old Books are best.

What though the print be not so bright,
The paper dark, the binding slight?
Our author, be he dull or sage,
Returning from that distant age
So lives again, we say of right:
Old Books are best.

Beverly Chew [1850–

IMPRESSION

In these restrained and careful times
Our knowledge petrifies our rhymes;
Ah! for that reckless fire men had
When it was witty to be mad;

When wild conceits were piled in scores,
And lit by flaming metaphors,
When all was crazed and out of tune,—
Yet throbbed with music of the moon.

If we could dare to write as ill
As some whose voices haunt us still,
Even we, perchance, might call our own
Their deep enchanting undertone.

We are too diffident and nice,
Too learnèd and too over-wise,
Too much afraid of faults to be
The flutes of bold sincerity.

For, as this sweet life passes by,
We blink and nod with critic eye;
We've no words rude enough to give
Its charm so frank and fugitive.

The green and scarlet of the Park,
The undulating streets at dark,
The brown smoke blown across the blue,
This colored city we walk through;—

The pallid faces full of pain,
The field-smell of the passing wain,
The laughter, longing, perfume, strife,
The daily spectacle of life;—

Ah! how shall this be given to rhyme,
By rhymesters of a knowing time?
Ah! for the age when verse was clad,
Being godlike, to be bad and mad.

Edmund Gosse [1849–

"WITH STRAWBERRIES"

With strawberries we filled a tray,
And then we drove away, away
Along the links beside the sea,
Where wave and wind were light and free,
And August felt as fresh as May.

And where the springy turf was gay
With thyme and balm and many a spray
Of wild roses, you tempted me
With strawberries!

A shadowy sail, silent and gray,
Stole like a ghost across the bay;

But none could hear me ask my fee,
And none could know what came to be.
Can sweethearts *all* their thirst allay
With strawberries?

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

BALLADE OF LADIES' NAMES

Brown's for Lalage, Jones for Lelia,
Robinson's bosom for Beatrice glows,
Smith is a Hamlet before Ophelia.
The glamor stays if the reason goes!
Every lover the years disclose
Is of a beautiful name made free.
One befriends, and all others are foes.
Anna's the name of names for me.

Sentiment hallows the vowels of Delia;
Sweet simplicity breathes from Rose;
Courtly memories glitter in Celia;
Rosalind savors of quips and hose,
Araminta of wits and beaux,
Prue of puddings, and Coralie
All of sawdust and spangled shows;
Anna's the name of names for me.

Fie upon Caroline, Madge, Amelia—
These I reckon the essence of prose!—
Cavalier Katherine, cold Cornelia,
Portia's masterful Roman nose,
Maud's magnificence, Totty's toes,
Poll and Bet with their twang of the sea,
Nell's impertinence, Pamela's woes!
Anna's the name of names for me.

ENVOY

Ruth like a gillyflower smells and blows,
Sylvia prattles of Arcadee,
Sybil mystifies, Connie crows,
Anna's the name of names for me!

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

TO A PAIR OF EGYPTIAN SLIPPERS

Tiny slippers of gold and green,
Tied with a mouldering golden cord!
What pretty feet they must have been
When Cæsar Augustus was Egypt's lord!
Somebody graceful and fair you were!
Not many girls could dance in these!
When did your shoemaker make you, dear,
Such a nice pair of Egyptian "threes"?

Where were you measured? In Saïs, or On,
Memphis, or Thebes, or Pelusium?
Fitting them neatly your brown toes upon,
Lacing them deftly with finger and thumb,
I seem to see you!—so long ago,
Twenty-one centuries, less or more!
And here are your sandals: yet none of us know
What name, or fortune, or face you bore.

Your lips would have laughed, with a rosy scorn,
If the merchant, or slave-girl, had mockingly said,
"The feet will pass, but the shoes they have worn
Two thousand years onward Time's road shall tread,
And still be footgear as good as new!"
To think that calf-skin, gilded and stitched,
Should Rome and the Pharaohs outlive—and you
Be gone, like a dream, from the world you bewitched!

Not that we mourn you! 'Twere too absurd!
You have been such a very long while away!
Your dry spiced dust would not value one word
Of the soft regrets that my verse could say.
Sorrow and Pleasure, and Love and Hate,
If you ever felt them, have vaporized hence
To this odor—so subtle and delicate—
Of myrrh, and cassia, and frankincense.

Of course they embalmed you! Yet not so sweet
Were aloes and nard, as the youthful glow
Which Amenti stole when the small dark feet
Wearied of treading our world below.

Look! it was flood-time in valley of Nile,
Or a very wet day in the Delta, dear!
When your slippers tripped lightly their latest mile—
The mud on the soles renders that fact clear.

You knew Cleopatra, no doubt! You saw
Antony's galleys from Actium come.
But there! if questions could answers draw
From lips so many a long age dumb,
I would not tease you with history,
Nor vex your heart for the men that were;
The one point to learn that would fascinate me
Is, where and what are you to-day, my dear!

You died, believing in Horus and Pasht,
Isis, Osiris, and priestly lore;
And found, of course, such theories smashed
By actual fact on the heavenly shore.
What next did you do? Did you transmigrate?
Have we seen you since, all modern and fresh?
Your charming soul—so I calculate—
Mislaid its mummy, and sought new flesh.

Were you she whom I met at dinner last week,
With eyes and hair of the Ptolemy black,
Who still of this find in Fayoum would speak,
And to Pharaohs and scarabs still carry us back?
A scent of lotus about her hung,
And she had such a far-away wistful air
As of somebody born when the Earth was young;
And she wore of gilt slippers a lovely pair.

Perchance you were married? These might have been
Part of your *trousseau*—the wedding shoes;
And you laid them aside with the garments green,
And painted clay Gods which a bride would use;
And, may be, to-day, by Nile's bright waters
Damsels of Egypt in gowns of blue—
Great-great-great—very great—grand-daughters
Owe their shapely insteps to you!

But vainly I beat at the bars of the Past,
Little green slippers with golden strings!

For all you can tell is that leather will last
When loves, and delightings, and beautiful things
Have vanished, forgotten—No! not quite that!
I catch some gleam of the grace you wore
When you finished with Life's daily pit-a-pat,
And left your shoes at Death's bedroom door.

You were born in the Egypt which did not doubt;
You were never sad with our new-fashioned sorrows:
You were sure, when your play-days on Earth ran out,
Of play-times to come, as we of our morrows!
Oh, wise little Maid of the Delta! I lay
Your shoes in your mummy-chest back again,
And wish that one game we might merrily play
At "Hunt the Slippers"—to see it all plain.

Edwin Arnold [1832–1904]

WITHOUT AND WITHIN

My coachman, in the moonlight there,
Looks through the side-light of the door;
I hear him with his brethren swear,
As I could do,—but only more.

Flattening his nose against the pane,
He envies me my brilliant lot,
Breathes on his aching fists in vain,
And dooms me to a place more hot.

He sees me in to supper go,
A silken wonder by my side,
Bare arms, bare shoulders, and a row
Of flounces, for the door too wide.

He thinks how happy is my arm
'Neath its white-gloved and jewelled load;
And wishes me some dreadful harm,
Hearing the merry corks explode.

Meanwhile I inly curse the bore
Of hunting still the same old coon,
And envy him, outside the door,
In golden quiets of the moon.

The winter wind is not so cold
As the bright smile he sees me win,
Nor the host's oldest wine so old
As our poor gabble sour and thin.

I envy him the ungyved prance
With which his freezing feet he warms,
And drag my lady's-chains and dance
The galley-slave of dreary forms.

Oh, could he have my share of din,
And I his quiet!—past a doubt
'Twould still be one man bored within,
And just another bored without.

Nay, when, once paid my mortal fee,
Some idler on my headstone grim
Traces the moss-blurred name, will he
Think me the happier, or I him?

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

"SHE WAS A BEAUTY"

She was a beauty in the days
When Madison was President,
And quite coquettish in her ways,—
On conquests of the heart intent.

Grandpapa, on his right knee bent,
Wooed her in stiff, old-fashioned phrase,—
She was a beauty in the days
When Madison was President.

And when your roses where hers went
Shall go, my Rose, who date from Hayes,
I hope you'll wear her sweet content
Of whom tradition lightly says:
She was a beauty in the days
When Madison was President.

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855–1896]

NELL GWYNNE'S LOOKING-GLASS

Glass antique, 'twixt thee and Nell
Draw we here a parallel.
She, like thee, was forced to bear
All reflections, foul or fair.
Thou art deep and bright within,
Depths as bright belonged to Gwynne;
Thou art very frail as well,
Frail as flesh is,—so was Nell.

Thou, her glass, art silver-lined,
She too, had a silver mind:
Thine is fresh till this far day,
Hers till death ne'er wore away:
Thou dost to thy surface win
Wandering glances, so did Gwynne;
Eyes on thee love long to dwell,
So men's eyes would do on Nell.

Life-like forms in thee are sought,
Such the forms the actress wrought;
Truth unfailing rests in you,
Nell, whate'er she was, was true.
Clear as virtue, dull as sin,
Thou art oft, as oft was Gwynne;
Breathe on thee, and drops will swell:
Bright tears dimmed the eyes of Nell.

Thine's a frame to charm the sight,
Framed was she to give delight;
Waxen forms here truly show
Charles above and Nell below;
But between them, chin with chin,
Stuart stands as low as Gwynne,—
Paired, yet parted,—meant to tell
Charles was opposite to Nell.

Round the glass wherein her face
Smiled so soft, her "arms" we trace;
Thou, her mirror, hast the pair,
Lion here, and leopard there.

She had part in these,—akin
To the lion-heart was Gwynne;
And the leopard's beauty fell
With its spots to bounding Nell.

Oft inspected, ne'er seen through,
Thou art firm, if brittle too;
So her will, on good intent,
Might be broken, never bent.
What the glass was, when therein
Beamed the face of glad Nell Gwynne,
Was that face by beauty's spell
To the honest soul of Nell.

Laman Blanchard [1804–1845]

MIMNERMUS IN CHURCH

You promise heavens free from strife,
Pure truth, and perfect change of will;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
So sweet, I fain would breathe it still:
Your chilly stars I can forego,
This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,
One great reality above:
Back from that void I shrink in fear,
And child-like hide myself in love:
Show me what angels fell. Till then,
I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires
From faltering lips and fitful veins
To sexless souls, ideal choirs,
Unwearied voices, wordless strains:
My mind with fonder welcome owns
One dear dead friend's remembered tones.

Forsooth the present we must give
To that which cannot pass away;
All beauteous things for which we live
By laws of time and space decay.

But oh, the very reason why
I clasp them, is because they die.

William Johnson-Cory [1823–1892]

CLAY

"We are but clay," the preacher saith;
"The heart is clay, and clay the brain,
And soon or late there cometh death
To mingle us with earth again."

Well, let the preacher have it so,
And clay we are, and clay shall be;—
Why iterate?—for this I know,
That clay does very well for me.

When clay has such red mouths to kiss,
Firm hands to grasp, it is enough:
How can I take it aught amiss
We are not made of rarer stuff?

And if one tempt you to believe
His choice would be immortal gold,
Question him, Can you then conceive
A warmer heart than clay can hold?

Or richer joys than clay can feel?
And when perforce he falters nay,
Bid him renounce his wish and kneel
In thanks for this same kindly clay.

Edward Verrall Lucas [1868–

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETE

What magic halo rings thy head,
Dream-maiden of a minstrel dead?
What charm of faerie round thee hovers,
That all who listen are thy lovers?

What power yet makes our pulses thrill
To see thee at thy window-sill,
And by that dangerous cord down-sliding,
And through the moonlit garden gliding?

True maiden art thou in thy dread;
True maiden in thy hardihead;
True maiden when, thy fears half-over,
Thou lingerest to try thy lover.

And ah! what heart of stone or steel
But doth some stir unwonted feel,
When to the day new brightness bringing
Thou standest at the stair-foot singing!

Thy slender limbs in boyish dress,
Thy tones half glee, half tenderness,
Thou singest, 'neath the light tale's cover,
Of thy true love to thy true lover.

O happy lover, happy maid,
Together in sweet story laid;
Forgive the hand that here is baring
Your old loves for new lovers' staring!

Yet, Nicolete, why fear'st thou fame?
No slander now can touch thy name,
Nor Scandal's self a fault discovers,
Though each new year thou hast new lovers.

Nor, Aucassin, need'st thou to fear
These lovers of too late a year,
Nor dread one jealous pang's revival;
No lover now can be thy rival.

What flower considers if its blooms
Light haunts of men, or forest glooms?
What care ye though the world discovers
Your flowers of love, O flower of lovers!

Francis William Bourdillon [1852–1921]

BALLADE OF SUMMER

When strawberry pottles are common and cheap,
Ere elms be black, or limes be sere,
When midnight dances are murdering sleep,
Then comes in the sweet o' the year!

And far from Fleet Street, far from here,
The Summer is Queen in the length of the land,
And moonlit nights they are soft and clear,
When fans for a penny are sold in the Strand!

When clamor that doves in the lindens keep
Mingles with musical plash of the weir,
When drowned green tresses of crowsfoot creep,
Then comes in the sweet o' the year!
And better a crust and a beaker of beer,
With rose-hung hedges on either hand,
Than a palace in town, and a prince's cheer,
When fans for a penny are sold in the Strand!

When big trout late in the twilight leap,
When cuckoo clamoreth far and near,
When glittering scythes in the hayfield reap,
Then comes in the sweet o' the year!
And it's oh to sail, with the wind to steer,
While kine knee-deep in the water stand,
On a Highland loch, or a Lowland mere,
When fans for a penny are sold in the Strand!

ENVOY

Friend, with the fops, while we dawdle here,
Then comes in the sweet o' the year!
And the Summer runs out, like grains of sand,
When fans for a penny are sold in the Strand!

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

THE BALLAD OF PROSE AND RHYME

When the ways are heavy with mire and rut,
In November fogs, in December snows,
When the North Wind howls, and the doors are shut,—
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever a scent from the whitethorn blows,
And the jasmine-stars at the casement climb,
And a Rosalind-face at the lattice shows,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

When the brain gets dry as an empty nut,
When the reason stands on its squarest toes,
When the mind (like a beard) has a "formal cut,"—
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever the May-blood stirs and glows,
And the young year draws to the "golden prime,"
And Sir Romeo sticks in his ear a rose,—
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

In a theme where the thoughts have a pedant-strut,
In a changing quarrel of "Ayes" and "Noes,"
In a starched procession of "If" and "But,"—
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever a soft glance softer grows,
And the light hours dance to the trysting-time,
And the secret is told "that no one knows,"—
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

ENVOY

In the work-a-day world,—for its needs and woes,
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever the May-bells clash and chime,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

Austin Dobson [1840–

"GOOD-NIGHT, BABETTE!"

Si vieillesse pouvait!—

SCENE.—*A small neat Room. In a high Voltaire Chair sits a white-haired old Gentleman.*

MONSIEUR VIEUXBOIS BABETTE

M. VIEUXBOIS (*turning querulously*)

Day of my life! Where *can* she get!
Babette! I say! Babette!—Babette!

BABETTE (*entering hurriedly*)

Coming, M'sieu'! If M'sieu' speaks
So loud, he won't be well for weeks!

M. VIEUXBOIS

Where have you been?

BABETTE

Why M'sieu' knows:—
April! . . . Ville d'Avray! . . . Ma'am'selle Rose!

M. VIEUXBOIS

Ah! I am old,—and I forget.
Was the place growing green, Babette?

BABETTE

But of a greenness!—yes, M'sieu'!
And then the sky so blue!—so blue!
And when I dropped my *immortelle*,
How the birds sang!
(*Lifting her apron to her eyes*)
This poor Ma'am'selle!

M. VIEUXBOIS

You're a good girl, Babette, but she,—
She was an Angel, verily.
Sometimes I think I see her yet
Stand smiling by the cabinet;
And once, I know, she peeped and laughed
Betwixt the curtains . . .
Where's the draught?
(*She gives him a cup*)
Now I shall sleep, I think, Babette;—
Sing me your Norman *chansonnette*.

BABETTE (*sings*)

"*Once at the Angelus,*
(*Ere I was dead*),
Angels all glorious
Came to my bed;
Angels in blue and white
Crowned on the Head."

M. VIEUXBOIS (*drowsily*)

"She was an Angel" . . . "Once she laughed" . . .
What, was I dreaming?
Where's the draught?

BABETTE (*showing the empty cup*)

The draught, M'sieu'?

M. VIEUXBOIS

How I forget!
I am so old! But sing, Babette!

BABETTE (*sings*)

"One was the Friend I left
Stark in the Snow;
One was the Wife that died
Long,—long ago;
One was the Love I lost
How could she know?"

M. VIEUXBOIS (*murmuring*)

Ah, Paul! . . . old Paul! . . . Eulalie too!
And Rose . . . And O! "the sky so blue!"

BABETTE (*sings*)

"One had my Mother's eyes,
Wistful and mild;
One had my Father's face;
One was a Child:
All of them bent to me,—
Bent down and smiled!"

(He is asleep!)

M. VIEUXBOIS (*almost inaudibly*)

"How I forget!"
"I am so old!" . . . "Good-night, Babette!"

Austin Dobson [1840–

A DIALOGUE FROM PLATO

Le temps le mieux employé est celui qu'on perd.—CLAUDE TILLIER

I'D "read" three hours. Both notes and text
Were fast a mist becoming;
In bounced a vagrant bee, perplexed,
And filled the room with humming,

Then out. The casement's leafage sways,
And, parted light, discloses
Miss Di., with hat and book,—a maze
Of muslin mixed with roses.

"You're reading Greek?" "I am—and you?"
"O, mine's a mere romancer!"
"So Plato is." "Then read him—do;
And I'll read mine for answer."

I read: "My Plato (Plato, too—
That wisdom thus should harden!)
Declares 'blue eyes look doubly blue
Beneath a Dolly Varden.'"

She smiled. "My book in turn avers
(No author's name is stated)
That sometimes those Philosophers
Are sadly mistranslated."

"But hear,—the next's in stronger style:
The Cynic School asserted
That two red lips which part and smile
May not be controverted!"

She smiled once more. "My book, I find,
Observes some modern doctors
Would make the Cynics out a kind
Of album-verse concoctors."

Then I: "Why not? 'Ephesian law,
No less than time's tradition,
Enjoined fair speech on all who saw
Diana's apparition.'"

She blushed,—this time. "If Plato's page
No wiser precept teaches,
Then I'd renounce that doubtful sage,
And walk to Burnham Beeches."

"Agreed," I said. "For Socrates
(I find he too is talking)
Thinks Learning can't remain at ease
When Beauty goes a-walking."

She read no more. I leapt the sill:
The sequel's scarce essential—
Nay, more than this, I hold it still
Profoundly confidential.

Austin Dobson [1840–

THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S

A PROPER NEW BALLAD OF THE COUNTRY AND THE TOWN

Phyllida amo ante alias.—VIRGIL

THE ladies of St. James's
Go swinging to the play;
Their footmen run before them,
With a "Stand by! Clear the way!"
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
She takes her buckled shoon,
When we go out a-courting
Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's
Wear satin on their backs;
They sit all night at *Ombre*,
With candles all of wax:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
She dons her russet gown,
And runs to gather May dew
Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's!
They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essences
Was broken in the air:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
The breath of heath and furze
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's!
They're painted to the eyes;
Their white it stays for ever,
Their red it never dies:

But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
  Her color comes and goes;
It trembles to a lily,—
  It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's!
  You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
  Their phrases are so grand:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
  Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
  The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's!
  They have their fits and freaks;
They smile on you—for seconds,
  They frown on you—for weeks:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
  Come either storm or shine,
From Shrove-tide unto Shrove-tide,
  Is always true—and mine.

My Phyllida! my Phyllida!
  I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
  And give me all to keep;
I care not whose the beauties
  Of all the world may be,
For Phyllida—for Phyllida
  Is all the world to me!

Austin Dobson [1840–

THE CURÉ'S PROGRESS

Monsieur the Curé down the street
  Comes with his kind old face,—
With his coat worn bare, and his straggling hair,
  And his green umbrella-case.

You may see him pass by the little "*Grande Place*",
  And the tiny "*Hotel-de-Ville*";
He smiles, as he goes, to the *fleuriste* Rose,
  And the *pompier* Théophile.

He turns, as a rule, through the "*Marché*" cool,
  Where the noisy fish-wives call;
And his compliment pays to the "*Belle Thérèse*",
  As she knits in her dusky stall.

There's a letter to drop at the locksmith's shop,
  And Toto, the locksmith's niece,
Has jubilant hopes, for the Curé gropes
  In his tails for a *pain d'épice*.

There's a little dispute with a merchant of fruit,
  Who is said to be heterodox,
That will ended be with a "*Ma foi, oui!*"
  And a pinch from the Curé's box.

There is also a word that no one heard
  To the furrier's daughter Lou.;
And a pale cheek fed with a flickering red,
  And a "*Bon Dieu garde M'sieu'!*"

But a grander way for the *Sous-Préfet*,
  And a bow for Ma'am'selle Anne;
And a mock "off-hat" to the Notary's cat,
  And a nod to the Sacristan:—

For ever through life the Curé goes
  With a smile on his kind old face—
With his coat worn bare, and his straggling hair,
  And his green umbrella-case.

Austin Dobson [1840–

A GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL

He lived in that past Georgian day,
When men were less inclined to say
That "Time is Gold," and overlay

With toil their pleasure;
He held some land, and dwelt thereon,—
Where, I forget,—the house is gone;
His Christian name, I think, was John,—
His surname, Leisure.

Reynolds has painted him, —a face
Filled with a fine, old-fashioned grace,
Fresh-colored, frank, with ne'er a trace
Of trouble shaded;
The eyes are blue, the hair is dressed
In plainest way,—one hand is pressed
Deep in a flapped canary vest,
With buds brocaded.

He wears a brown old Brunswick coat,
With silver buttons,—round his throat,
A soft cravat;—in all you note
An elder fashion,—
A strangeness, which, to us who shine
In shapely hats,—whose coats combine
All harmonies of hue and line,
Inspires compassion.

He lived so long ago, you see!
Men were untravelled then, but we,
Like Ariel, post o'er land and sea
With careless parting;
He found it quite enough for him
To smoke his pipe in "garden trim,"
And watch, about the fish tank's brim,
The swallows darting.

He liked the well-wheel's creaking tongue,—
He liked the thrush that fed her young,—
He liked the drone of flies among
His netted peaches;
He liked to watch the sunlight fall
Athwart his ivied orchard wall;
Or pause to catch the cuckoo's call
Beyond the beeches.

His were the times of Paint and Patch,
And yet no Ranelagh could match
The sober doves that round his thatch
Spread tails and sidled;
He liked their ruffling, puffed content;
For him their drowsy wheelings meant
More than a Mall of Beaux that bent,
Or Belles that bridled.

Not that, in truth, when life began
He shunned the flutter of the fan;
He too had maybe "pinked his man"
In Beauty's quarrel;
But now his "fervent youth" had flown
Where lost things go; and he was grown
As staid and slow-paced as his own
Old hunter, Sorrel.

Yet still he loved the chase, and held
That no composer's score excelled
The merry horn, when Sweetlip swelled
Its jovial riot;
But most his measured words of praise
Caressed the angler's easy ways,—
His idly meditative days,—
His rustic diet.

Not that his "meditating" rose
Beyond a sunny summer doze;
He never troubled his repose
With fruitless prying;
But held, as law for high and low,
What God withholds no man can know,
And smiled away enquiry so,
Without replying.

We read—alas, how much we read!—
The jumbled strifes of creed and creed
With endless controversies feed

Our groaning tables;
His books—and they sufficed him—were
Cotton's *Montaigne*, *The Grave* of Blair,
A "Walton,"—much the worse for wear,
And *Æsop's Fables*.

One more—*The Bible*. Not that he
Had searched its page as deep as we;
No sophistries could make him see
Its slender credit;
It may be that he could not count
The sires and sons to Jesse's fount,—
He liked the "Sermon on the Mount,"—
And more, he read it.

Once he had loved, but failed to wed,
A red-cheeked lass who long was dead;
His ways were far too slow, he said,
To quite forget her;
And still when time had turned him gray,
The earliest hawthorn buds in May
Would find his lingering feet astray,
Where first he met her.

"*In Cælo Quies*" heads the stone
On Leisure's grave,—now little known,
A tangle of wild-rose has grown
So thick across it;
The "Benefactions" still declare
He left the clerk an elbow-chair,
And "12 Pence Yearly to Prepare
A Christmas Posset."

Lie softly, Leisure! Doubtless you,
With too serene a conscience drew
Your easy breath, and slumbered through
The gravest issue;
But we, to whom our age allows
Scarce space to wipe our weary brows,
Look down upon your narrow house,
Old friend, and miss you!

Austin Dobson [1840–

ON A FAN

THAT BELONGED TO THE MARQUISE DE POMPADOUR

Chicken-skin, delicate, white,
  Painted by Carlo Vanloo,
Loves in a riot of light,
  Roses and vaporous blue;
  Hark to the dainty *frou-frou!*
Picture above, if you can,
  Eyes that could melt as the dew,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

See how they rise at the sight,
  Thronging the *Œil de Bœuf* through,
Courtiers as butterflies bright,
  Beauties that Fragonard drew,
  Talon-rouge, falbala, queue,
Cardinal, Duke,—to a man,
  Eager to sigh or to sue,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

Ah, but things more than polite
  Hung on this toy, *voyez-vous!*
Matters of state and of might,
  Things that great ministers do;
  Things that, maybe, overthrew
Those in whose brains they began;
  Here was the sign and the cue,—
This was the Pompadour's fan!

ENVOY

Where are the secrets it knew?
  Weavings of plot and of plan?
—But where is the Pompadour, too?
  This was the Pompadour's *Fan!*

Austin Dobson [1840–

"WHEN I SAW YOU LAST, ROSE"

WHEN I saw you last, Rose,
You were only so high;—
How fast the time goes!

Like a bud ere it blows,
You just peeped at the sky,
When I saw you last, Rose!

Now your petals unclose,
Now your May-time is nigh;—
How fast the time goes!

And a life,—how it grows!
You were scarcely so shy,
When I saw you last, Rose!

In your bosom it shows
There's a guest on the sly;
(How fast the time goes!)

Is it Cupid? Who knows!
Yet you used not to sigh,
When I saw you last, Rose;—
How fast the time goes!

Austin Dobson [1840–

URCEUS EXIT

I INTENDED an Ode,
And it turned to a Sonnet.
It began *à la mode*,
I intended an Ode;
But Rose crossed the road
In her latest new bonnet;
I intended an Ode;
And it turned to a Sonnet.

Austin Dobson [1840–

A CORSAGE BOUQUET

Myrtilla, to-night,
Wears Jacqueminot roses.
She's the loveliest sight!
Myrtilla to-night:—
Correspondingly light
My pocket-book closes.
Myrtilla, to-night
Wears Jacqueminot roses.

Charles Henry Lüders [1858–1891]

TWO TRIOLETS

What he said:—

This kiss upon your fan I press—
Ah! Sainte Nitouche, you don't refuse it!
And may it from its soft recess—
This kiss upon your fan I press—
Be blown to you, a shy caress,
By this white down, whene'er you use it.
This kiss upon your fan I press,—
Ah, Sainte Nitouche, you *don't* refuse it!

What she thought:—

To kiss a fan!
What a poky poet!
The stupid man
To kiss a fan
When he knows—that—he—can—
Or ought to know it—
To kiss a fan!
What a poky poet!

Harrison Robertson [1856–

THE BALLAD OF DEAD LADIES*

FROM THE FRENCH OF FRANÇOIS VILLON 1450

Tell me now in what hidden way is
Lady Flora the lovely Roman?
Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thais,
Neither of them the fairer woman?

* For the original of this poem see page 3837.

Where is Echo, beheld of no man,
Only heard on river and mere,—
She whose beauty was more than human? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Where's Héloise, the learnèd nun,
For whose sake Abeilard, I ween,
Lost manhood and put priesthood on?
(From Love he won such dule and teen!)
And where, I pray you, is the Queen
Who willed that Buridan should steer
Sewed in a sack's mouth down the Seine? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

White Queen Blanche, like a queen of lilies,
With a voice like any mermaiden,—
Bertha Broadfoot, Beatrice, Alice,
And Ermengarde the lady of Maine,—
And that good Joan whom Englishmen
At Rouen doomed and burned her there,—
Mother of God, where are they then? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord,
Where they are gone, nor yet this year,
Except with this for an overword,—
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

BALLADE OF DEAD LADIES

AFTER VILLON

Nay, tell me now in what strange air
The Roman Flora dwells to-day,
Where Archippiada hides, and where
Beautiful Thais has passed away?
Whence answers Echo, afield, astray,
By mere or stream,—around, below?
Lovelier she than a woman of clay;
Nay, but where is the last year's snow?

Where is wise Héloïse, that care
Brought on Abeilard, and dismay?
All for her love he found a snare,
A maimed poor monk in orders gray;
And where's the Queen who willed to slay
Buridan, that in a sack must go
Afloat down Seine,—a perilous way—
Nay, but where is the last year's snow?

Where's that White Queen, a lily rare,
With her sweet song, the Siren's lay?
Where's Bertha Broad-foot, Beatrice fair?
Alys and Ermengarde, where are they?
Good Joan, whom English did betray
In Rouen town, and burned her? No,
Maiden and Queen, no man may say;
Nay, but where is the last year's snow?

ENVOY

Prince, all this week thou needst not pray,
Nor yet this year the thing to know.
One burden answers, ever and aye,
"Nay, but where is the last year's snow?"

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

A BALLAD OF DEAD LADIES

AFTER VILLON

From "If I Were King"

I WONDER in what Isle of Bliss
Apollo's music fills the air;
In what green valley Artemis
For young Endymion spreads the snare:
Where Venus lingers debonair:
The Wind has blown them all away—
And Pan lies piping in his lair—
Where are the Gods of Yesterday?

Say where the great Semiramis
Sleeps in a rose-red tomb; and where
The precious dust of Caesar is,
Or Cleopatra's yellow hair:
Where Alexander Do-and-Dare;
The Wind his blown them all away—
And Redbeard of the Iron Chair;
Where are the Dreams of Yesterday?

Where is the Queen of Herod's kiss,
And Phryne in her beauty bare;
By what strange sea does Tomyris
With Dido and Cassandra share
Divine Proserpina's despair;
The Wind has blown them all away—
For what poor ghost does Helen care?
Where are the Girls of Yesterday?

ENVOY

Alas for lovers! Pair by pair
The Wind has blown them all away:
The young and yare, the fond and fair:
Where are the Snows of Yesterday?

Justin Huntly McCarthy [1860–

IF I WERE KING

AFTER VILLON

From "If I Were King"

All French folk, whereso'er ye be,
Who love your country, sail and sand,
From Paris to the Breton sea,
And back again to Norman strand,
Forsooth ye seem a silly band,
Sheep without shepherd, left to chance—
Far otherwise our Fatherland,
If Villon were the King of France!

The figure on the throne you see
  Is nothing but a puppet, planned
To wear the regal bravery
  Of silken coat and gilded wand.
  Not so we Frenchmen understand
The Lord of lion's heart and glance,
  And such a one would take command
If Villon were the King of France!

His counsellors are rogues, Perdie!
  While men of honest mind are banned
To creak upon the Gallows Tree,
  Or squeal in prisons over-manned;
  We want a chief to bear the brand,
And bid the damned Burgundians dance.
  God! Where the Oriflamme should stand
If Villon were the King of France!

ENVOY

Louis the Little, play the grand;
  Buffet the foe with sword and lance;
'Tis what would happen, by this hand,
  If Villon were the King of France!

Justin Huntly McCarthy [1860–

A BALLADE OF SUICIDE

The gallows in my garden, people say,
Is new and neat and adequately tall.
I tie the noose on in a knowing way
As one that knots his necktie for a ball;
But just as all the neighbors—on the wall—
Are drawing a long breath to shout "Hurray!"
The strangest whim has seized me. . . . After all
I think I will not hang myself to-day.

To-morrow is the time I get my pay—
My uncle's sword is hanging in the hall—
I see a little cloud all pink and gray—
Perhaps the rector's mother will *not* call—

I fancy that I heard from Mr. Gall
That mushrooms could be cooked another way—
I never read the works of Juvenal—
I think I will not hang myself to-day.

The world will have another washing day;
The decadents decay; the pedants pall;
And H. G. Wells has found that children play,
And Bernard Shaw discovered that they squall;
Rationalists are growing rational—
And through thick woods one finds a stream astray,
So secret that the very sky seems small—
I think I will not hang myself to-day.

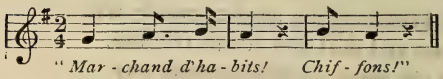
ENVOI

Prince, I can hear the trumpet of Germinal,
The tumbrils toiling up the terrible way;
Even to-day your royal head may fall—
I think I will not hang myself to-day.

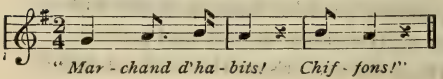
Gilbert Keith Chesterton [1874–

CHIFFONS!

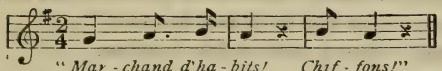
THROUGH this our city of delight,
This Paris of our joy and play,
This Paris perfumed, jeweled, bright,
Rouged, powdered, amorous,—*ennuyé:*
Across our gilded *Quartier,*
So fair to see, so frail *au fond,*
Echoes—*mon Dieu!*—the Ragman's bray:



Foul, hunched, a plague to dainty sight,
He limps *infect* by park and *quai,*
Voicing (for those that hear aright)
His hunger-world, the dark *Marais.*
Sexton of all we waste and fray,
He bags at last *pour tout de bon*
Our trappings rare, our braveries gay,

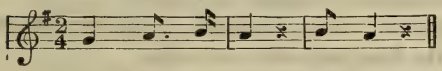


Their lot is ours! A grislier wight,
The Ragman Time, takes day by day
Our beauty's bloom, our manly might,
Our *joie de vivre*, our gods of clay;
Till torn and worn and soiled and gray
Hot life rejects us—*nom de nom!*—
Rags! and our only requiem lay,



ENVOY

Princes take heed!—for where are they,
Valois, Navarre and Orléans?
Death drones the answer, far away,



William Samuel Johnson [1859–

THE COURT HISTORIAN

LOWER EMPIRE. *Circa* A. D. 700

The Monk Arnulphus uncorked his ink
That shone with a blood-red light
Just now as the sun began to sink;
His vellum was pumiced a silvery white;
"The Basileus"—for so he began—
"Is a royal sagacious Mars of a man,
Than the very lion bolder;
He has married the stately widow of Thrace—"
"Hush!" cried a voice at his shoulder.

His palette gleamed with a burnished green,
Bright as a dragon-fly's skin:
His gold-leaf shone like the robe of a queen,
His azure glowed as a cloud worn thin,
Deep as the blue of the king-whale's lair:
"The Porphyrogenita Zoë the fair
Is about to wed with a Prince much older,
Of an unpropitious mien and look—"
"Hush!" cried a voice at his shoulder.

The red flowers trellised the parchment page,
  The birds leaped up on the spray,
The yellow fruit swayed and drooped and swung,
  It was Autumn mixed up with May.
(O, but his cheek was shrivelled and shrunk!)
"The child of the Basileus," wrote the Monk,
  "Is golden-haired—tender the Queen's arms fold her.
Her step-mother Zoë doth love her so—"
  "Hush!" cried a voice at his shoulder.

The Kings and Martyrs and Saints and Priests
  All gathered to guard the text:
There was Daniel snug in the lions' den
  Singing no whit perplexed—
Brazen Samson with spear and helm—
"The Queen," wrote the Monk, "rules firm this realm,
  For the King gets older and older.
The Norseman Thorkill is brave and fair—"
  "Hush!" cried a voice at his shoulder.

Walter Thornbury [1828–1876]

MISS LOU

When thin-strewn memory I look through,
I see most clearly poor Miss Loo,
Her tabby cat, her cage of birds,
Her nose, her hair—her muffled words,
And how she'd open her green eyes,
As if in some immense surprise,
Whenever as we sat at tea,
She made some small remark to me.

It's always drowsy summer when
From out the past she comes again;
The westering sunshine in a pool
Floats in her parlor still and cool;
While the slim bird its lean wires shakes,
As into piercing song it breaks;
Till Peter's pale-green eyes ajar
Dream, wake; wake, dream, in one brief bar;
And I am sitting, dull and shy,
And she with gaze of vacancy,

And large hands folded on the tray,
Musing the afternoon away;
Her satin bosom heaving slow
With sighs that softly ebb and flow,
And her plain face in such dismay,
It seems unkind to look her way;
Until all cheerful back will come
Her cheerful gleaming spirit home:
And one would think that poor Miss Loo
Asked nothing else, if she had you.

Walter De la Mare [1873–

THE POET AND THE WOOD-LOUSE

A PORTLY Wood-louse, full of cares,
Transacted eminent affairs
Along a parapet where pears
Unripened fell
And vines embellished the sweet airs
With muscatel.

Day after day beheld him run
His scales a-twinkle in the sun
About his business never done;
Night's slender span he
Spent in the home his wealth had won—
A red-brick cranny.

Thus, as his Sense of Right directed,
He lived both honored and respected,
Cherished his children and protected
His duteous wife,
And naught of diffidence deflected
His useful life.

One mid-day, hastening to his Club,
He spied beside a water-tub
The owner of each plant and shrub
A humble Bard
Who turned upon the conscious grub
A mild regard.

"Eh?" quoth the Wood-louse, "Can it be
A Higher Power looks down to see

My praiseworthy activity
And notes me plying
My Daily Task?—Nor strange, dear me,
But gratifying!"

To whom the Bard: "I still divest
My orchard of the Insect Pest,
That you are such is manifest,
Prepare to die.—
And yet, how sweetly does your crest
Reflect the sky!

"Go then forgiven, (for what ails
Your naughty life this fact avails
To pardon) mirror in your scales
Celestial blue,
Till the sun sets and the light fails
The skies and you."

. . . . . .

May all we proud and bustling parties
Whose lot in forum, street and mart is
Stand in conspectu Deitatis
And save our face,
Reflecting where our scaly heart is
Some skyey grace.

Helen Parry Eden [18

STUDENTS

John Brown and Jeanne at Fontainebleau—
'Twas Toussaint, just a year ago;
Crimson and copper was the glow
Of all the woods at Fontainebleau.
They peered into that ancient well,
And watched the slow torch as it fell.
John gave the keeper two whole sous,
And Jeanne that smile with which she woos
John Brown to folly. So they lose
The Paris train. But never mind!—
All-Saints are rustling in the wind,
And there's an inn, a crackling fire—
(It's *deux-cinquante*, but Jeanne's desire);

There's dinner, candles, country wine,
Jeanne's lips—philosophy divine!
There was a bosquet at Saint Cloud
Wherein John's picture of her grew
To be a Salon masterpiece—
Till the rain fell that would not cease.
Through one long alley how they raced!—
'Twas gold and brown, and all a waste
Of matted leaves, moss-interlaced.
Shades of mad queens and hunter-kings
And thorn-sharp feet of dryad-things
Were company to their wanderings;
Then rain and darkness on them drew.
The rich folks' motors honked and flew.
They hailed an old cab, heaven for two;
The bright Champs-Elysées at last—
Though the cab crawled it sped too fast.

Paris, upspringing white and gold:
Flamboyant arch and high-enscrolled
War-sculpture, big, Napoleonic—
Fierce chargers, angels histrionic;
The royal sweep of gardened spaces,
The pomp and whirl of columned Places;
The *Rive Gauche*, age-old, gay and gray;
The *impasse* and the loved café;
The tempting tidy little shops;
The convent walls, the glimpsed tree-tops;
Book-stalls, old men like dwarfs in plays;
Talk, work, and Latin Quarter ways.

May—Robinson's, the chestnut trees—
Were ever crowds as gay as these?
The quick pale waiters on a run,
The round green tables, one by one,
Hidden away in amorous bowers—
Lilac, laburnum's golden showers.
Kiss, clink of glasses, laughter heard,
And nightingales quite undeterred.
And then that last extravagance—
O Jeanne, a single amber glance

Will pay him!—"Let's play millionaire
For just two hours—on princely fare,
At some hotel where lovers dine
À deux and pledge across the wine!"
They find a damask breakfast-room,
Where stiff silk roses range their bloom.
The garçon has a splendid way
Of bearing in *grand déjeuner*.
Then to be left alone, alone,
High up above Rue Castiglione;
Curtained away from all the rude
Rumors, in silken solitude;
And, John, her head upon your knees—
Time waits for moments such as these.

Florence Wilkinson [18

A LIKENESS

(PORTRAIT BUST OF AN UNKNOWN, CAPITOL, ROME)

In every line a supple beauty—
The restless head a little bent—
Disgust of pleasure, scorn of duty,
The unseeing eyes of discontent.
I often come to sit beside him,
This youth who passed and left no trace
Of good or ill that did betide him,
Save the disdain upon his face.

The hope of all his House, the brother
Adored, the golden-hearted son,
Whom Fortune pampered like a mother;
And then—a shadow on the sun.
Whether he followed Cæsar's trumpet,
Or chanced the riskier game at home
To find how favor played the strumpet
In fickle politics at Rome;

Whether he dreamed a dream in Asia
He never could forget by day,
Or gave his youth to some Aspasia,
Or gamed his heritage away;
Once lost, across the Empire's border

This man would seek his peace in vain;
His look arraigns a social order
Somehow entrammelled with his pain.

"The dice of gods are always loaded";
One gambler, arrogant as they,
Fierce, and by fierce injustice goaded,
Left both his hazard and the play.
Incapable of compromises,
Unable to forgive or spare,
The strange awarding of the prizes
He had no fortitude to bear.

Tricked by the forms of things material—
The solid-seeming arch and stone,
The noise of war, the pomp imperial,
The heights and depths about a throne—
He missed, among the shapes diurnal,
The old, deep-travelled road from pain,
The thoughts of men, which are eternal,
In which, eternal, men remain.

Ritratto d'ignoto; defying
Things unsubstantial as a dream—
An Empire, long in ashes lying—
His face still set against the stream.
Yes, so he looked, that gifted brother
I loved, who passed and left no trace,
Not even—luckier than this other—
His sorrow in a marble face.

Willa Sibert Cather [1875–

THE CHAPERON

I TAKE my chaperon to the play—
She thinks she's taking me.
And the gilded youth who owns the box,
A proud young man is he;
But how would his young heart be hurt
If he could only know
That not for his sweet sake I go
Nor yet to see the trifling show;
But to see my chaperon flirt.

Her eyes beneath her snowy hair
They sparkle young as mine;
There's scarce a wrinkle in her hand
So delicate and fine.
And when my chaperon is seen,
They come from everywhere—
The dear old boys with silvery hair,
With old-time grace and old-time air,
To greet their old-time queen.

They bow as my young Midas here
Will never learn to bow
(The dancing-masters do not teach
That gracious reverence now);
With voices quavering just a bit,
They play their old parts through,
They talk of folk who used to woo,
Of hearts that broke in 'fifty-two—
Now none the worse for it.

And as those aged crickets chirp,
I watch my chaperon's face,
And see the dear old features take
A new and tender grace;
And in her happy eyes I see
Her youth awakening bright,
With all its hope, desire, delight—
Ah, me! I wish that I were quite
As young—as young as she!

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855–1896]

"A PITCHER OF MIGNONETTE"

A PITCHER of mignonette
In a tenement's highest casement,—
Queer sort of flower-pot—yet
That pitcher of mignonette
Is a garden in heaven set,
To the little sick child in the basement—
The pitcher of mignonette,
In the tenement's highest casement.

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855–1896]

OLD KING COLE

In Tilbury Town did Old King Cole
A wise old age anticipate,
Desiring, with his pipe and bowl,
No Khan's extravagant estate.
No crown annoyed his honest head,
No fiddlers three were called or needed;
For two disastrous heirs instead
Made music more that ever three did.

Bereft of her with whom his life
Was harmony without a flaw,
He took no other for a wife,
Nor sighed for any that he saw;
And if he doubted his two sons,
And heirs, Alexis and Evander,
He might have been as doubtful once
Of Robert Burns and Alexander.

Alexis, in his early youth,
Began to steal—from old and young.
Likewise Evander, and the truth
Was like a bad taste on his tongue.
Born thieves and liars, their affair
Seemed only to be tarred with evil—
The most insufferable pair
Of scamps that ever cheered the devil.

The world went on, their fame went on,
And they went on—from bad to worse;
Till, goaded hot with nothing done,
And each accoutered with a curse,
The friends of Old King Cole, by twos,
And fours, and sevens, and elevens,
Pronounced unalterable views
Of doings that were not of Heaven's.

And having learned again whereby
Their baleful zeal had come about,
King Cole met many a wrathful eye
So kindly that its wrath went out—

Or partly out. Say what they would,
He seemed the more to court their candor;
But never told what kind of good
Was in Alexis and Evander.

And Old King Cole, with many a puff
That haloed his urbanity,
Would smoke till he had smoked enough,
And listen most attentively.
He beamed as with an inward light
That had the Lord's assurance in it;
And once a man was there all night,
Expecting something every minute.

But whether from too little thought,
Or too much fealty to the bowl,
A dim reward was all he got
For sitting up with Old King Cole.
"Though mine," the father mused aloud,
"Are not the sons I would have chosen,
Shall I, less evilly endowed,
By their infirmity be frozen?

"They'll have a bad end, I'll agree,
But I was never born to groan;
For I can see what I can see,
And I'm accordingly alone.
With open heart and open door,
I love my friends, I like my neighbors;
But if I try to tell you more,
Your doubts will overmatch my labors.

"This pipe would never make me calm,
This bowl my grief would never drown.
For grief like mine there is no balm
In Gilead, or in Tilbury Town.
And if I see what I can see,
I know not any way to blind it;
Nor more if any way may be
For you to grope or fly to find it.

"There may be room for ruin yet,
And ashes for a wasted love;

Or, like One whom you may forget,
I may have meat you know not of.
And if I'd rather live than weep
Meanwhile, do you find that surprising?
Why, bless my soul, the man's asleep!
That's good. The sun will soon be rising."

Edwin Arlington Robinson [1869–

THE MASTER MARINER

My grandshire sailed three years from home,
And slew unmoved the sounding whale:
Here on the windless beach I roam
And watch far out the hardy sail.

The lions of the surf that cry
Upon this lion-colored shore
On reefs of midnight met his eye:
He knew their fangs as I their roar.

My grandsire sailed uncharted seas,
And toll of all their leagues he took:
I scan the shallow bays at ease,
And tell their colors in a book.

The anchor-chains his music made
And wind in shrouds and running-gear:
The thrush at dawn beguiles my glade,
And once, 'tis said, I woke to hear.

My grandsire in his ample fist
The long harpoon upheld to men:
Behold obedient to my wrist
A gray gull's-feather for my pen!

Upon my grandsire's leathern cheek
Five zones their bitter bronze had set:
Some day their hazards I will seek,
I promise me at times. Not yet.

I think my grandsire now would turn
A mild but speculative eye
On me, my pen and its concern,
Then gaze again to sea—and sigh.

George Sterling [1?69–

A ROSE TO THE LIVING

A ROSE to the living is more
  Than sumptuous wreaths to the dead:
In filling love's infinite store,
A rose to the living is more,—
If graciously given before
  The hungering spirit is fled,—
A rose to the living is more
  Than sumptuous wreaths to the dead.

Nixon Waterman [1859–

A KISS

ROSE kissed me to-day.
  Will she kiss me to-morrow?
Let it be as it may,
Rose kissed me to-day
But the pleasure gives way
  To a savor of sorrow;—
Rose kissed me to-day,—
  Will she kiss me to-morrow?

Austin Dobson [1840–

BIFTEK AUX CHAMPIGNONS

MIMI, do you remember—
  Don't get behind your fan—
That morning in September
  On the cliffs of Grand Manan,
Where to the shock of Fundy
  The topmost harebells sway
(*Campanula rotundifolia: cf.* Gray)?

On the pastures high and level
  That overlook the sea,
Where I wondered what the devil
  Those little things could be

That Mimi stooped to gather,
  As she strolled across the down,
And held her dress skirt rather—
  Oh, now, you need n't frown.

For you know the dew was heavy,
  And your boots, *I* know, were thin;
So a little extra brevi-
  ty in skirts was, sure, no sin.
Besides, who minds a cousin?
  First, second, even third,—
I've kissed 'em by the dozen,
  And they never once demurred.

"If one's allowed to ask it,"
  Quoth I, "*Ma belle cousine,*
What have you in your basket?"
  (Those baskets white and green
The brave Passamaquoddies
  Weave out of scented grass,
And sell to tourist bodies
  Who through Mt. Desert pass.)

You answered, slightly frowning,
  "Put down your stupid book—
That everlasting Browning!—
  And come and help me look.
Mushroom you spik him English,
  I call him *champignon:*
I'll teach you to distinguish
  The right kind from the wrong."

There was no fog on Fundy
  That blue September day;
The west wind, for that one day,
  Had swept it all away.
The lighthouse glasses twinkled,
  The white gulls screamed and flew,
The merry sheep-bells tinkled,
  The merry breezes blew.

The bayberry aromatic,
The papery immortelles
(That give our grandma's attic
That sentimental smell,
Tied up in little brush-brooms)
Were sweet as new-mown hay,
While we went hunting mushrooms
That blue September day.

Henry Augustin Beers [1847-

MISS NANCY'S GOWN

In days when George the Third was King
And ruled the Old Dominion,
And Law and Fashion owned the sway
Of Parliament's opinion,
A good ship brought across the sea,—
A treasure fair and fine,—
Miss Nancy's gown from London town,
The latest Court design!

The plaited waist from neck to belt
Scarce measured half a span;
The sleeves, balloon-like, at the top
Could hold her feather fan;
The narrow skirt with bias gore
Revealed an ankle neat,
Whene'er she put her dainty foot
From carriage step to street!

By skilful hands this wondrous gown
Of costliest stuff was made,
Cocoons of France on Antwerp looms
Wrought to embossed brocade,
Where roses red and violets
In blooming beauty grew,
As if young May were there alway,
And June and April too!

And from this bower of delight
  Miss Nancy reigned a Queen,
Nor one disloyal heart rebelled
  In all her wide demesne:
The noble House of Burgesses
  Forgot its fierce debate
O'er rights of Crown, when Nancy's gown
  Appeared in Halls of State!

Through jocund reel, or measured tread
  Of stately minuet,
Like fairy vision shone the bloom
  Of rose and violet,
As, hand in hand with Washington,
  The hero of the day,
The smiling face and nymph-like grace
  Of Nancy led the way!

A century, since that gay time
  The merry dance was trod,
Has passed, and Nancy long has slept
  Beneath the churchyard sod;
Yet on the brocade velvet gown
  The rose and violet
Are blooming bright as on the night
  She danced the minuet!

Zitella Cocke [1847–

WING TEE WEE

Oh, Wing Tee Wee
  Was a sweet Chinee,
And she lived in the town of Tac.
  Her eyes were blue,
  And her curling cue
Hung dangling down her back;
And she fell in love with gay Win Sil
When he wrote his love on a laundry bill.

And oh, Tim Told
Was a pirate bold,
And he sailed in a Chinese junk
And he loved, ah me!
Sweet Wing Tee Wee,
But his valiant heart had sunk;
So he drowned his blues in fickle fizz,
And vowed the maid would yet be his.

So bold Tim Told
Showed all his gold
To the maid in the town of Tac,
And sweet Wing Wee
Eloped to sea,
And nevermore came back;
For in far Chinee the maids are fair,
And the maids are false, as everywhere.

J. P. Denison [18 –

MY GRANDMOTHER'S TURKEY-TAIL FAN

It owned not a color that vanity dons
Or slender wits choose for display;
Its beautiful tint was a delicate bronze,
A brown softly blended with gray.
From her waist to her chin, spreading out without break,
'Twas built on a generous plan:
The pride of the forest was slaughtered to make
My grandmother's turkey-tail fan.

For common occasions it never was meant:
In a chest between two silken cloths
'Twas kept safely hidden with careful intent
In camphor to keep out the moths.
'Twas famed far and wide through the whole country side,
From Beersheba e'en unto Dan;
And often at meeting with envy 'twas eyed,
My grandmother's turkey-tail fan.

Camp-meetings, indeed, were its chiefest delight.
Like a crook unto sheep gone astray
It beckoned backsliders to re-seek the right,
And exhorted the sinners to pray.

It always beat time when the choir went wrong,
In psalmody leading the van.
Old Hundred, I know, was its favorite song—
My grandmother's turkey-tail fan.

A fig for the fans that are made nowadays,
Suited only to frivolous mirth!
A different thing is the fan that I praise,
Yet it scorned not the good things of earth.
At bees and at quiltings 'twas aye to be seen.
The best of the gossip began
When in at the doorway had entered serene
My grandmother's turkey-tail fan.

Tradition relates of it wonderful tales.
Its handle of leather was buff.
Though shorn of its glory, e'en now it exhales
An odor of hymn-books and snuff.
Its primeval grace, if you like, you can trace:
'Twas limned for the future to scan,
Just under a smiling, gold-spectacled face,
My grandmother's turkey-tail fan.

Samuel Minturn Peck [1854–

A MORAL IN SEVRES

Upon my mantel-piece they stand,
While all its length between them lies;
He throws a kiss with graceful hand,
She glances back with bashful eyes.

The china Shepherdess is fair,
The Shepherd's face denotes a heart
Burning with ardor and despair.
Alas, they stand so far apart!

And yet, perhaps, if they were moved,
And stood together day by day,
Their love had not so constant proved,
Nor would they still have smiled so gay.

His hand the Shepherd might have kissed
The match-box Angel's heart to win;
The Shepherdess, his love have missed,
And flirted with the Mandarin.

But on my mantel-piece they stand,
While all its length between them lies;
He throws a kiss with graceful hand,
She glances back with bashful eyes.

Mildred Howells [18 –

ON THE FLY-LEAF OF A BOOK OF OLD PLAYS

At Cato's Head in Russell Street
These leaves she sat a-stitching;
I fancy she was trim and neat,
Blue-eyed and quite bewitching.

Before her on the street below,
All powder, ruffs, and laces,
There strutted idle London beaux
To ogle pretty faces;

While, filling many a Sedan chair
With monstrous hoop and feather,
In paint and powder London's fair
Went trooping past together.

Swift, Addison, and Pope, mayhap
They sauntered slowly past her,
Or printer's boy, with gown and cap,
For Steele, went trotting faster.

For beau nor wit had she a look;
Nor lord nor lady minding,
She bent her head above this book,
Attentive to her binding.

And one stray thread of golden hair,
Caught on her nimble fingers,
Was stitched within this volume, where
Until to-day it lingers.

Past and forgotten, beaux and fair,
Wigs, powder, all outdated;
A queer antique, the Sedan chair,
Pope, stiff and antiquated.

Yet as I turn these odd, old plays,
This single stray lock finding,
I'm back in those forgotten days,
And watch her at her binding.

Walter Learned [1847–191-]

THE TALENTED MAN

A LETTER FROM A LADY IN LONDON TO A LADY AT LAUSANNE

DEAR Alice! you'll laugh when you know it,—
Last week, at the Duchess's ball,
I danced with the clever new poet,—
You've heard of him,—Tully St. Paul.
Miss Jonquil was perfectly frantic;
I wish you had seen Lady Anne!
It really was very romantic,
He *is* such a talented man!

He came up from Brazen Nose College,
Just caught, as they call it, this spring;
And his head, love, is stuffed full of knowledge
Of every conceivable thing.
Of science and logic he chatters,
As fine and as fast as he can;
Though I am no judge of such matters,
I'm sure he's a talented man.

His stories and jests are delightful;—
Not stories or jests, dear, for you;
The jests are exceedingly spiteful,
The stories not always *quite* true.
Perhaps to be kind and veracious
May do pretty well at Lausanne;
But it never would answer,—good gracious!
Chez nous—in a talented man.

He sneers,—how my Alice would scold him!—
At the bliss of a sigh or a tear;
He laughed—only think!—when I told him
How we cried o'er Trevelyan last year;
I vow I was quite in a passion;
I broke all the sticks of my fan;
But sentiment's quite out of fashion,
It seems, in a talented man.

Lady Bab, who is terribly moral,
Has told me that Tully is vain,
And apt—which is silly—to quarrel,
And fond—which is sad—of champagne.
I listened, and doubted, dear Alice,
For I saw, when my Lady began,
It was only the Dowager's malice;—
She *does* hate a talented man!

He's hideous, I own it. But fame, love,
Is all that these eyes can adore;
He's lame,—but Lord Byron was lame, love,
And dumpy,—but so is Tom Moore.
Then his voice,—*such* a voice! my sweet creature,
It's like your Aunt Lucy's toucan:
But oh! what's a tone or a feature,
When once one's a talented man?

My mother, you know, all the season,
Has talked of Sir Geoffrey's estate;
And truly, to do the fool reason,
He *has* been less horrid of late.
But to-day, when we drive in the carriage,
I'll tell her to lay down her plan;—
If ever I venture on marriage,
It must be a talented man!

P. S.—I have found, on reflection,
One fault in my friend,—*entre nous;*
Without it, he'd just be perfection;—
Poor fellow, he has not a *soul*

And so, when he comes in September
To shoot with my uncle, Sir Dan,
I've promised mamma to remember
He's *only* a talented man!

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802–1839]

A LETTER OF ADVICE

FROM MISS MEDORA TREVILIAN, AT PADUA, TO MISS ARAMINTA VAVASOUR, IN LONDON

"Enfin, Monsieur, un homme aimable;
Voilà pourquoi je ne saurais l'aimer."—SCRIBE

You tell me you're promised a lover,
My own Araminta, next week;
Why cannot my fancy discover
The hue of his coat, and his cheek?
Alas! if he look like another,
A vicar, a banker, a beau,
Be deaf to your father and mother,
My own Araminta, say "No!"

Miss Lane, at her Temple of Fashion,
Taught us both how to sing and to speak,
And we loved one another with passion,
Before we had been there a week:
You gave me a ring for a token;
I wear it wherever I go;
I gave you a chain,—it is broken?
My own Araminta, say "No!"

O think of our favorite cottage,
And think of our dear Lalla Rookh!
How we shared with the milkmaids their pottage,
And drank of the stream from the brook;
How fondly our loving lips faltered,
"What further can grandeur bestow?"
My heart is the same;—is yours altered?
My own Araminta, say "No!"

Remember the thrilling romances
We read on the bank in the glen;
Remember the suitors our fancies
Would picture for both of us then;
They wore the red cross on their shoulder,
They had vanquished and pardoned their foe—
Sweet friend, are you wiser or colder?
My own Araminta, say "No!"

You know, when Lord Rigmarole's carriage,
Drove off with your cousin Justine,
You wept, dearest girl, at the marriage,
And whispered "How base she has been!"
You said you were sure it would kill you,
If ever your husband looked so;
And you will not apostatize,—will you?
My own Araminta, say "No!"

When I heard I was going abroad, love,
I thought I was going to die;
We walked arm in arm to the road, love,
We looked arm in arm to the sky;
And I said, "When a foreign postilion
Has hurried me off to the Po,
Forget not Medora Trevilian:—
My own Araminta, say "No!"

We parted! but sympathy's fetters
Reach far over valley and hill;
I muse o'er your exquisite letters,
And feel that your heart is mine still;
And he who would share it with me, love,—
The richest of treasures below,—
If he's not what Orlando should be, love,
My own Araminta, say "No!"

If he wears a top-boot in his wooing,
If he comes to you riding a cob,
If he talks of his baking or brewing,
If he puts up his feet on the hob,

If he ever drinks port after dinner,
If his brow or his breeding is low,
If he calls himself "Thompson" or "Skinner,"
My own Araminta, say "No!"

If he studies the news in the papers
While you are preparing the tea,
If he talks of the damps or the vapors
While moonlight lies soft on the sea,
If he's sleepy while you are capricious,
If he has not a musical "Oh!"
If he does not call Werther delicious,—
My own Araminta, say "No!"

If he ever sets foot in the city
Among the stockbrokers and Jews,
If he has not a heart full of pity,
If he don't stand six feet in his shoes,
If his lips are not redder than roses,
If his hands are not whiter than snow,
If he has not the model of noses,—
My own Araminta, say "No!"

If he speaks of a tax or a duty,
If he does not look grand on his knees,
If he's blind to a landscape of beauty,
Hills, valleys, rocks, waters, and trees,
If he dotes not on desolate towers,
If he likes not to hear the blast blow,
If he knows not the language of flowers,—
My own Araminta, say "No!"

He must walk like a god of old story
Come down from the home of his rest;
He must smile like the sun in his glory
On the buds he loves ever the best;
And oh! from its ivory portal
Like music his soft speech must flow!—
If he speak, smile, or walk like a mortal,
My own Araminta, say "No!"

Don't listen to tales of his bounty,
  Don't hear what they say of his birth,
Don't look at his seat in the county,
  Don't calculate what he is worth;
But give him a theme to write verse on,
  And see if he turns out his toe;—
If he's only an excellent person,
  My own Araminta, say "No!"

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802–1839]

A *NICE* CORRESPONDENT

"There are plenty of roses" (the patriarch speaks)
"Alas not for me, on your lips and your cheeks;
Fair maiden rose-laden enough and to spare,
Spare, spare me that rose that you wear in your hair."

The glow and the glory are plighted
  To darkness, for evening is come;
The lamp in Glebe Cottage is lighted,
  The birds and the sheep-bells are dumb.
I'm alone, for the others have flitted
  To dine with a neighbor at Kew:
Alone, but I'm not to be pitied—
    I'm thinking of you!

I wish you were here! Were I duller
  Than dull, you'd be dearer than dear;
I am dressed in your favorite color—
  Dear Fred, how I wish you were here!
I am wearing my lazuli necklace,
  The necklace you fastened askew!
Was there ever so rude or so reckless
    A Darling as you?

I want you to come and pass sentence
  On two or three books with a plot;
Of course you know "Janet's Repentance"?
  I am reading Sir *Waverley* Scott.

That story of Edgar and Lucy,
How thrilling, romantic, and true!
The Master (his bride *was* a goosey!)
Reminds me of you.

They tell me Cockaigne has been crowning
A Poet whose garland endures;—
It was you that first told me of Browning,—
That stupid old Browning of yours!
His vogue and his verve are alarming,
I'm anxious to give him his due;
But, Fred, he's not nearly so charming
A Poet as you!

I heard how you shot at The Beeches,
I saw how you rode *Chanticleer*,
I have read the report of your speeches,
And echoed the echoing cheer.
There's a whisper of hearts you are breaking,
Dear Fred, I believe it, I do!
Small marvel that Folly is making
Her Idol of you!

Alas for the World, and its dearly
Bought triumph,—its fugitive bliss;
Sometimes I half wish I were merely
A plain or a penniless Miss;
But, perhaps, one is blest with "a measure
Of pelf," and I'm not sorry, too,
That I'm pretty, because it's a pleasure,
My Darling, to you!

Your whim is for frolic and fashion,
Your taste is for letters and art;—
This rhyme is the commonplace passion
That glows in a fond woman's heart:
Lay it by in some sacred deposit
For relics—we all have a few!
Love, some day they'll print it, because it
Was written to You.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

A DEAD LETTER

À cœur blessé—l'ombre et le silence.—BALZAC

I

I DREW it from its china tomb;—
It came out feebly scented
With some thin ghost of past perfume
That dust and days had lent it.

An old, old letter,—folded still!
To read with due composure,
I sought the sun-lit window-sill,
Above the gray enclosure,

That, glimmering in the sultry haze,
Faint-flowered, dimly shaded,
Slumbered like Goldsmith's Madam Blaize,
Bedizened and brocaded.

A queer old place! You'd surely say
Some tea-board garden-maker
Had planned it in Dutch William's day
To please some florist Quaker,

So trim it was. The yew-trees still,
With pious care perverted,
Grew in the same grim shapes; and still
The lipless dolphin spurted;

Still in his wonted state abode
The broken-nosed Apollo;
And still the cypress-arbor showed
The same umbrageous hollow.

Only,—as fresh young Beauty gleams
From coffee-colored laces,
So peeped from its old-fashioned dreams
The fresher modern traces;

For idle mallet, hoop, and ball
  Upon the lawn were lying;
A magazine, a tumbled shawl,
  Round which the swifts were flying;

And, tossed beside the Guelder rose,
  A heap of rainbow knitting,
Where, blinking in her pleased repose,
  A Persian cat was sitting.

"A place to love in,—live,—for aye,
  If we too, like Tithonus,
Could find some God to stretch the gray
  Scant life the Fates have thrown us;

"But now by steam we run our race,
  With buttoned heart and pocket;
Our Love's a gilded, surplus grace,—
  Just like an empty locket!

"'The time is out of joint.' Who will,
  May strive to make it better;
For me, this warm old window-sill,
  And this old dusty letter."

II

"Dear *John* (the letter ran), it can't, can't be,
  For Father's gone to *Chorley Fair* with *Sam*,
And Mother's storing Apples,—*Prue* and *Me*
  Up to our Elbows making Damson Jam:
But we shall meet before a Week is gone,—
'Tis a long Lane that has no Turning,' *John!*

"Only till Sunday next, and then you'll wait
  Behind the White-Thorn, by the broken Stile—
We can go round and catch them at the Gate,
  All to Ourselves, for nearly one long Mile;
Dear *Prue* won't look, and Father he'll go on,
And *Sam's* two Eyes are all for *Cissy, John!*

"*John*, she's so smart,—with every Ribbon new,
Flame-colored Sack, and Crimson Padesoy:
As proud as proud; and has the Vapors too,
Just like My Lady;—calls poor *Sam* a Boy,
And vows no Sweet-heart's worth the Thinking-on
Till he's past Thirty . . . I know better, *John!*

"My Dear, I don't think that I thought of much
Before we knew each other, I and you;
And now, why, *John*, your least, least Finger-touch,
Gives me enough to think a Summer through.
See, for I send you Something! There, 'tis gone!
Look in this corner,—mind you find it, *John!*"

III

This was the matter of the note,—
A long-forgot deposit,
Dropped in an Indian dragon's throat
Deep in a fragrant closet,

Piled with a dapper Dresden world,—
Beaux, beauties, prayers, and poses,—
Bonzes with squat legs undercurled,
And great jars filled with roses.

Ah, heart that wrote! Ah, lips that kissed!
You had no thought or presage
Into what keeping you dismissed
Your simple old-world message!

A reverent one. Though we to-day
Distrust beliefs and powers,
The artless, ageless things you say
Are fresh as May's own flowers,

Starring some pure primeval spring,
Ere Gold had grown despotic,—
Ere Life was yet a selfish thing,
Or Love a mere exotic!

I need not search too much to find
Whose lot it was to send it,
That feel upon me yet the kind,
Soft hand of her who penned it;

And see, through two-score years of smoke,
In by-gone, quaint apparel,
Shine from yon time-black Norway oak
The face of Patience Caryl,—

The pale, smooth forehead, silver-tressed;
The gray gown, primly flowered;
The spotless, stately coif whose crest
Like Hector's horse-plume towered;

And still the sweet half-solemn look
Where some past thought was clinging,
As when one shuts a serious book
To hear the thrushes singing.

I kneel to you! Of those you were,
Whose kind old hearts grow mellow,—
Whose fair old faces grow more fair,
As Point and Flanders yellow;

Whom some old store of garnered grief,
Their placid temples shading,
Crowns like a wreath of autumn leaf
With tender tints of fading.

Peace to your soul! You died unwed—
Despite this loving letter.
And what of John? The less that's said
Of John, I think, the better.

Austin Dobson [1840–

THE NYMPH COMPLAINING FOR THE DEATH OF HER FAWN

The wanton troopers riding by
Have shot my fawn, and it will die.
Ungentle men! They cannot thrive
Who killed thee. Thou ne'er didst, alive,

Them any harm; alas! nor could
Thy death to them do any good.
I'm sure I never wished them ill,
Nor do I for all this; nor will:
But, if my simple prayers may yet
Prevail with Heaven to forget
Thy murder, I will join my tears
Rather than fail. But O my fears!
It cannot die so. Heaven's King
Keeps register of everything,
And nothing may we use in vain;
Even beasts must be with justice slain;
Else men are made their deodands.
Though they should wash their guilty hands
In this warm life-blood, which doth part
From thine, and wound me to the heart,
Yet could they not be clean; their stain
Is dyed in such a purple grain,
There is not such another in
The world to offer for their sin.

Inconstant Sylvio, when yet
I had not found him counterfeit,
One morning, I remember well,
Tied in this silver chain and bell,
Gave it to me: nay, and I know
What he said then—I'm sure I do.
Said he, "Look how your huntsman here
Hath taught a fawn to hunt his deer!"
But Sylvio soon had me beguiled:
This waxèd tame, while he grew wild,
And, quite regardless of my smart,
Left me his fawn, but took his heart.

Thenceforth I set myself to play
My solitary time away
With this; and very well content
Could so mine idle life have spent;
For it was full of sport, and light
Of foot and heart, and did invite

Me to its game: it seemed to bless
Itself in me. How could I less
Than love it? Oh, I cannot be
Unkind to a beast that loveth me!

Had it lived long, I do not know
Whether it, too, might have done so
As Sylvio did; his gifts might be
Perhaps as false, or more, than he.
But I am sure, for aught that I
Could in so short a time espy,
Thy love was far more better than
The love of false and cruel man.

With sweetest milk and sugar first
I it at mine own fingers nursed;
And as it grew, so every day,
It waxed more white and sweet than they.
It had so sweet a breath! and oft
I blushed to see its foot more soft,
And white, shall I say? than my hand—
Nay, any lady's of the land!

It was a wondrous thing how fleet
'Twas on those little silver feet.
With what a pretty skipping grace
It oft would challenge me the race;
And when't had left me far away,
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay;
For it was nimbler much than hinds,
And trod as if on the four winds.

I have a garden of my own,
But so with roses overgrown,
And lilies, that you would it guess
To be a little wilderness;
And all the spring-time of the year
It lovèd only to be there.
Among the beds of lilies I
Have sought it oft, where it should lie,

Yet could not, till itself would rise,
Find it, although before mine eyes;
For in the flaxen lilies' shade,
It like a bank of lilies laid.
Upon the roses it would feed,
Until its lips e'en seemed to bleed;
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,
And print those roses on my lip.
But all its chief delight was still
On roses thus itself to fill;
And its pure virgin lips to fold
In whitest sheets of lilies cold.
Had it lived long, it would have been
Lilies without, roses within.

O help! O help! I see it faint
And die as calmly as a saint!
See how it weeps! the tears do come
Sad, slowly, dropping like a gum.
So weeps the wounded balsam; so
The holy frankincense doth flow;
The brotherless Heliades
Melt in such amber tears as these.

I in a golden vial will
Keep these two crystal tears, and fill
It, till it doth overflow, with mine,
Then place it in Diana's shrine.

Now my sweet fawn is vanished to
Whither the swans and turtles go;
In fair Elysium to endure
With milk-white lambs and ermines pure.
O, do not run too fast, for I
Will but bespeak thy grave, and die.

First my unhappy statue shall
Be cut in marble; and withal
Let it be weeping too; but there
The engraver sure his art may spare;

For I so truly thee bemoan
That I shall weep though I be stone,
Until my tears, still dropping, wear
My breast, themselves engraving there;
Then at my feet shalt thou be laid,
Of purest alabaster made;
For I would have thine image be
White as I can, though not as thee.

Andrew Marvell [1621–1678]

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVORITE CAT, DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLD FISHES

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw; and purred applause.

Still had she gazed, but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armor's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple to the view
Betrayed a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretched, in vain, to reach the prize.
What female heart can gold despise?
What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptous Maid! with looks intent
Again she stretched, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between.
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled.)
The slippery verge her feet beguiled,
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mewed to every watery god,
Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirred:
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard,—
A Favorite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties, undeceived,
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;
Nor all that glisters, gold.

Thomas Gray [1716–1771]

VERSES ON A CAT

Clubby! thou surely art, I ween,
A Puss of most majestic mien,
So stately all thy paces!
With such a philosophic air
Thou seek'st thy professorial chair,
And so demure thy face is!

And as thou sit'st, thine eye seems fraught
With such intensity of thought
That could we read it, knowledge
Would seem to breathe in every mew,
And learning yet undreamt by you
Who dwell in Hall or College.

Oh! when in solemn taciturnity
Thy brain seems wandering through eternity,
What happiness were mine
Could I then catch the thoughts that flow,
Thoughts such as ne'er were hatched below,
But in a head like thine.

Oh then, throughout the livelong day,
With thee I'd sit and purr away
In ecstasy sublime;
And in thy face, as from a book,
I'd drink in science at each look,
Nor fear the lapse of time.

Charles Daubeny [1745–1827]

EPITAPH ON A HARE

Here lies, whom hound did ne'er pursue,
Nor swifter greyhound follow,
Whose foot ne'er tainted morning dew,
Nor ear heard huntsman's hallo;

Old Tiney, surliest of his kind,
Who, nursed with tender care,
And to domestic bounds confined,
Was still a wild Jack-hare.

Though duly from my hand he took
His pittance every night,
He did it with a jealous look,
And, when he could, would bite.

His diet was of wheaten bread,
And milk, and oats, and straw;
Thistles, or lettuces instead,
With sand to scour his maw.

On twigs of hawthorn he regaled,
On pippins' russet peel;
And, when his juicy salads failed,
Sliced carrot pleased him well.

A Turkey carpet was his lawn,
Whereon he loved to bound,
To skip and gambol like a fawn,
And swing his rump around.

His frisking was at evening hours,
For then he lost his fear;
But most before approaching showers,
Or when a storm drew near.

Eight years and five round-rolling moons
He thus saw steal away,
Dozing out all his idle noons,
And every night at play.

I kept him for his humor's sake,
For he would oft beguile
My heart of thoughts that made it ache,
And force me to a smile.

But now, beneath this walnut-shade
He finds his long, last home,
And waits, in snug concealment laid,
Till gentler Puss shall come.

He, still more aged, feels the shocks
From which no care can save,
And, partner once of Tiney's box,
Must soon partake his grave.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. THROCKMORTON'S BULLFINCH

Ye Nymphs! if e'er your eyes were red
With tears o'er hapless favorites shed,
O share Maria's grief!
Her favorite, even in his cage,
(What will not hunger's cruel rage?)
Assassined by a thief.

Where Rhenus strays his vines among,
The egg was laid from which he sprung,
And though by nature mute,
Or only with a whistle blessed,
Well-taught, he all the sounds expressed
Of flageolet or flute.

The honors of his ebon poll
Were brighter than the sleekest mole;
His bosom of the hue
With which Aurora decks the skies,
When piping winds shall soon arise
To sweep away the dew.

Above, below, in all the house,
Dire foe alike of bird and mouse,
No cat had leave to dwell;
And Bully's cage supported stood,
On props of smoothest-shaven wood,
Large-built and latticed well.

Well-latticed,—but the grate, alas!
Not rough with wire of steel or brass,
For Bully's plumage sake,
But smooth with wands from Ouse's side,
With which, when neatly peeled and dried,
The swains their baskets make.

Night veiled the pole—all seemed secure—
When, led by instinct sharp and sure,
Subsistence to provide,
A beast forth sallied on the scout,
Long-backed, long-tailed, with whiskered snout,
And badger-colored hide.

He, entering at the study-door,
Its ample area 'gan explore;
And something in the wind
Conjectured, sniffing round and round,
Better than all the books he found,
Food, chiefly, for the mind.

Just then, by adverse fate impressed
A dream disturbed poor Bully's rest;
In sleep he seemed to view
A rat, fast-clinging to the cage,
And, screaming at the sad presage,
Awoke and found it true.

For, aided both by ear and scent,
Right to his mark the monster went—
Ah, Muse! forbear to speak
Minute the horror that ensued;
His teeth were strong, the cage was wood—
He left poor Bully's beak.

O had he made that too his prey!
That beak, whence issued many a lay
Of such mellifluous tone,
Might have repaid him well, I wote,
For silencing so sweet a throat,
Fast stuck within his own.

Maria weeps,—the Muses mourn;—
So, when by Bacchanalians torn,
On Thracian Hebrus' side
The tree-enchanter Orpheus fell,
His head alone remained to tell
The cruel death he died.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

AN ELEGY ON A LAP-DOG

Shock's fate I mourn; poor Shock is now no more:
Ye Muses! mourn; ye Chambermaids! deplore.
Unhappy Shock! Yet more unhappy fair,
Doomed to survive thy joy and only care.
Thy wretched fingers now no more shall deck,
And tie the favorite ribbon round his neck;
No more thy hand shall smooth his glossy hair,
And comb the wavings of his pendent ear.
Let cease thy flowing grief, forsaken maid!
All mortal pleasures in a moment fade:

Our surest hope is in an hour destroyed,
And love, best gift of Heaven, not long enjoyed.
  Methinks I see her frantic with despair,
Her streaming eyes, wrung hands, and flowing hair;
Her Mechlin pinners, rent, the floor bestrow,
And her torn fan gives real signs of woe.
Hence, Superstition! that tormenting guest,
That haunts with fancied fears the coward breast;
No dread events upon this fate attend,
Stream eyes no more, no more thy tresses rend.
Though certain omens oft forewarn a state,
And dying lions show the monarch's fate,
Why should such fears bid Celia's sorrow rise?
For, when a lap-dog falls, no lover dies.
  Cease, Celia, cease; restrain thy flowing tears.
Some warmer passion will dispel thy cares.
In man you'll find a more substantial bliss,
More grateful toying and a sweeter kiss.
  He's dead. Oh! lay him gently in the ground!
And may his tomb be by this verse renowned:
Here Shock, the pride of all his kind, is laid,
Who fawned like man, but ne'er like man betrayed.

John Gay [1685–1732]

MY LAST TERRIER

I MOURN "Patroclus," whilst I praise
  Young "Peter" sleek before the fire,
A proper dog, whose decent ways
  Renew the virtues of his sire;
"Patroclus" rests in grassy tomb,
And "Peter" grows into his room.

For though, when Time or Fates consign
  The terrier to his latest earth,
Vowing no wastrel of the line
  Shall dim the memory of his worth,
I meditate the silkier breeds,
Yet still an Amurath succeeds:

Succeeds to bind the heart again
To watchful eye and strenuous paw,
To tail that gratulates amain
Or deprecates offended Law;
To bind, and break, when failing eye
And palsied paw must say good-bye.

Ah, had the dog's appointed day
But tallied with his master's span,
Nor one swift decade turned to gray
The busy muzzle's black and tan,
To reprobate in idle men
Their threescore empty years and ten!

Sure, somewhere o'er the Stygian strait
"Panurge" and "Bito," "Tramp" and "Mike,"
In couchant conclave watch the gate,
Till comes the last successive tyke,
Acknowledged with the countersign:
"*Your master was a friend of mine.*"

In dreams I see them spring to greet,
With rapture more than tail can tell,
Their master of the silent feet
Who whistles o'er the asphodel,
And through the dim Elysian bounds
Leads all his cry of little hounds.

John Halsham [18 –

GEIST'S GRAVE

Four years!—and didst thou stay above
The ground, which hides thee now, but four?
And all that life, and all that love,
Were crowded, Geist! into no more?

Only four years those winning ways,
Which make me for thy presence yearn,
Called us to pet thee or to praise,
Dear little friend! at every turn?

That loving heart, that patient soul,
Had they indeed no longer span,
To run their course, and reach their goal
And read their homily to man?

That liquid, melancholy eye,
From whose pathetic, soul-fed springs
Seemed surging the Virgilian cry,
The sense of tears in mortal things—

That steadfast, mournful strain, consoled
By spirits gloriously gay,
And temper of heroic mould—
What, was four years their whole short day?

Yes, only four!—and not the course
Of all the centuries yet to come,
And not the infinite resource
Of Nature, with her countless sum

Of figures, with her fulness vast
Of new creation evermore,
Can ever quite repeat the past,
Or just thy little self restore.

Stern law of every mortal lot!
Which man, proud man, finds hard to bear,
And builds himself I know not what
Of second life I know not where.

But thou, when struck thine hour to go,
On us, who stood despondent by,
A meek last glance of love didst throw,
And humbly lay thee down to die.

Yet would we keep thee in our heart—
Would fix our favorite on the scene,
Nor let thee utterly depart
And be as if thou ne'er hadst been.

And so there rise these lines of verse
On lips that rarely form them now;
While to each other we rehearse:
Such ways, such arts, such looks hadst thou!

We stroke thy broad brown paws again,
We bid thee to thy vacant chair,
We greet thee by the window-pane,
We hear thy scuffle on the stair;

We see the flaps of thy large ears
Quick raised to ask which way we go;
Crossing the frozen lake, appears
Thy small black figure on the snow!

Nor to us only art thou dear,
Who mourn thee in thine English home;
Thou hast thine absent master's tear,
Dropped by the far Australian foam.

Thy memory lasts both here and there,
And thou shalt live as long as we.
And after that—thou dost not care!
In us was all the world to thee.

Yet, fondly zealous for thy fame,
Even to a date beyond our own,
We strive to carry down thy name
By mounded turf and graven stone.

We lay thee, close within our reach,
Here, where the grass is smooth and warm,
Between the holly and the beech,
Where oft we watched thy couchant form,

Asleep, yet lending half an ear
To travelers on the Portsmouth road;—
There choose we thee, O guardian dear,
Marked with a stone, thy last abode!

Then some, who through this garden pass,
When we too, like thyself, are clay,
Shall see thy grave upon the grass,
And stop before the stone, and say:

People who lived here long ago
Did by this stone, it seems, intend
To name for future times to know
The dachs-hound, Geist, their little friend.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

LADDIE

Lowly the soul that waits
At the white, celestial gates,
A threshold soul to greet
Belovèd feet.

Down the streets that are beams of sun
Cherubim children run;
They welcome it from the wall;
Their voices call.

But the Warder saith: "Nay, this
Is the City of Holy Bliss.
What claim canst thou make good
To angelhood?"

"Joy," answereth it from eyes
That are amber ecstasies,
Listening, alert, elate,
Before the gate.

Oh, how the frolic feet
On lonely memory beat!
What rapture in a run
'Twixt snow and sun!

"Nay, brother of the sod,
What part hast thou in God?
What spirit art thou of?"
It answers: "Love,"

Lifting its head, no less
Cajoling a caress,
Our winsome collie wraith,
Than in glad faith

The door will open wide,
Or kind voice bid: "Abide,
A threshold soul to greet
The longed-for feet."

Ah, Keeper of the Portal,
If Love be not immortal,
If Joy be not divine,
What prayer is mine?

Katharine Lee Bates [1859–

"HOLD"

I KNOW, where Hampshire fronts the Wight,
A little church, where "after strife"
Reposes Guy de Blanquely, Knight,
By Alison his wife:
I know their features' graven lines
In time-stained marble monotone,
While crouched before their feet reclines
Their little dog of stone!

I look where Blanquely Castle still
Frowns o'er the oak wood's summer state,
(The maker of a patent pill
Has purchased it of late),
And then through Fancy's open door
I backward turn to days of old,
And see Sir Guy—a bachelor
Who owns a dog called "Hold"!

I see him take the tourney's chance,
And urge his coal-black charger on

To an arbitrament by lance
For lovely Alison;
I mark the onset, see him hurl
From broidered saddle to the dirt
His rival, that ignoble Earl—
Black-hearted Massingbert!

Then Alison, with down-dropped eyes,
Where happy tears bedim the blue,
Bestows a valuable prize
And adds her hand thereto;
My lord, his surcoat streaked with sand,
Remounts, low muttering curses hot,
And with a base-born, hireling band
He plans a dastard plot!

. . . . . .

'Tis night—Sir Guy has sunk to sleep,
The castle keep is hushed and still—
See, up the spiral stairway creep,
To work his wicked will,
Lord Massingbert of odious fame,
Soft followed by his cut-throat staff;
Ah, "Hold" has justified his name
And pinned his lordship's calf!

A growl, an oath, then torches flare;
Out rings a sentry's startled shout;
The guard are racing for the stair,
Half-dressed, Sir Guy runs out;
On high his glittering blade he waves,
He gives foul Massingbert the point,
He carves the hired assassin knaves
Joint from plebeian joint!

. . . . . .

The Knight is dead—his sword is rust,
But in his day I'm certain "Hold"

Wore, as his master's badge of trust,
A collarette of gold:
And still I like to fancy that,
Somewhere beyond the Styx's bound,
Sir Guy's tall phantom stoops to pat
His little phantom hound!

Patrick R. Chalmers [18

THE BARB OF SATIRE

THE VICAR OF BRAY

In good King Charles's golden days,
When loyalty no harm meant,
A zealous high-churchman was I,
And so I got preferment.
To teach my flock I never missed:
Kings were by God appointed,
And lost are those that dare resist
Or touch the Lord's anointed.
And this is law that I'll maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king shall reign,
Still I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir.

When royal James possessed the crown,
And popery grew in fashion,
The penal laws I hooted down,
And read the Declaration;
The Church of Rome I found would fit
Full well my constitution;
And I had been a Jesuit
But for the Revolution.

When William was our king declared,
To ease the nation's grievance,
With this new wind about I steered,
And swore to him allegiance;
Old principles I did revoke,
Set conscience at a distance;
Passive obedience was a joke,
A jest was non-resistance.

When royal Anne became our queen,
The Church of England's glory,
Another face of things was seen,
And I became a Tory;
Occasional conformists base,
I blamed their moderation,
And thought the Church in danger was,
By such prevarication.

When George in pudding-time came o'er,
And moderate men looked big, sir,
My principles I changed once more,
And so became a Whig, sir;
And thus preferment I procured
From our new Faith's defender,
And almost every day abjured
The Pope and the Pretender.

The illustrious house of Hanover,
And Protestant succession,
To these I do allegiance swear—
While they can keep possession:
For in my faith and loyalty
I nevermore will falter,
And George my lawful king shall be—
Until the times do alter.
And this is law that I'll maintain
Until my dying day, sir,
That whatsoever king shall reign,
Still I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir.

Unknown

THE LOST LEADER

[WILLIAM WORDSWORTH]

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a ribbon to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote;

They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allowed:
How all our copper had gone for his service!
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud—
We that had loved him so, followed him, honored him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their graves!
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
—He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!
We shall march prospering,—not through his presence;
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire:
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devil's-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!
Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!
Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

ICHABOD

[DANIEL WEBSTER]

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Revile him not, the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains;
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

WHAT MR. ROBINSON THINKS

Guvener B. is a sensible man;
He stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;
He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,
An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My! aint it terrible? Wut shall we du?
We can't never choose him o' course,—thet's flat;
Guess we shall hev to come round, (don't you?)
An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an' all that;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

Gineral C. is a dreffle smart man:
He's ben on all sides that give places or pelf;
But consistency still wuz a part of his plan,—
He's ben true to *one* party,—an' thet is himself;—
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer Gineral C.

Gineral C. he goes in fer the war;
He don't vally princerple more'n an old cud;
Wut did God make us raytional creeturs fer,
But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an' blood?
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer Gineral C.

We were gittin' on nicely up here to our village,
With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut aint,
We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an' pillage,
An' thet eppyletts worn't the best mark of a saint;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

The side of our country must ollers be took,
An' Presidunt Polk, you know, *he* is our country,
An' the angel thet writes all our sins in a book
Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per contry;*
An' John P.
Robinson he
Sez this is his view o' the thing to a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argimunts lies;
Sez they're nothin' on airth but jest *fee, faw, fum;*
An' thet all this big talk of our destinies
Is half on it ign'ance, an' t'other half rum;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez it aint no sech thing; an', of course, so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in his life
That th' Apostles rigged out in their swaller-tail coats,
An' marched round in front of a drum an' a fife,
To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em votes;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez they didn't know everythin' down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we've gut folks to tell us
The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters, I vow,—
God sends country lawyers, an' other wise fellers,
To start the world's team wen it gits in a slough;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez the world'll go right, ef he hollers out Gee!

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

THE DEBATE IN THE SENNIT

SOT TO A NURSERY RHYME

"HERE we stan' on the Constitution, by thunder!
It's a fact o' wich ther's bushils o' proofs;
Fer how could we trample on 't so, I wonder,
Ef't worn't thet it's ollers under our hoofs?"

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;
"Human rights haint no more
Right to come on this floor,
No more'n the man in the moon," sez he.

"The North haint no kind o' bisness with nothin',
An' you've no idee how much bother it saves;
We aint none riled by their frettin' an' frothin',
We're *used* to layin' the string on our slaves,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
Sez Mister Foote,
"I should like to shoot
The holl gang, by the gret horn spoon!" sez he.

"Freedom's Keystone is Slavery, thet ther's no doubt on,
It's sutthin' thet's—wha'd'ye call it?—divine,—
An' the slaves thet we ollers *make* the most out on
Air them north o' Mason an' Dixon's line,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
"Fer all thet," sez Mangum,
"'T would be better to hang 'em
An' so git red on 'em soon," sez he.

"The mass ough' to labor an' we lay on soffies,
Thet's the reason I want to spread Freedom's aree;
It puts all the cunninest on us in office,
An' reelises our Maker's orig'nal idee,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
"Thet's ez plain," sez Cass,
"Ez thet some one's an ass,
It's ez clear ez the sun is at noon," sez he.

"Now don't go to say I'm the friend of oppression,
But keep all your spare breath fer coolin' your broth,
Fer I ollers hev strove (at least thet's my impression)
To make cussed free with the rights o' the North,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
"Yes," sez Davis o' Miss.,
"The perfection o' bliss
Is in skinnin' thet same old coon," sez he.

"Slavery's a thing thet depends on complexion,
It's God's law thet fetters on black skins don't chafe;
Ef brains wuz to settle it (horrid reflection!)
Wich of our onnable body'd be safe?"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
Sez Mister Hannegan,
Afore he began agin,
"Thet exception is quite oppertoon," sez he.

"Gen'nle Cass, Sir, you needn't be twitchin' your collar,
Your merit's quite clear by the dut on your knees;
At the North we don't make no distinctions o' color;
You can all take a lick at our shoes wen you please,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
Sez Mister Jarnagin,
"They wun't hev to larn agin,
They all on 'em know the old toon," sez he.

"The slavery question aint no ways bewilderin',
North an' South hev one int'rest, it's plain to a glance,
No'thern men, like us patriarchs, don't sell their childrin,
But they *du* sell themselves, ef they git a good chance,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
Sez Atherton here,
"This is gittin' severe,
I wish I could dive like a loon," sez he.

"It'll break up the Union, this talk about freedom,
An' your fact'ry gals (soon ez we split) 'll make head,
An' gittin' some Miss chief or other to lead 'em,
'll go to work raisin' permiscoous Ned,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
"Yes, the North," sez Colquitt,
"Ef we Southeners all quit,
Would go down like a busted balloon," sez he.

"Jest look wut is doin', wut annyky's brewin'
In the beautiful clime o' the olive an' vine,
All the wise aristoxy's atumblin' to ruin,
An' the sankylot's drorin' an' drinkin' their wine,"

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
"Yes," sez Johnson, "in France
They're beginnin' to dance
Beëlzebub's own rigadoon," sez he.

"The South's safe enough, it don't feel a mite skeery,
Our slaves in their darkness an' dut air tu blest
Not to welcome with proud hallylugers the ery
Wen our eagle kicks yourn from the naytional nest,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
"Oh," sez Westcott o' Florida,
"Wut treason is horrider
Than our priv'leges tryin' to proon?" sez he.

"It's 'coz they're so happy, thet, wen crazy sarpints
Stick their nose in our bizness, we git so darned riled;
We think it's our dooty to give pooty sharp hints,
Thet the last crumb of Edin on airth sha'n't be spiled,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;—
"Ah," sez Dixon H. Lewis,
"It perfectly true is
Thet slavery's airth's grettest boon," sez he.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

THE MARQUIS OF CARABAS

A SONG WITH A STOLEN BURDEN

Off with your hat! along the street
His Lordship's carriage rolls;
Respect to greatness—when it shines
To cheer our darkened souls.
Get off the step, you ragged boys!
Policeman, where's your staff?
This is a sight to check with awe
The most irreverent laugh.
Chapeau bas!
Chapeau bas!
Gloire au Marquis de Carabas!

Stand further back! we'll see him well;
Wait till they lift him out:
It takes some time; his Lordship's old,
And suffers from the gout.
Now look! he owns a castled park
For every finger thin;
He has more sterling pounds a day
Than wrinkles in his skin.

The founder of his race was son
To a king's cousin, rich;
(The mother was an oyster wench—
She perished in a ditch).
His patriot worth embalmed has been
In poets' loud applause:
He made twelve thousand pounds a year
By aiding France's cause.

The second marquis, of the stole
Was groom to the second James;
He all but caught that recreant king
When flying o'er the Thames.
Devotion rare! by Orange Will
With a Scotch county paid;
He gained one more—in Ireland—when
Charles Edward he betrayed.

He lived to see his son grow up
A general famed and bold,
Who fought his country's fights—and one,
For half a million, sold.
His son (alas! the house's shame)
Frittered the name away:
Diced, wenched and drank—at last got shot,
Through cheating in his play!

Now, see, where, focused on one head,
The race's glories shine:
The head gets narrow at the top,
But mark the jaw—how fine!

Don't call it satyr-like; you'd wound
Some scores, whose honest pates
The self-same type present, upon
The Carabas estates!

Look at his skin—at four-score years
How fresh it gleams and fair:
He never tasted ill-dressed food,
Or breathed in tainted air.
The noble blood glows through his veins
Still, with a healthful pink;
His brow scarce wrinkled!—Brows keep so
That have not got to think.

His hand 's ungloved!—it shakes, 'tis true,
But mark its tiny size,
(High birth's true sign) and shape, as on
The lackey's arm it lies.
That hand ne'er penned a useful line,
Ne'er worked a deed of fame,
Save slaying one, whose sister he—
Its owner—brought to shame.

They've got him in—he's gone to vote
Your rights and mine away;
Perchance our lives, should men be scarce,
To fight his cause for pay.
We are his slaves! he owns our lands,
Our woods, our seas, and skies;
He'd have us shot like vicious dogs,
Should we in murmuring rise!
Chapeau bas!
Chapeau bas!
Gloire au Marquis de Carabas!

Robert Brough [1828–1860]

A MODEST WIT

A SUPERCILIOUS nabob of the East—
Haughty, being great—purse-proud, being rich—
A governor, or general, at the least,
I have forgotten which—

Had in his family a humble youth,
  Who went from England in his patron's suit,
An unassuming boy, in truth
  A lad of decent parts, and good repute.

This youth had sense and spirit;
  But yet with all his sense,
  Excessive diffidence
Obscured his merit.

One day, at table, flushed with pride and wine,
  His Honor, proudly free, severely merry,
Conceived it would be vastly fine
  To crack a joke upon his secretary.

"Young man," he said, "by what art, craft, or trade,
  Did your good father gain a livelihood?"—
"He was a saddler, sir," Modestus said,
  "And in his time was reckoned good."

"A saddler, eh! and taught you Greek,
  Instead of teaching you to sew!
Pray, why did not your father make
  A saddler, sir, of you?"

Each parasite, then, as in duty bound,
The joke applauded, and the laugh went round.
  At length Modestus, bowing low,
Said (craving pardon, if too free he made),
  "Sir, by your leave, I fain would know
Your father's trade!"

"My father's trade! by heaven, that's too bad!
My father's trade? Why, blockhead, are you mad?
My father, sir, did never stoop so low—
He was a gentleman, I'd have you know."

"Excuse the liberty I take,"
  Modestus said, with archness on his brow,
"Pray, why did not your father make
  A gentleman of you?"

Selleck Osborn [1783–1826]

JOLLY JACK

When fierce political debate
  Throughout the isle was storming,
And Rads attacked the throne and state,
  And Tories the reforming,
To calm the furious rage of each,
  And right the land demented,
Heaven sent us Jolly Jack, to teach
  The way to be contented.

Jack's bed was straw, 'twas warm and soft,
  His chair, a three-legged stool;
His broken jug was emptied oft,
  Yet, somehow, always full.
His mistress' portrait decked the wall,
  His mirror had a crack;
Yet, gay and glad, though this was all
  His wealth, lived Jolly Jack.

To give advice to avarice,
  Teach pride its mean condition,
And preach good sense to dull pretence,
  Was honest Jack's high mission.
Our simple statesman found his rule
  Of moral in the flagon,
And held his philosophic school
  Beneath the "George and Dragon."

When village Solons cursed the Lords,
  And called the malt-tax sinful,
Jack heeded not their angry words,
  But smiled and drank his skinful.
And when men wasted health and life,
  In search of rank and riches,
Jack marched aloof the paltry strife.
  And wore his threadbare breeches.

"I enter not the Church," he said,
  "But I'll not seek to rob it;"
So worthy Jack Joe Miller read,
  While others studied Cobbett.

His talk it was of feast and fun;
  His guide the Almanack;
From youth to age thus gaily run
  The life of Jolly Jack.

And when Jack prayed, as oft he would,
  He humbly thanked his Maker;
"I am," said he, "O Father good!
  Nor Catholic nor Quaker:
Give each his creed, let each proclaim
  His catalogue of curses;
I trust in Thee, and not in them,
  In Thee, and in Thy mercies!

"Forgive me if, midst all Thy works,
  No hint I see of damning;
And think there's faith among the Turks,
  And hope for e'en the Brahmin.
Harmless my mind is, and my mirth,
  And kindly is my laughter;
I cannot see the smiling earth,
  And think there's hell hereafter."

Jack died; he left no legacy,
  Save that his story teaches:—
Content to peevish poverty;
  Humility to riches.
Ye scornful great, ye envious small,
  Come follow in his track;
We all were happier, if we all
  Would copy Jolly Jack.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

THE KING OF BRENTFORD*

AFTER BÉRANGER

THERE was a King in Brentford,—of whom no legends tell,
But who, without his glory,—could eat and sleep right well.
His Polly's cotton nightcap,—it was his crown of state,
He slept of evenings early,—and rose of mornings late.

* For the original of this poem see page 3840.

All in a fine mud palace,—each day he took four meals,
And for a guard of honor,—a dog ran at his heels.
Sometimes to view his kingdoms,—rode forth this monarch good,
And then a prancing jackass—he royally bestrode.

There were no costly habits—with which this King was cursed,
Except (and where's the harm on't?)—a somewhat lively thirst;
But people must pay taxes,—and Kings must have their sport;
So out of every gallon—His Grace he took a quart.

He pleased the ladies round him,—with manners soft and bland;
With reason good, they named him,—the father of his land.
Each year his mighty armies—marched forth in gallant show;
Their enemies were targets,—their bullets they were tow.

He vexed no quiet neighbor,—no useless conquest made,
But by the laws of pleasure,—his peaceful realm he swayed.
And in the years he reignèd,—through all this country wide,
There was no cause for weeping,—save when the good man died.

The faithful men of Brentford,—do still their King deplore,
His portrait yet is swinging,—beside an alehouse door.
And topers, tender-hearted,—regard his honest phiz,
And envy times departed,—that knew a reign like his.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

HOCH! DER KAISER

Der Kaiser of dis Faterland
Und Gott on high all dings command,
Ve two—ach! Don't you understand?
Myself—und Gott.

Vile some men sing der power divine,
Mine soldiers sing "Der Wacht am Rhine,"
Und drink der health in Rhenish wine
Of Me—und Gott.

Dere's France, she swaggers all aroundt;
She's ausgespield, of no account,
To much we dink she don't amount;
Myself—und Gott.

She will not dare to fight again,
But if she shouldt, I'll show her blain
Dot Elsass und (in French) Lorraine
Are mein—by Gott!

Dere's grandma dinks she's nicht small beer,
Mit Boers und such she interfere;
She'll learn none owns dis hemisphere
But me—und Gott!

She dinks, good frau, fine ships she's got
Und soldiers mit der scarlet goat.
Ach! We could knock dem! Pouf! Like dot,
Myself—mit Gott!

In dimes of peace, brepare for wars,
I bear de spear und helm of Mars,
Und care not for a dousand Czars,
Myself—mit Gott!

In fact, I humor efery whim,
Mit aspect dark und visage grim;
Gott pulls mit me, und I mit him,
Myself—und Gott!

Alexander Macgregor Rose [1846–1898]

NONGTONGPAW

John Bull for pastime took a prance,
Some time ago, to peep at France;
To talk of sciences and arts,
And knowledge gained in foreign parts.

Monsieur, obsequious, heard him speak,
And answered John in heathen Greek:
To all he asked, 'bout all he saw,
'Twas, "*Monsieur, je vous n'entends pas.*"

John, to the Palais-Royal come,
Its splendor almost struck him dumb.
"I say, whose house is that there here?"
"House! *Je vous n'entends pas, Monsieur.*"
"What, Nongtongpaw again!" cries John;
"This fellow is some mighty Don:
No doubt he's plenty for the maw,—
I'll breakfast with this Nongtongpaw."

John saw Versailles from Marli's height,
And cried, astonished at the sight,
"Whose fine estate is that there here?"
"State! *Je vous n'entends pas, Monsieur.*'
"His? what, the land and houses too?
The fellow's richer than a Jew:
On everything he lays his claw!
I should like to dine with Nongtongpaw."

Next tripping came a courtly fair,
John cried, enchanted with her air,
"What lovely wench is that there here?"
"Ventch! *Je vous n'entends pas, Monsieur.*"
"What, he again? Upon my life!
A palace, lands, and then a wife
Sir Joshua might delight to draw:
I should like to sup with Nongtongpaw.

"But hold! whose funeral's that?" cries John.
"*Je vous n'entends pas.*"—"What, is he gone?
Wealth, fame, and beauty could not save
Poor Nongtongpaw, then, from the grave!
His race is run, his game is up,—
I'd with him breakfast, dine, and sup;
But since he chooses to withdraw,
Good night t' ye, Mounseer Nongtongpaw!"

Charles Dibdin [1745–1814]

THE LION AND THE CUB

How fond are men of rule and place,
Who court it from the mean and base!
These cannot bear an equal nigh,
But from superior merit fly.
They love the cellar's vulgar joke,
And lose their hours in ale and smoke.
There o'er some petty club preside;
So poor, so paltry, is their pride!
Nay, even with fools whole nights will sit,
In hopes to be supreme in wit.
If these can read, to these I write,
To set their worth in truest light.

A Lion-cub, of sordid mind,
Avoided all the lion kind;
Fond of applause, he sought the feasts
Of vulgar and ignoble beasts;
With asses all his time he spent,
Their club's perpetual president.
He caught their manners, looks, and airs;
An ass in everything but ears!
If e'er his Highness meant a joke,
They grinned applause before he spoke;
But at each word what shouts of praise!
"Good gods! how natural he brays!"
Elate with flattery and conceit,
He seeks his royal sire's retreat;
Forward, and fond to show his parts,
His Highness brays; the Lion starts.
"Puppy! that cursed vociferation
Betrays thy life and conversation:
Coxcombs, an ever-noisy race,
Are trumpets of their own disgrace."
"Why so severe?" the Cub replies;
"Our senate always held me wise!"
"How weak is pride," returns the sire:
"All fools are vain when fools admire!

But know, what stupid asses prize,
Lions and noble beasts despise."

John Gay [1685–1732]

THE HARE WITH MANY FRIENDS

Friendship, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame.
The child, whom many fathers share,
Hath seldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendship; who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.
A Hare, who, in a civil way,
Complied with everything, like Gay,
Was known by all the bestial train,
Who haunt the wood, or graze the plain;
Her care was never to offend,
And every creature was her friend.
As forth she went at early dawn,
To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,
Behind she hears the hunter's cries,
And from the deep-mouthed thunder flies:
She starts, she stops, she pants for breath;
She hears the near advance of death;
She doubles, to mislead the hound,
And measures back her mazy round:
Till, fainting in the public way,
Half dead with fear she gasping lay.
What transport in her bosom grew,
When first the Horse appeared in view!
"Let me," says she, "your back ascend,
And owe my safety to a friend.
You know my feet betray my flight:
To friendship every burden's light."
The Horse replied: "Poor honest Puss,
It grieves my heart to see thee thus;
Be comforted; relief is near,
For all your friends are in the rear."
She next the stately Bull implored;
And thus replied the mighty lord:

"Since every beast alive can tell
That I sincerely wish you well,
I may, without offence, pretend,
To take the freedom of a friend.
Love calls me hence; a favorite cow
Expects me near yon barley-mow;
And when a lady's in the case,
You know, all other things give place.
To leave you thus might seem unkind;
But see, the Goat is just behind."

The Goat remarked her pulse was high,
Her languid head, her heavy eye;
"My back," says he, "may do you harm;
The Sheep's at hand, and wool is warm."

The Sheep was feeble, and complained
His sides a load of wool sustained:
Said he was slow, confessed his fears,
For hounds eat sheep as well as Hares.

She now the trotting Calf addressed,
To save from death a friend distressed.
"Shall I," says he, "of tender age,
In this important care engage?
Older and abler passed you by;
How strong are those, how weak am I!
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offence.
Excuse me, then. You know my heart;
But dearest friends, alas! must part.
How shall we all lament! Adieu!
For see, the hounds are just in view."

John Gay [1685–1732]

THE SYCOPHANTIC FOX AND THE GULLIBLE RAVEN

A RAVEN sat upon a tree,
And not a word he spoke, for
His beak contained a piece of Brie,
Or, maybe, it was Roquefort?
We'll make it any kind you please—
At all events, it was a cheese.

Beneath the tree's umbrageous limb
A hungry fox sat smiling;
He saw the raven watching him,
And spoke in words beguiling:
"*J'admire*," said he, "*ton beau plumage*,"
(The which was simply persiflage).

Two things there are, no doubt you know,
To which a fox is used,—
A rooster that is bound to crow,
A crow that's bound to roost,
And whichsoever he espies
He tells the most unblushing lies.

"Sweet fowl," he said, "I understand
You're more than merely natty:
I hear you sing to beat the band
And Adelina Patti.
Pray render with your liquid tongue
A bit from 'Götterdammerung.'"

This subtle speech was aimed to please
The crow, and it succeeded:
He thought no bird in all the trees
Could sing as well as he did.
In flattery completely doused,
He gave the "Jewel Song" from "Faust."

But gravitation's law, of course,
As Isaac Newton showed it,
Exerted on the cheese its force,
And elsewhere soon bestowed it.
In fact, there is no need to tell
What happened when to earth it fell.

I blush to add that when the bird
Took in the situation,
He said one brief, emphatic word,
Unfit for publication.
The fox was greatly startled, but
He only sighed and answered "Tut!"

THE MORAL is: A fox is bound
To be a shameless sinner.
And also: When the cheese comes round
You know it's after dinner.
But (what is only known to few)
The fox is after dinner, too.

Guy Wetmore Carryl [1873–1904]

THE FRIEND OF HUMANITY AND THE KNIFE-GRINDER

FRIEND OF HUMANITY

NEEDY knife-grinder! whither are you going?
Rough is the road; your wheel is out of order.—
Bleak blows the blast;—your hat has got a hole in't.
So have your breeches!

Weary knife-grinder! little think the proud ones
Who in their coaches roll along the turnpike-
Road, what hard work 'tis crying all day,
"Knives and
Scissors to grind O!"

Tell me, knife-grinder, how you came to grind knives?
Did some rich man tyrannically use you?
Was it the squire? or parson of the parish?
Or the attorney?

Was it the squire for killing of his game? or
Covetous parson, for his tithes destraining?
Or roguish lawyer made you lose your little
All in a lawsuit?

(Have you not read the Rights of Man, by Tom Paine?)
Drops of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
Ready to fall, as soon as you have told your
Pitiful story.

KNIFE-GRINDER

Story? God bless you! I have none to tell, sir;
Only, last night, a-drinking at the Chequers,
This poor old hat and breeches, as you see, were
Torn in a scuffle

Constables came up for to take me into
Custody; they took me before the justice;
Justice Oldmixon put me in the parish
Stocks for a vagrant.

I should be glad to drink your honor's health in
A pot of beer, if you will give me sixpence;
But for my part, I never love to meddle
With politics, sir.

FRIEND OF HUMANITY

I give thee sixpence! I will see thee damned first,—
Wretch! whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to vengeance!—
Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
Spiritless outcast!

(Kicks the Knife-grinder, overturns his wheel, and exit in a transport of republican enthusiasm and universal philanthropy.)

George Canning [1770–1827]

VILLON'S STRAIGHT TIP TO ALL CROSS COVES

"Tout aux tavernes et aux fiells."

SUPPOSE you screeve? or go cheap-jack?
Or fake the broads? or fig a nag?
Or thimble-rig? or knap a yack?
Or pitch a snide? or smash a rag?
Suppose you duff? or nose and lag?
Or get the straight, and land your pot?
How do you melt the multy swag?
Booze and the blowens cop the lot.

Fiddle, or fence, or mace, or mack;
Or moskeneer, or flash the drag;
Dead-lurk a crib, or do a crack;
Pad with a slang, or chuck a fag;

Bonnet, or tout, or mump and gag;
Rattle the tats, or mark the spot;
You can not bag a single stag;
Booze and the blowens cop the lot.

Suppose you try a different tack,
And on the square you flash your flag?
At penny-a-lining make your whack,
Or with the mummers mug and gag?
For nix, for nix the dibbs you bag!
At any graft, no matter what,
Your merry goblins soon stravag:
Booze and the blowens cop the lot.

THE MORAL

It's up the spout and Charley Wag
With wipes and tickers and what not,
Until the squeezer nips your scrag,
Booze and the blowens cop the lot.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

VILLON'S BALLADE

OF GOOD COUNSEL, TO HIS FRIENDS OF EVIL LIFE

Nay, be you pardoner or cheat,
Or cogger keen, or mumper shy,
You'll burn your fingers at the feat,
And howl like other folks that fry.
All evil folks that love a lie!
And where goes gain that greed amasses,
By wile, and guile, and thievery?
'Tis all to taverns and to lasses!

Rhyme, rail, dance, play the cymbals sweet,
With game, and shame, and jollity,
Go jigging through the field and street,
With *myst'ry* and *morality;*
Win gold at *gleek*,—and that will fly,
Where all your gain at *passage* passes,—
And that's? You know as well as I,
'Tis all to taverns and to lasses!

Nay, forth from all such filth retreat,
Go delve and ditch, in wet or dry,
Turn groom, give horse and mule their meat,
If you've no clerkly skill to ply;
You'll gain enough, with husbandry,
But—sow hempseed and such wild grasses,
And where goes all you take thereby?—
'Tis all to taverns and to lasses!

ENVOY

Your clothes, your hose, your broidery,
Your linen that the snow surpasses,
Or ere they're worn, off, off they fly,
'Tis all to taverns and to lasses!

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

A LITTLE BROTHER OF THE RICH

To put new shingles on old roofs;
  To give old women wadded skirts;
To treat premonitory coughs
  With seasonable flannel shirts;
To soothe the stings of poverty
  And keep the jackal from the door,—
These are the works that occupy
  The Little Sister of the Poor.

She carries, everywhere she goes,
  Kind words and chickens, jams and coals;
Poultices for corporeal woes,
  And sympathy for downcast souls:
Her currant jelly, her quinine,
  The lips of fever move to bless;
She makes the humble sick-room shine
  With unaccustomed tidiness.

A heart of hers the instant twin
  And vivid counterpart is mine;
I also serve my fellow-men,
  Though in a somewhat different line.

The Poor, and their concerns, she has
  Monopolized, because of which
It falls to me to labor as
  A Little Brother of the Rich.

For their sake at no sacrifice
  Does my devoted spirit quail;
I give their horses exercise;
  As ballast on their yachts I sail.
Upon their tallyhos I ride
  And brave the chances of a storm;
I even use my own inside
  To keep their wines and victuals warm.

Those whom we strive to benefit
  Dear to our hearts soon grow to be;
I love my Rich, and I admit
  That they are very good to me.
Succor the Poor, my sisters,—I,
  While heaven shall still vouchsafe me health,
Will strive to share and mollify
  The trials of abounding wealth.

Edward Sandford Martin [1856–

THE WORLD'S WAY

At Haroun's court it chanced, upon a time,
An Arab poet made this pleasant rhyme:

"The new moon is a horseshoe, wrought of God,
Wherewith the Sultan's stallion shall be shod."

On hearing this, the Sultan smiled, and gave
The man a gold-piece. *Sing again, O slave!*

Above his lute the happy singer bent,
And turned another gracious compliment.

And, as before, the smiling Sultan gave
The man a sekkah. *Sing again, O slave!*

Again the verse came, fluent as a rill
That wanders, silver-footed, down a hill.

The Sultan, listening, nodded as before,
Still gave the gold, and still demanded more.

The nimble fancy that had climbed so high
Grew weary with its climbing by and by:

Strange discords rose; the sense went quite amiss;
The singer's rhymes refused to meet and kiss:

Invention flagged, the lute had got unstrung,
And twice he sang the song already sung.

The Sultan, furious, called a mute, and said,
O Musta, straightway whip me off his head!

Poets! not in Arabia alone
You get beheaded when your skill is gone.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

FOR MY OWN MONUMENT

As doctors give physic by way of prevention,
Mat, alive and in health, of his tombstone took care;
For delays are unsafe, and his pious intention
May haply be never fulfilled by his heir.

Then take Mat's word for it, the sculptor is paid;
That the figure is fine, pray believe your own eye;
Yet credit but lightly what more may be said,
For we flatter ourselves, and teach marble to lie.

Yet counting as far as to fifty his years,
His virtues and vices were as other men's are;
High hopes he conceived, and he smothered great fears,
In a life parti-colored, half pleasure, half care.

Nor to business a drudge, nor to faction a slave,
He strove to make interest and freedom agree;
In public employments industrious and grave,
And alone with his friends, lord! how merry was he!

Now in equipage stately, now humbly on foot,
Both fortunes he tried, but to neither would trust;
And whirled in the round, as the wheel turned about,
He found riches had wings, and knew man was but dust.

This verse, little polished, though mighty sincere,
Sets neither his titles nor merit to view;
It says that his relics collected lie here,
And no mortal yet knows too if this may be true.

Fierce robbers there are that infest the highway,
So Mat may be killed, and his bones never found;
False witness at court, and fierce tempests at sea,
So Mat may yet chance to be hanged or be drowned.

If his bones lie in earth, roll in sea, fly in air,
To Fate we must yield, and the thing is the same;
And if passing thou giv'st him a smile or a tear,
He cares not—yet, prithee, be kind to his fame.

Matthew Prior [1664–1721]

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB AT SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH

VANITY, saith the preacher, vanity!
Draw round my bed: is Anselm keeping back?
Nephews—sons mine . . . ah God, I know not! Well—
She, men would have to be your mother once,
Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!
What's done is done, and she is dead beside,
Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,
And as she died so must we die ourselves,
And thence ye may perceive the world's a dream.
Life, how and what is it? As here I lie
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours and long hours in the dead night, I ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" Peace, peace seems all.
Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace;
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye know:

—Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my care;
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner South
He graced his carrion with, God curse the same!
Yet still my niche is not so cramped, but thence
One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,
And up into the aery dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk:
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and two,
The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands:
Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse.
—Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-stone,
Put me where I may look at him! True peach,
Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!
Draw close: that conflagration of my church
—What then? So much was saved if aught were missed!
My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig
The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press stood,
Drop water gently till the surface sink,
And if ye find. . . . Ah God, I know not, I! . . .
Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,
And corded up in a tight olive-frail,
Some lump, ah God, of lapis lazuli,
Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast. . .
Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all,
That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,
Like God the Father's globe on both his hands
Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
For Gandolf shall not choose but see and burst!
Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—
'T was ever antique-black I meant! How else
Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?
The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,

Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and perchance
Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,
Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan
Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment off,
And Moses with the tables . . . but I know
Ye mark me not! What do they whisper thee,
Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
To revel down my villas while I gasp
Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy travertine
Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at!
Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!
'T is jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve
My bath must needs be left behind, alas!
One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,
There's plenty jasper somewhere in the world—
And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray
Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts,
And mistresses with great smooth marbly limbs?
—That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,
Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's every word,
No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—
Tully, my masters? Ulpian serves his need!
And then how I shall lie through centuries,
And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
And see God made and eaten all day long,
And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste
Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke!
For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,
Dying in state and by such slow degrees,
I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,
And stretch my feet forth straight as stone can point,
And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop
Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work:
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange thoughts
Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,
About the life before I lived this life,
And this life too, popes, cardinals and priests,
Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,

And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,
—Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?
No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!
Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.
All lapis, all, sons! Else I give the Pope
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?
Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,
They glitter like your mother's for my soul,
Or ye would heighten my impoverished frieze,
Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase
With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,
And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx
That in his struggle throws the thyrsus down,
To comfort me on my entablature
Whereon I am to lie till I must ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave me, there!
For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude
To death—ye wish it—God, ye wish it! Stone—
Gritstone, a-crumble! Clammy squares which sweat
As if the corpse they keep were oozing through—
And no more lapis to delight the world!
Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,
But in a row: and, going, turn your backs
—Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,
And leave me in my church, the church for peace,
That I may watch at leisure if he leers—
Old Gandolf—at me, from his onion-stone,
As still he envied me, so fair she was!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON OF QUALITY

HAD I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square.
Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least!
There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast;
While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the creature's skull,
Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull!
—I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city—the square with the houses! Why?
They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something to take the eye!
Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry!
You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by;
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets high;
And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over in March by rights,
'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well off the heights:
You've the brown ploughed land before, where the oxen steam and wheeze,
And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint gray olive trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've summer all at once;
In a day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns.
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell,
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell.

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout and splash!
In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine such foam-bows flash
On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and pash
Round the lady atop in the conch—fifty gazers do not abash,
Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of sash.

All the year round at the villa, nothing's to see though you linger,
Except yon cypress that points like Death's lean lifted fore-finger.
Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix in the corn and mingle,
Or thrid the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem a-tingle.
Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill
And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the hill.
Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin:
No sooner the bells leave off, than the diligence rattles in:
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.
By and by there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play, piping hot!
And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were shot.
Above it, behold the Archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of the Duke's!

Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don So-and-so,
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, St. Jerome, and Cicero,
"And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming), "the skirts of St. Paul has reached,
Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more unctuous than ever he preached."
Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession! our Lady borne smiling and smart
With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart!
Bang-whang-whang, goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear! fowls, wine, at double the rate.
They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing the gate
It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa for me, not the city!
Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but still—ah, the pity, the pity!
Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls and sandals,
And the penitents dressed in white skirts, a-holding the yellow candles;
One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better prevention of scandals.
Bang-whang-whang, goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife.
Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such pleasure in life!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

ALL SAINTS'

In a church which is furnished with mullion and gable,
With altar and reredos, with gargoyle and groin,
The penitents' dresses are sealskin and sable,
The odor of sanctity's eau-de-cologne.

But only could Lucifer, flying from Hades,
Gaze down on this crowd with its paniers and paints,
He would say, as he looked at the lords and the ladies,
"Oh, where is All Sinners' if this is All Saints'?"

Edmund Yates [1831–1894]

AN ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID, OR THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS

My son, these maxims make a rule,
And lump them aye thegither:
The Rigid Righteous is a fool
The Rigid Wise anither:
The cleanest corn that e'er was dight
May hae some pyles o' caff in;
Sae ne'er a fellow-creature slight
For random fits o' daffin.

Solomon—Eccles. vii, 16.

Oh ye wha are sae guid yoursel',
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've naught to do but mark and tell
Your neebor's fauts and folly:—
Whase life is like a weel-gaun mill,
Supplied wi' store o' water,
The heapèd happer's ebbing still,
And still the clap plays clatter.

Hear me, ye venerable core,
As counsel for poor mortals,
That frequent pass douce Wisdom's door,
For glaikit Folly's portals!
I, for their thoughtless, careless sakes,
Would here propone defences,
Their donsie tricks, their black mistakes,
Their failings and mischances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compared,
And shudder at the niffer;
But cast a moment's fair regard,
What maks the mighty differ?
Discount what scant occasion gave
That purity ye pride in,
And (what's aft mair than a' the lave)
Your better art o' hidin'.

Think, when your castigated pulse
Gies now and then a wallop,
What ragings must his veins convulse,
That still eternal gallop:
Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
Right on ye scud your sea-way;—
But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
It makes an unco lee-way.

See Social Life and Glee sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmugrified, they've grown
Debauchery and Drinking:
Oh, would they stay to calculate
The eternal consequences;
Or your more dreaded hell to state,
Damnation of expenses!

Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
Tied up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor Frailty names,
Suppose a change o' cases;
A dear-loved lad, convenience snug,
A treacherous inclination,—
But, let me whisper i' your lug,
Ye're aiblins nae temptation.

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
Though they may gang a kennin' wrang,
To step aside is human:
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving why they do it;
And just as lamely can ye mark
How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us;
He knows each chord,—its various tone,
Each spring,—its various bias:

Then at the balance let's be mute;
We never can adjust it;
What's done we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

THE DEACON'S MASTERPIECE, OR THE WONDERFUL "ONE-HOSS SHAY"

A LOGICAL STORY

HAVE you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down,* but doesn't *wear out.*

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou,*")

He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *couldn'* break daown:
"Fur," said the Deacon, " 't's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees,
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.

Eighteen hundred increased by ten;
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and Forty at last arrive,
And then come Fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day,—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay.
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
And the back-crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out!*

First of November, Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-railed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.

The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.

All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once, and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

BALLADE OF A FRIAR *

AFTER CLÉMENT MAROT

Some ten or twenty times a day,
To bustle to the town with speed,
To dabble in what dirt he may,—
Le Frère Lubin's the man you need!
But any sober life to lead
Upon an exemplary plan,
Requires a Christian indeed,—
Le Frère Lubin is *not* the man!

Another's wealth on his to lay,
With all the craft of guile and greed,
To leave you bare of pence or pay,—
Le Frère Lubin's the man you need!
But watch him with the closest heed,
And dun him with what force you can,—
He'll not refund, howe'er you plead,—
Le Frère Lubin is *not* the man—

* For the original of this poem see page 3838.

An honest girl to lead astray,
With subtle saw and promised meed,
Requires no cunning crone and gray,—
Le Frère Lubin's the man you need!
He preaches an ascetic creed,
But,—try him with the water can—
A dog will drink, whate'er his breed,—
Le Frère Lubin is *not* the man!

ENVOY

In good to fail, in ill succeed,
Le Frère Lubin's the man you need!
In honest works to lead the van,
Le Frère Lubin is *not* the man!

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

THE CHAMELEON

Oft has it been my lot to mark
A proud, conceited, talking spark,
With eyes, that hardly served at most
To guard their master 'gainst a post,
Yet round the world the blade has been
To see whatever could be seen;
Returning from his finished tour,
Grown ten times perter than before;
Whatever word you chance to drop,
The traveled fool your mouth will stop;
"Sir, if my judgment you'll allow,
I've seen—and sure I ought to know,"
So begs you'd pay a due submission,
And acquiesce in his decision.

Two travelers of such a cast,
As o'er Arabia's wilds they passed,
And on their way in friendly chat,
Now talked of this, and then of that,
Discoursed awhile, 'mongst other matter,
Of the chameleon's form and nature.

"A stranger animal," cries one,
"Sure never lived beneath the sun.
A lizard's body, lean and long,
A fish's head, a serpent's tongue,
Its foot with triple claw disjoined;
And what a length of tail behind!
How slow its pace; and then its hue—
Who ever saw so fine a blue?"

"Hold, there," the other quick replies,
" 'Tis *green*,—I saw it with these eyes,
As late with open mouth it lay,
And warmed it in the sunny ray:
Stretched at its ease, the beast I viewed
And saw it eat the air for food."
"I've seen it, sir, as well as you,
And must again affirm it blue;
At leisure I the beast surveyed,
Extended in the cooling shade."
" 'Tis green, 'tis green, sir, I assure ye!"
"Green!" cries the other in a fury—
"Why, sir!—d'ye think I've lost my eyes?"
" 'Twere no great loss," the friend replies,
"For, if they always serve you thus,
You'll find them of but little use."

So high at last the contest rose,
From words they almost came to blows:
When luckily came by a third—
To him the question they referred,
And begged he'd tell 'em, if he knew,
Whether the thing was green or blue.
"Sirs," cries the umpire, "cease your pother!
The creature's neither one or t'other.
I caught the animal last night,
And viewed it o'er by candlelight:
I marked it well—'t was black as jet—
You stare—but, sirs, I've got it yet,
And can produce it." "Pray, sir, do:
I'll lay my life the thing is blue."

"And I'll be sworn, that when you've seen
The reptile, you'll pronounce him green."

"Well, then, at once to ease the doubt,"
Replies the man, "I'll turn him out:
And when before your eyes I've set him,
If you don't find him black, I'll eat him."
He said: then full before their sight
Produced the beast, and lo!—'twas white.

Both stared, the man looked wondrous wise—
"My children," the chameleon cries,
(Then first the creature found a tongue),
"You all are right, and all are wrong:
When next you talk of what you view,
Think others see as well as you:
Nor wonder, if you find that none
Prefers your eyesight to his own."

After De La Motte, by James Merrick [1720–1769]

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT

A HINDOO FABLE

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The *First* approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"

The *Second*, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Ho! what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear

This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"

The *Third* approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"

The *Fourth* reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee.
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he;
" 'Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"

The *Fifth* who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"

The *Sixth* no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

MORAL

So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,

And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen!
John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

THE PHILOSOPHER'S SCALES

A MONK, when his rites sacerdotal were o'er,
In the depths of his cell with its stone-covered floor,
Resigning to thought his chimerical brain,
Once formed the contrivance we now shall explain;
But whether by magic's or alchemy's powers
We know not; indeed, 'tis no business of ours.

Perhaps it was only by patience and care,
At last, that he brought his invention to bear.
In youth 'twas projected, but years stole away,
And ere 'twas complete he was wrinkled and gray;
But success is secure, unless energy fails;
And at length he produced the Philosopher's Scales.

"What were they?" you ask. You shall presently see;
These scales were not made to weigh sugar and tea.
Oh no; for such properties wondrous had they,
That qualities, feelings, and thoughts they could weigh,
Together with articles small or immense,
From mountains or planets to atoms of sense.

Naught was there so bulky but there it would lay,
And naught so ethereal but there it would stay,
And naught so reluctant but in it must go:
All which some examples more clearly will show.

The first thing he weighed was the head of Voltaire,
Which retained all the wit that had ever been there;
As a weight, he threw in the torn scrap of a leaf
Containing the prayer of the penitent thief;
When the skull rose aloft with so sudden a spell
That it bounced like a ball on the roof of the cell.

One time he put in Alexander the Great,
With the garment that Dorcas had made, for a weight;
And though clad in armor from sandals to crown,
The hero rose up and the garment went down.

A long row of almshouses, amply endowed
By a well-esteemed Pharisee, busy and proud,
Next loaded one scale; while the other was pressed
By those mites the poor widow dropped into the chest:
Up flew the endowment, not weighing an ounce,
And down, down the farthing-worth came with a bounce.

By further experiments (no matter how)
He found that ten chariots weighed less than one plough;
A sword with gilt trappings rose up in the scale,
Though balanced by only a ten-penny nail;
A shield and a helmet, a buckler and spear,
Weighed less than a widow's uncrystallized tear.

A lord and a lady went up at full sail,
When a bee chanced to light on the opposite scale;
Ten doctors, ten lawyers, two courtiers, one earl,
Ten counsellors' wigs, full of powder and curl,
All heaped in one balance and swinging from thence,
Weighed less than a few grains of candor and sense;
A first-water diamond, with brilliants begirt,
Than one good potato just washed from the dirt;
Yet not mountains of silver and gold could suffice
One pearl to outweigh,—'twas the Pearl of Great Price.

Last of all, the whole world was bowled in at the grate,
With the soul of a beggar to serve for a weight,
When the former sprang up with so strong a rebuff
That it made a vast rent and escaped at the roof!
When balanced in air, it ascended on high,
And sailed up aloft, a balloon in the sky;
While the scale with the soul in't so mightily fell
That it jerked the philosopher out of his cell.

Jane Taylor [1783–1824]

THE MAIDEN AND THE LILY

A LILY in my garden grew,
Amid the thyme and clover;
No fairer lily ever blew,
Search all the wide world over.

Its beauty passed into my heart:
I know 'twas very silly,
But I was then a foolish maid,
And it—a perfect lily.

One day a learnèd man came by,
With years of knowledge laden,
And him I questioned with a sigh,
Like any foolish maiden:—
"Wise sir, please tell me wherein lies—
I know the question's silly—
The something that my art defies,
And makes a perfect lily."

He smiled, then bending plucked the flower,
Then tore it, leaf and petal,
And talked to me for full an hour,
And thought the point to settle:—
"Therein it lies," at length he cries;
And I—I know 'twas silly—
Could only weep and say, "But where—
O doctor, where's my lily?"

John Fraser [1750–1811]

THE OWL-CRITIC

"Who stuffed that white owl?" No one spoke in the shop:
The barber was busy, and he couldn't stop;
The customers, waiting their turns, were all reading
The *Daily*, the *Herald*, the *Post*, little heeding
The young man who blurted out such a blunt question;
Not one raised a head, or even made a suggestion;
And the barber kept on shaving.

"Don't you see, Mister Brown,"
Cried the youth with a frown,
"How wrong the whole thing is,
How preposterous each wing is,
How flattened the head is, how jammed down the neck is—
In short, the whole owl, what an ignorant wreck 'tis!

I make no apology;
I've learned owl-eology.
I've passed days and nights in a hundred collections,
And cannot be blinded to any deflections
Arising from unskilful fingers that fail
To stuff a bird right, from his beak to his tail.
Mister Brown! Mister Brown!
Do take that bird down,
Or you'll soon be the laughing-stock all over town!"
And the barber kept on shaving.

"I've *studied* owls
And other night fowls,
And I tell you
What I know to be true:
An owl cannot roost
With his limbs so unloosed;
No owl in this world
Ever had his claws curled,
Ever had his legs slanted,
Ever had his bill canted,
Ever had his neck screwed
Into that attitude.
He can't *do* it, because
'Tis against all bird-laws.
Anatomy teaches,
Ornithology preaches
An owl has a toe
That *can't* turn out so!
I've made the white owl my study for years,
And to see such a job almost moves me to tears!
Mister Brown, I'm amazed
You should be so gone crazed
As to put up a bird
In that posture absurd!
To *look* at that owl really brings on a dizziness;
The man who stuffed *him* don't half know his business!"
And the barber kept on shaving.

"Examine those eyes.
I'm filled with surprise

Taxidermists should pass
Off on you such poor glass;
So unnatural they seem
They'd make Audubon scream,
And John Burroughs laugh
To encounter such chaff.
Do take that bird down;
Have him stuffed again, Brown!"
And the barber kept on shaving.

"With some sawdust and bark
I could stuff in the dark
An owl better than that.
I could make an old hat
Look more like an owl
Than that horrid fowl,
Stuck up there so stiff like a side of coarse leather.
In fact, about *him* there's not one natural feather."

Just then, with a wink and a sly normal lurch,
The owl, very gravely, got down from his perch,
Walked round, and regarded his fault-finding critic
(Who thought he was stuffed) with a glance analytic,
And then fairly hooted, as if he would say:
"Your learning's at fault *this* time, any way;
Don't waste it again on a live bird, I pray.
I'm an owl; you're another. Sir Critic, good-day!"
And the barber kept on shaving.

James Thomas Fields [1816–1881]

THE BALLAD OF IMITATION

C'est imiter quelqu'un que de planter des choux.—ALFRED DE MUSSET

If they hint, O Musician, the piece that you played
Is naught but a copy of Chopin or Spohr;
That the ballad you sing is but merely "conveyed"
From the stock of the Arnes and the Purcells of yore;
That there's nothing, in short, in the words or the score,
That is not as out-worn as the "Wandering Jew";
Make answer—Beethoven could scarcely do more—
That the man who plants cabbages imitates, too!

If they tell you, Sir Artist, your light and your shade
Are simply "adapted" from other men's lore;
That—plainly to speak of a "spade" as a "spade"—
You've "stolen" your grouping from three or from four;
That (however the writer the truth may deplore),
'Twas Gainsborough painted *your* "Little Boy Blue";
Smile only serenely—though cut to the core—
For the man who plants cabbages imitates, too!

And you too, my Poet, be never dismayed
If they whisper your Epic—"Sir Eperon d'Or"—
Is nothing but Tennyson thinly arrayed
In a tissue that's taken from Morris's store;
That no one, in fact, but a child could ignore
That you "lift" or "accommodate" all that you do;
Take heart—though your Pegasus' withers be sore—
For the man who plants cabbages imitates, too!

Postcriptum.—And you, whom we all so adore,
Dear Critics, whose verdicts are always so new!—
One word in your ear. There were Critics before.
And the man who plants cabbages imitates, too!

Austin Dobson [1840–

THE CONUNDRUM OF THE WORKSHOPS

When the flush of a new-born sun fell first on Eden's green and gold,
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and scratched with a stick in the mould;
And the first rude sketch that the world had seen was joy to his mighty heart,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves: "It's pretty, but is it Art?"

Wherefore he called to his wife, and fled to fashion his work anew—
The first of his race who cared a fig for the first, most dread review;

And he left his lore to the use of his sons—and that was a glorious gain
When the Devil chuckled: "Is it Art?" in the ear of the branded Cain.

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and wrench the stars apart,
Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks: "It's striking, but is it Art?"
The stone was dropped at the quarry-side and the idle derrick swung,
While each man talked of the aims of Art, and each in an alien tongue.

They fought and they talked in the North and the South, they talked and they fought in the West,
Till the waters rose on the jabbering land, and the poor Red Clay had rest—
Had rest till the dank, blank-canvas dawn when the dove was preened to start,
And the Devil bubbled below the keel: "It's human, but is it Art?"

The tale is as old as the Eden Tree—and new as the new-cut tooth—
For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows he is master of Art and Truth;
And each man hears as the twilight nears, to the beat of his dying heart,
The Devil drum on the darkened pane: "You did it, but was it Art?"

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree to the shape of a surplice-peg,
We have learned to bottle our parents twain in the yolk of an addled egg,
We know that the tail must wag the dog, as the horse is drawn by the cart;
But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old: "It's clever, but is it Art?"

When the flicker of London sun falls faint on the Club-room's green and gold,
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch with their pens in the mould—
They scratch with their pens in the mould of their graves, and the ink and the anguish start,
For the Devil mutters behind the leaves: "It's pretty, but is it Art?"

Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree where the Four Great Rivers flow,
And the Wreath of Eve is red on the turf as she left it long ago,
And if we could come when the sentry slept, and softly scurry through,
By the favor of God we might know as much—as our father Adam knew.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–]

THE V–A–S–E

From the madding crowd they stand apart,
The maidens four and the Work of Art;

And none might tell from sight alone
In which had Culture ripest grown,—

The Gotham Million fair to see,
The Philadelphia Pedigree,

The Boston Mind of azure hue,
Or the soulful Soul from Kalamazoo,—

For all loved Art in a seemly way,
With an earnest soul and a capital A.

Long they worshipped; but no one broke
The sacred stillness, until up spoke

The Western one from the nameless place,
Who blushing said: "What a lovely vace!"

Over three faces a sad smile flew,
And they edged away from Kalamazoo.

But Gotham's haughty soul was stirred
To crush the stranger with one small word.

Deftly hiding reproof in praise,
She cries: " 'Tis, indeed, a lovely vaze!"

But brief her unworthy triumph when
The lofty one from the home of Penn,

With the consciousness of two grandpapas,
Exclaims: "It is quite a lovely vahs!"

And glances round with an anxious thrill,
Awaiting the word of Beacon Hill.

But the Boston maid smiles courteouslee,
And gently murmurs: "Oh pardon me!

"I did not catch your remark, because
I was so entranced with that charming vaws!"

Dies erit praegelida
Sinistra quum Bostonia.
James Jeffrey Roche [1847–1908]

HEM AND HAW

Hem and Haw were the sons of sin,
Created to shally and shirk;
Hem lay 'round and Haw looked on
While God did all the work.

Hem was a fogy, and Haw was a prig,
For both had the dull, dull mind;
And whenever they found a thing to do,
They yammered and went it blind.

Hem was the father of bigots and bores;
As the sands of the sea were they.
And Haw was the father of all the tribe
Who criticise to-day.

But God was an artist from the first,
And knew what he was about;
While over his shoulder sneered these two,
And advised him to rub it out.

They prophesied ruin ere man was made:
"Such folly must surely fail!"
And when he was done, "Do you think, my Lord,
He's better without a tail?"

And still in the honest working world,
With posture and hint and smirk,
These sons of the devil are standing by
While Man does all the work.

They balk endeavor and baffle reform,
In the sacred name of law;
And over the quavering voice of Hem,
Is the droning voice of Haw.

Bliss Carman [1861–

MINIVER CHEEVY

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
He wept that he was ever born,
And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old
When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;
The vision of a warrior bold
Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
And dreamed, and rested from his labors;
He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
That made so many a name so fragrant;
He mourned Romance, now on the town,
And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
Albeit he had never seen one;
He would have sinned incessantly
Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace,
And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
He missed the medieval grace
Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
But sore annoyed was he without it;
Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
And kept on drinking.

Edwin Arlington Robinson [1869–

THEN AG'IN

Jim Bowker, he said, ef he'd had a fair show,
And a big enough town for his talents to grow,
And the least bit assistance in hoein' his row,
Jim Bowker, he said,
He'd filled the world full of the sound of his name,
An' clumb the top round in the ladder of fame;
It may have been so;
I dunno;
Jest so it might been,
Then ag'in—

But he had tarnal luck—everythin' went ag'in him,
The arrers er fortune they allus 'ud pin him;
So he didn't get no chance to show off what was in him.

Jim Bowker, he said,
Ef he'd had a fair show, you couldn't tell where he'd come,
An' the feats he'd a-done, an' the heights he'd a-clumb—
It may have been so;
I dunno;
Jest so it might been,
Then ag'in—

But we're all like Jim Bowker, thinks I, more or less—
Charge fate for our bad luck, ourselves for success,
An' give fortune the blame for all our distress,
As Jim Bowker, he said.
Ef it hadn' been for luck an' misfortune an' sich,
We might a-been famous, an' might a-been rich.
It might be jest so;
I dunno;
Jest so it might been,
Then ag'in—

Sam Walter Foss [1858–1911]

A CONSERVATIVE

The garden beds I wandered by
One bright and cheerful morn,
When I found a new-fledged butterfly,
A-sitting on a thorn,
A black and crimson butterfly,
All doleful and forlorn.

I thought that life could have no sting
To infant butterflies,
So I gazed on this unhappy thing
With wonder and surprise,
While sadly with his waving wing
He wiped his weeping eyes.

Said I, "What can the matter be?
Why weepest thou so sore?
With garden fair and sunlight free
And flowers in goodly store:"—
But he only turned away from me
And burst into a roar.

Cried he, "My legs are thin and few
  Where once I had a swarm!
Soft fuzzy fur—a joy to view—
  Once kept my body warm,
Before these flapping wing-things grew,
  To hamper and deform!"

At that outrageous bug I shot
  The fury of mine eye;
Said I, in scorn all burning hot,
  In rage and anger high,
"You ignominious idiot!
  Those wings are made to fly!

"I do not want to fly," said he,
  "I only want to squirm!"
And he drooped his wings dejectedly,
  But still his voice was firm:
"I do not want to be a fly!
  I want to be a worm!"

O yesterday of unknown lack!
  To-day of unknown bliss!
I left my fool in red and black,
  The last I saw was this,—
The creature madly climbing back
  Into his chrysalis.

Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman [1860–

SIMILAR CASES

There was once a little animal,
  No bigger than a fox,
And on five toes he scampered
  Over Tertiary rocks.
They called him Eohippus,
  And they called him very small,
And they thought him of no value—
  When they thought of him at all;

For the lumpish old Dinoceras
And Coryphodon so slow
Were the heavy aristocracy
In days of long ago.

Said the little Eohippus,
"I am going to be a horse!
And on my middle finger-nails
To run my earthly course!
I'm going to have a flowing tail!
I'm going to have a mane!
I'm going to stand fourteen hands high
On the psychozoic plain!"

The Coryphodon was horrified,
The Dinoceras was shocked;
And they chased young Eohippus,
But he skipped away and mocked.
And they laughed enormous laughter,
And they groaned enormous groans,
And they bade young Eohippus
Go view his father's bones.
Said they, "You always were as small
And mean as now we see,
And that's conclusive evidence
That you're always going to be.
What! Be a great, tall, handsome beast,
With hoofs to gallop on?
Why! You'd have to change your nature!"
Said the Loxolophodon.
They considered him disposed of,
And retired with gait serene;
That was the way they argued
In "the early Eocene."

There was once an Anthropoidal Ape,
Far smarter than the rest,
And everything that they could do
He always did the best;

So they naturally disliked him,
And they gave him shoulders cool,
And when they had to mention him
They said he was a fool.

Cried this pretentious Ape one day,
"I'm going to be a Man!
And stand upright, and hunt, and fight,
And conquer all I can!
I'm going to cut down forest trees,
To make my houses higher!
I'm going to kill the Mastodon!
I'm going to make a fire!"

Loud screamed the Anthropoidal Apes
With laughter wild and gay;
They tried to catch that boastful one,
But he always got away.
So they yelled at him in chorus,
Which he minded not a whit;
And they pelted him with cocoanuts,
Which didn't seem to hit.
And then they gave him reasons
Which they thought of much avail,
To prove how his preposterous
Attempt was sure to fail.
Said the sages, "In the first place,
The thing cannot be done!
And, second, if it could be,
It would not be any fun!
And, third, and most conclusive,
And admitting no reply,
You would have to change your nature!
We should like to see you try!"
They chuckled then triumphantly,
These lean and hairy shapes,
For these things passed as arguments
With the Anthropoidal Apes.

There was once a Neolithic Man,
An enterprising wight,

Who made his chopping implements
  Unusually bright.
Unusually clever he,
  Unusually brave,
And he drew delightful Mammoths
  On the borders of his cave.
To his Neolithic neighbors,
  Who were startled and surprised,
Said he, "My friends, in course of time,
  We shall be civilized!
We are going to live in cities!
  We are going to fight in wars!
We are going to eat three times a day
  Without the natural cause!
We are going to turn life upside down
  About a thing called gold!
We are going to want the earth, and take
  As much as we can hold!
We are going to wear great piles of stuff
  Outside our proper skins!
We are going to have diseases!
  And Accomplishments!! And Sins!!!"

Then they all rose up in fury
  Against their boastful friend,
For prehistoric patience
  Cometh quickly to an end.
Said one, "This is chimerical!
  Utopian! Absurd!"
Said another, "What a stupid life!
  Too dull, upon my word!"
Cried all, "Before such things can come,
  You idiotic child,
You must alter Human Nature!"
  And they all sat back and smiled.
Thought they, "An answer to that last
  It will be hard to find!"
It was a clinching argument
  To the Neolithic Mind!

Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman [1860–

MAN AND THE ASCIDIAN

A MORALITY

"The Ancestor remote of Man,"
Says Darwin, "is the Ascidian,"
A scanty sort of water-beast
That, ninety million years at least
Before Gorillas came to be,
Went swimming up and down the sea.

Their ancestors the pious praise,
And like to imitate their ways;
How, then, does our first parent live,
What lesson has his life to give?

The Ascidian tadpole, young and gay,
Doth Life with one bright eye survey,
His consciousness has easy play.
He's sensitive to grief and pain,
Has tail, a spine, and bears a brain,
And everything that fits the state
Of creatures we call vertebrate.
But age comes on; with sudden shock
He sticks his head against a rock!
His tail drops off, his eye drops in,
His brain's absorbed into his skin;
He does not move, nor feel, nor know
The tidal water's ebb and flow,
But still abides, unstirred, alone,
A sucker sticking to a stone.

And we, his children, truly we
In youth are, like the Tadpole, free.
And where we would we blithely go,
Have brains and hearts, and feel and know.
Then Age comes on! To Habit we
Affix ourselves and are not free;
The Ascidian's rooted to a rock,
And we are bond-slaves of the clock;

Our rocks are Medicine—Letters—Law,
From these our heads we cannot draw:
Our loves drop off, our hearts drop in,
And daily thicker grows our skin.

Ah, scarce we live, we scarcely know
The wide world's moving ebb and flow,
The clanging currents ring and shock,
But we are rooted to the rock.
And thus at ending of his span,
Blind, deaf, and indolent, does Man
Revert to the Ascidian.

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

THE CALF-PATH

One day, through the primeval wood,
A calf walked home, as good calves should;
But made a trail all bent askew,
A crooked trail as all calves do.

Since then two hundred years have fled,
And, I infer, the calf is dead.
But still he left behind his trail,
And thereby hangs my moral tale.

The trail was taken up next day
By a lone dog that passed that way;
And then a wise bell-wether sheep
Pursued the trail o'er vale and steep,
And drew the flock behind him, too,
As good bell-wethers always do.

And from that day, o'er hill and glade,
Through those old woods a path was made;
And many men wound in and out,
And dodged, and turned, and bent about
And uttered words of righteous wrath
Because 'twas such a crooked path.

But still they followed—do not laugh—
The first migrations of that calf,
And through this winding wood-way stalked,
Because he wobbled when he walked.

This forest path became a lane,
That bent, and turned, and turned again;
This crooked lane became a road,
Where many a poor horse with his load
Toiled on beneath the burning sun,
And traveled some three miles in one.
And thus a century and a half
They trod the footsteps of that calf.

The years passed on in swiftness fleet,
The road became a village street;
And this, before men were aware,
A city's crowded thoroughfare;
And soon the central street was this
Of a renowned metropolis;
And men two centuries and a half
Trod in the footsteps of that calf.

Each day a hundred thousand rout
Followed the zigzag calf about;
And o'er his crooked journey went
The traffic of a continent.
A hundred thousand men were led
By one calf near three centuries dead.
They followed still his crooked way,
And lost one hundred years a day;
For thus such reverence is lent
To well-established precedent.

A moral lesson this might teach,
Were I ordained and called to preach;
For men are prone to go it blind
Along the calf-paths of the mind,
And work away from sun to sun
To do what other men have done.

They follow in the beaten track,
And out and in, and forth and back,
And still their devious course pursue,
To keep the path that others do.

But how the wise old wood-gods laugh,
Who saw the first primeval calf!
Ah! many things this tale might teach,—
But I am not ordained to preach.

Sam Walter Foss [1858–1911]

WEDDED BLISS

"O come and be my mate!" said the Eagle to the Hen;
"I love to soar, but then
I want my mate to rest
Forever in the nest!"
Said the Hen, "I cannot fly,
I have no wish to try,
But I joy to see my mate careering through the sky!"
They wed, and cried, "Ah, this is Love, my own!"
And the Hen sat, and the Eagle soared, alone.

"O come and be my mate!" said the Lion to the Sheep;
"My love for you is deep!
I slay,—a Lion should,—
But you are mild and good!"
Said the Sheep, "I do no ill—
Could not, had I the will—
But I joy to see my mate pursue, devour and kill."
They wed, and cried, "Ah, this is Love, my own!"
And the Sheep browsed, the Lion prowled, alone.

"O come and be my mate!" said the Salmon to the Clam;
"You are not wise, but I am.
I know the sea and stream as well;
You know nothing but your shell."
Said the Clam, "I'm slow of motion,
But my love is all devotion,
And I joy to have my mate traverse lake and stream and ocean!"

They wed, and cried, "Ah, this is Love, my own!"
And the Clam sucked, the Salmon swam, alone.

Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman [1860–

THE HINDOO'S DEATH

A Hindoo died; a happy thing to do,
When fifty years united to a shrew.
Released, he hopefully for entrance cries
Before the gates of Brahma's paradise.
"Hast been through purgatory?" Brahma said.
"I have been married!" and he hung his head.
"Come in! come in! and welcome to my son!
Marriage and purgatory are as one."
In bliss extreme he entered heaven's door,
And knew the bliss he ne'er had known before.

He scarce had entered in the gardens fair,
Another Hindoo asked admission there.
The self-same question Brahma asked again:
"Hast been through purgatory?" "No; what then?"
"Thou canst not enter!" did the god reply.
"He who went in was there no more than I."
"All that is true, but he has married been,
And so on earth has suffered for all his sin."
"Married? Tis well, for I've been married twice."
"Begone! We'll have no fools in paradise!"

George Birdseye [18 –

AD CHLOEN, M. A.

(FRESH FROM HER CAMBRIDGE EXAMINATION)

Lady, very fair are you,
And your eyes are very blue,
And your hose;
And your brow is like the snow,
And the various things you know
Goodness knows.

And the rose-flush on your cheek,
And your algebra and Greek
Perfect are;
And that loving lustrous eye
Recognizes in the sky
Every star.

You have pouting piquant lips,
You can doubtless an eclipse
Calculate;
But for your cerulean hue,
I had certainly from you
Met my fate.

If by an arrangement dual
I were Adams mixed with Whewell,
Then some day
I, as wooer, perhaps might come
To so sweet an Artium
Magistra.

Mortimer Collins [1827–1876]

"AS LIKE THE WOMAN AS YOU CAN"

"As like the Woman as you can"—
(*Thus the New Adam was beguiled*)—
"So shall you touch the Perfect Man"—
(*God in the Garden heard and smiled*).
"Your father perished with his day:
A clot of passions fierce and blind,
He fought, he hacked, he crushed his way:
Your muscles, Child, must be of mind.

"The Brute that lurks and irks within,
How, till you have him gagged and bound,
Escape the foulest form of Sin?"
(*God in the Garden laughed and frowned*).
"So vile, so rank, the bestial mood
In which the race is bid to be,
It wrecks the Rarer Womanhood:
Live, therefore, you, for Purity!

"Take for your mate no gallant croup,
No girl all grace and natural will:
To work her mission were to stoop,
Maybe to lapse, from Well to Ill.
Choose one of whom your grosser make"—
(*God in the Garden laughed outright*)—
"The true refining touch may take,
Till both attain to Life's last height.

"There, equal, purged of soul and sense,
Beneficent, high-thinking, just,
Beyond the appeal of Violence,
Incapable of common Lust,
In mental Marriage still prevail"—
(*God in the Garden hid His face*)—
"Till you achieve that Female-Male
In which shall culminate the race."

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

"NO FAULT IN WOMEN"

No fault in women to refuse
The offer which they most would choose:
No fault in women to confess
How tedious they are in their dress:
No fault in women to lay on
The tincture of vermilion,
And there to give the cheek a dye
Of white, where Nature doth deny:
No fault in women to make show
Of largeness, when they've nothing so;
When, true it is, the outside swells
With inward buckram, little else:
No fault in woman, though they be
But seldom from suspicion free:
No fault in womankind at all,
If they but slip, and never fall.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

"ARE WOMEN FAIR?"

"Are women fair?" Ay! wondrous fair to see too.
"Are women sweet?" Yea, passing sweet they be too;
Most fair and sweet to them that only love them;
Chaste and discreet to all save those that prove them.

"Are women wise?" Not wise, but they be witty.
"Are women witty?" Yea, the more the pity;
They are so witty, and in wit so wily,
That be you ne'er so wise, they will beguile ye.

"Are women fools?" Not fools, but fondlings many.
"Can women found be faithful unto any?"
When snow-white swans do turn to color sable,
Then women fond will be both firm and stable.

"Are women saints?" No saints, nor yet no devils.
"Are women good?" Not good, but needful evils;
So Angel-like, that devils I do not doubt them;
So needful evils, that few can live without them.

"Are women proud?" Ay! passing proud, and praise them.
"Are women kind?" Ay! wondrous kind and please them,
Or so imperious, no man can endure them,
Or so kind-hearted, any may procure them.

Francis Davison (?) [fl. 1602]

A STRONG HAND

Tender-handed stroke a nettle,
And it stings you for your pains;
Grasp it like a lad of mettle,
And it soft as silk remains:

So it is with these fair creatures,
Use them kindly, they rebel;
But be rough as nutmeg graters,
And the rogues obey you well.

Aaron Hill [1685–1750]

WOMEN'S LONGING

From "Women Pleased"

TELL me what is that only thing
For which all women long;
Yet, having what they most desire,
To have it does them wrong?

'Tis not to be chaste, nor fair,
(Such gifts malice may impair),
Richly trimmed, to walk or ride,
Or to wanton unespied,
To preserve an honest name
And so to give it up to fame—
These are toys. In good or ill
They desire to have their will:
Yet, when they have it, they abuse it,
For they know not how to use it.

John Fletcher [1579–1625]

TRIOLET

ALL women born are so perverse
No man need boast their love possessing.
If naught seem better, nothing's worse:
All women born are so perverse.
From Adam's wife, that proved a curse,
Though God had made her for a blessing,
All women born are so perverse
No man need boast their love possessing.

Robert Bridges [1844–

THE FAIR CIRCASSIAN

FORTY Viziers saw I go
Up to the Seraglio,
Burning, each and every man,
For the fair Circassian.

Ere the morn had disappeared,
Every Vizier wore a beard;
Ere the afternoon was born,
Every Vizier came back shorn.

"Let the man that woos to win
Woo with an unhairy chin;"
Thus she said, and as she bid
Each devoted Vizier did.

From the beards a cord she made,
Looped it to the balustrade,
Glided down and went away
To her own Circassia.

When the Sultan heard, waxed he
Somewhat wroth, and presently
In the noose themselves did lend
Every Vizier did suspend.

Sages all, this rhyme who read,
Guard your beards with prudent heed,
And beware the wily plans
Of the fair Circassians.

Richard Garnett [1835–1906]

THE FEMALE PHAETON

Thus Kitty, beautiful and young,
And wild as colt untamed,
Bespoke the fair from whence she sprung,
With little rage inflamed:

Inflamed with rage at sad restraint,
Which wise mamma ordained;
And sorely vexed to play the saint,
Whilst wit and beauty reigned:

"Shall I thumb holy books, confined
With Abigails, forsaken?
Kitty's for other things designed,
Or I am much mistaken.

"Must Lady Jenny frisk about,
And visit with her cousins?
At balls must she make all the rout,
And bring home hearts by dozens?

"What has she better, pray, than I,
What hidden charms to boast,
That all mankind for her should die,
Whilst I am scarce a toast?

"Dearest mamma! for once let me,
Unchained, my fortune try;
I'll have my earl as well as she,
Or know the reason why.

"I'll soon with Jenny's pride quit score,
Make all her lovers fall:
They'll grieve I was not loosed before;
She, I was loosed at all."

Fondness prevailed, mamma gave way;
Kitty, at heart's desire,
Obtained the chariot for a day,
And set the world on fire.

Matthew Prior [1664–1721]

THE LURE

"What bait do you use," said a Saint to the Devil,
"When you fish where the souls of men abound?"
"Well, for special tastes," said the King of Evil,
"Gold and Fame are the best I've found."

"But for general use?" asked the Saint. "Ah, then,"
Said the Demon, "I angle for Man, not men,
And a thing I hate
Is to change my bait,
So I fish with a woman the whole year round."

John Boyle O'Reilly [1844–1890]

THE BALLAD OF CASSANDRA BROWN

Though I met her in the summer, when one's heart lies round at ease,
As it were in tennis costume, and a man's not hard to please,
Yet I think at any season to have met her was to love,
While her tones, unspoiled, unstudied, had the softness of the dove.

At request she read us poems in a nook among the pines,
And her artless voice lent music to the least melodious lines;
Though she lowered her shadowing lashes, in an earnest reader's wise,
Yet we caught blue gracious glimpses of the heavens that were her eyes.

As in paradise I listened. Ah, I did not understand
That a little cloud, no larger than the average human hand,
Might, as stated oft in fiction, spread into a sable pall,
When she said that she should study Elocution in the fall!

I admit her earliest efforts were not in the Ercles vein;
She began with "Lit-tle Maaybel, with her faayce against the payne
And the beacon-light a-t-r-r-remble"—which, although it made me wince,
Is a thing of cheerful nature to the things she's rendered since.

Having learned the Soulful Quiver, she acquired the Melting Mo-o-an,
And the way she gave "Young Grayhead" would have liquefied a stone.
Then the Sanguinary Tragic did her energies employ,
And she tore my taste to tatters when she slew "The Polish Boy."

It's not pleasant for a fellow when the jewel of his soul
Wades through slaughter on the carpet, while her orbs in frenzy roll;
What was I that I should murmur? Yet it gave me grievous pain
That she rose in social gatherings, and Searched among the Slain.

I was forced to look upon her, in my desperation dumb,
Knowing well that when her awful opportunity was come
She would give us battle, murder, sudden death at very least,
As a skeleton of warning, and a blight upon the feast.

Once, ah! once I fell a-dreaming; some one played a polonaise
I associated strongly with those happier August days;
And I mused, "I'll speak this evening," recent pangs forgotten quite—
Sudden shrilled a scream of anguish: "Curfew SHALL not ring to-night!"

Ah, that sound was as a curfew, quenching rosy, warm romance—
Were it safe to wed a woman one so oft would wish in France?
Oh, as she "cull-imbed" that ladder, swift my mounting hope came down:
I am still a single cynic; she is still Cassandra Brown!

Helen Gray Cone [1859–

A REASONABLE AFFLICTION

On his death-bed poor Lubin lies:
His spouse is in despair;
With frequent cries, and mutual sighs,
They both express their care.

"A different cause," says Parson Sly,
"The same effect may give:
Poor Lubin fears that he may die;
His wife, that he may live."

Matthew Prior [1664–1721]

THE WOMAN WITH THE SERPENT'S TONGUE

She is not old, she is not young,
The woman with the Serpent's Tongue,
The haggard cheek, the hungering eye,
The poisoned words that wildly fly,
The famished face, the fevered hand,—
Who slights the worthiest in the land,
Sneers at the just, contemns the brave,
And blackens goodness in its grave.

In truthful numbers be she sung,
The Woman with the Serpent's Tongue;
Concerning whom, Fame hints at things
Told but in shrugs and whisperings:
Ambitious from her natal hour,
And scheming all her life for power;
With little left of seemly pride;
With venomed fangs she cannot hide;
Who half makes love to you to-day,
To-morrow gives her guest away.
Burnt up within by that strange soul
She cannot slake, or yet control:
Malignant-lipped, unkind, unsweet;
Past all example indiscreet;
Hectic, and always overstrung,—
The Woman with the Serpent's Tongue.

To think that such as she can mar
Names that among the noblest are!
That hands like hers can touch the springs
That move who knows what men and things?
That on *her* will *their* fates have hung!—
The Woman with the Serpent's Tongue.

William Watson [1858–

SUPPOSE

How sad if, by some strange new law,
All kisses scarred!
For she who is most beautiful
Would be most marred.

And we might be surprised to see
Some lovely wife
Smooth-visaged, while a seeming prude
Was marked for life.

Anne Reeve Aldrich [1866–1892]

TOO CANDID BY HALF

As Tom and his wife were discoursing one day
Of their several faults in a bantering way,
Said she, "Though my wit you disparage,
I'm sure, my dear husband, our friends will attest
This much, at the least, that my judgment is best."
Quoth Tom, "So they said at our marriage."

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

FABLE

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter "Little Prig;"
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.

I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

WOMAN'S WILL

THAT man's a fool who tries by art and skill
To stem the torrent of a woman's will:
For if she will, she will; you may depend on't—
And if she won't, she won't—and there's an end on't.

Unknown

WOMAN'S WILL

MEN, dying, make their wills, but wives
Escape a task so sad;
Why should they make what all their lives
The gentle dames have had?

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

PLAYS

ALAS, how soon the hours are over
Counted us out to play the lover!
And how much narrower is the stage
Allotted us to play the sage!

But when we play the fool, how wide
The theatre expands! beside,
How long the audience sits before us!
How many prompters! what a chorus!

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

THE REMEDY WORSE THAN THE DISEASE

I SENT for Ratcliffe; was so ill,
That other doctors gave me over:
He felt my pulse, prescribed his pill,
And I was likely to recover.

But, when the wit began to wheeze,
And wine had warmed the politician,
Cured yesterday of my disease,
I died last night of my physician.

Matthew Prior [1664–1721]

THE NET OF LAW

THE net of law is spread so wide,
No sinner from its sweep may hide.

Its meshes are so fine and strong,
They take in every child of wrong.

O wondrous web of mystery!
Big fish alone escape from thee!

James Jeffrey Roche [1847–1908]

COLOGNE

IN Köln, a town of monks and bones,
And pavements fanged with murderous stones,
And rags, and hags, and hideous wenches;
I counted two and seventy stenches,
All well defined, and several stinks!
Ye Nymphs that reign o'er sewers and sinks,
The river Rhine, it is well known,
Doth wash your city of Cologne;
But tell me, Nymphs! what power divine
Shall henceforth wash the river Rhine?

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

EPITAPH ON CHARLES II

HERE lies our Sovereign Lord the King,
Whose word no man relies on,
Who never said a foolish thing,
Nor ever did a wise one.

John Wilmot [1647–1680]

CERTAIN MAXIMS OF HAFIZ

I

IF It be pleasant to look on, stalled in the packed *serai*,
Does not the Young Man try Its temper and pace ere he buy?

If She be pleasant to look on, what does the Young Man say?
"Lo! She is pleasant to look on, give Her to me today!"

II

Yea, though a Kaffir die, to him is remitted Jehannum
If he borrowed in life from a native at sixty per cent per annum.

III

Blister we not for *bursati?* So when the heart is vexed,
The pain of one maiden's refusal is drowned in the pain of the next.

IV

The temper of chums, the love of your wife, and a new piano's tune—
Which of the three will you trust at the end of an Indian June?

V

Who are the rulers of Ind—to whom shall we bow the knee?
Make your peace with the women, and men will make you L. G.

VI

Does the woodpecker flit round the young *ferash?* Does grass clothe a new-built wall?
Is she under thirty, the woman who holds a boy in her thrall?

VII

If She grow suddenly gracious—reflect. Is it all for thee?
The black-buck is stalked through the bullock, and Man through jealousy.

VIII

Seek not for favor of women. So shall you find it indeed.
Does not the boar break cover just when you're lighting a weed?

IX

If He play, being young and unskilful, for shekels of silver and gold,
Take His money, my son, praising Allah. The kid was ordained to be sold.

X

With a "weed" among men or horses verily this is the best,
That you work him in office or dog-cart lightly—but give him no rest.

XI

Pleasant the snaffle of Courtship, improving the manners and carriage;
But the colt who is wise will abstain from the terrible thorn-bit of Marriage.

XII

As the thriftless gold of the *baḅul*, so is the gold that we spend
On a Derby Sweep, or our neighbor's wife, or the horse that we buy from a friend.

XIII

The ways of a man with a maid be strange, yet simple and tame
To the ways of a man with a horse, when selling or racing that same.

XIV

In public Her face turneth to thee, and pleasant Her smile when ye meet.
It is ill. The cold rocks of El-Gidar smile thus on the waves at their feet.
In public Her face is averted, with anger She nameth thy name.
It is well. Was there ever a loser content with the loss of the game?

XV

If She have spoken a word, remember thy lips are sealed,
And the Brand of the Dog is upon him by whom is the secret revealed.
If She have written a letter, delay not an instant, but burn it.
Tear it in pieces, O Fool, and the wind to her mate shall return it!
If there be trouble to Herward, and a lie of the blackest can clear,
Lie, while thy lips can move or a man is alive to hear.

XVI

My Son, if a maiden deny thee and scufflingly bid thee give o'er,
Yet lip meets with lip at the lastward—get out! She has been there before.
They are pecked on the ear and the chin and the nose who are lacking in lore.

XVII

If we fall in the race, though we win, the hoof-slide is scarred on the course.
Though Allah and Earth pardon Sin, remaineth forever Remorse.

XVIII

"By all I am misunderstood!" if the Matron shall say, or the Maid:—
"Alas! I do not understand," my son, be thou nowise afraid.
In vain in the sight of the Bird is the net of the Fowler displayed.

XIX

My Son, if I, Hafiz, thy father, take hold of thy knees in my pain,
Demanding thy name on stamped paper, one day or one hour—refrain.
Are the links of thy fetters so light that thou cravest another man's chain?

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

A BAKER'S DUZZEN UV WIZE SAWZ

THEM ez wants, must choose.
Them ez hez, must lose.
Them ez knows, won't blab.
Them ez guesses, will gab.
Them ez borrows, sorrows.
Them ez lends, spends.
Them ez gives, lives.
Them ez keeps dark, is deep.
Them ez kin earn, kin keep.
Them ez aims, hits.
Them ez hez, gits.
Them ez waits, win.
Them ez *will*, *kin*.

Edward Rowland Sill [1841–1887]

EPIGRAMS

WHAT is an epigram? a dwarfish whole,
Its body brevity, and wit its soul.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

As in smooth oil the razor best is whet,
So wit is by politeness sharpest set;
Their want of edge from their offence is seen,
Both pain the heart when exquisitely keen.

Unknown

"I HARDLY ever ope my lips," one cries;
"Simonides, what think you of my rule?"
"If you're a fool, I think you're very wise;
If you are wise, I think you are a fool."

Richard Garnett [1835–1906]

PHILOSOPHER, whom dost thou most affect,
Stoics austere, or Epicurus' sect?
Friend, 'tis my grave infrangible design
With those to study, and with these to dine.

Richard Garnett [1835–1906]

Joy is the blossom, sorrow is the fruit,
Of human life; and worms are at the root.
Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

No truer word, save God's, was ever spoken,
Than that the largest heart is soonest broken.
Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

This house, where once a lawyer dwelt,
Is now a smith's. Alas!
How rapidly the iron age
Succeeds the age of brass!
William Erskine [1769–1822]

"I would," says Fox, "a tax devise
That shall not fall on me."
"Then tax receipts," Lord North replies,
"For those you never see."
Richard Brinsley Sheridan [1751–1816]

You beat your pate, and fancy wit will come.
Knock as you please,—there's nobody at home.
Alexander Pope [1688–1744]

If a man who turnips cries
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof that he would rather
Have a turnip than a father.
Samuel Johnson [1709–1784]

Life is a jest, and all things show it;
I said so once, and now I know it.
John Gay [1685–1732]

I am his Highness' dog at Kew.
Pray, sir, tell me,—whose dog are you?
Alexander Pope [1688–1744]

Sir, I admit your general rule,
That every poet is a fool,
But you yourself may serve to show it,
That every fool is not a poet.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

Damis, an author cold and weak,
Thinks as a critic he's divine;
Likely enough; we often make
Good vinegar of sorry wine.

Unknown

Swans sing before they die—'twere no bad thing
Did certain persons die before they sing.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

He who in his pocket hath no money
Should, in his mouth, be never without honey.

Unknown

Nobles and heralds, by your leave,
Here lies what once was Matthew Prior,
The son of Adam and of Eve;
Can Bourbon or Nassau claim higher?

Matthew Prior [1664–1721]

Here lie I, Martin Elginbrodde;
Hae mercy o' my soul, Lord God,
As I wad do were I Lord God,
And ye were Martin Elginbrodde.

George Macdonald [1824–1905]

Who killed Kildare? Who dared Kildare to kill?
Death killed Kildare—who dare kill whom he will.

Jonathan Swift [1667–1745]

With death doomed to grapple,
Beneath the cold slab he
Who lied in the chapel
Now lies in the abbey.

Byron's epitaph for Pitt

When doctrines meet with general approbation,
It is not heresy, but reformation.

David Garrick [1717–1779]

Treason doth never prosper; what's the reason?
Why, if it prosper, none dare call it treason.

John Harington [1561–1612]

God bless the King—I mean the faith's defender!
God bless (no harm in blessing!) the Pretender!
But who pretender is, or who is King—
God bless us all!—that's quite another thing.

John Byrom [1692–1763]

'Tis highly rational, we can't dispute,
The Love, being naked, should promote a suit:
But doth not oddity to him attach
Whose fire's so oft extinguished by a match?

Richard Garnett [1835–1906]

"Come, come," said Tom's father, "at your time of life,
There's no longer excuse for thus playing the rake.—
It is time you should think, boy, of taking a wife."—
"Why, so it is, father,—whose wife shall I take?"

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

When Eve upon the first of men
The apple pressed with specious cant,
O, what a thousand pities then
That Adam was not Adam-ant!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

Whilst Adam slept, Eve from his side arose:
Strange! his first sleep should be his last repose!

Unknown

"What? rise again with *all* one's bones,"
Quoth Giles, "I hope you fib:
I trusted, when I went to Heaven,
To go without my rib."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

HERE lies my wife: here let her lie!
Now she's at rest, and so am I.

John Dryden [1631–1700]

AFTER such years of dissension and strife,
Some wonder that Peter should weep for his wife;
But his tears on her grave are nothing surprising,—
He's laying her dust, for fear of its rising.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

WRITTEN ON A LOOKING-GLASS

I CHANGE, and so do women too;
But I reflect, which women never do.

Unknown

AN EPITAPH

A LOVELY young lady I mourn in my rhymes:
She was pleasant, good-natured, and civil sometimes.
Her figure was good: she had very fine eyes,
And her talk was a mixture of foolish and wise.
Her adorers were many, and one of them said,
"She waltzed rather well! It's a pity she's dead!"

George John Cayley [?]

ON A HENPECKED SQUIRE

AS father Adam first was fooled
(A case that's still too common),
Here lies a man a woman ruled,
The Devil ruled the woman.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

GENERAL SUMMARY

WE are very slightly changed
From the semi-apes who ranged
India's prehistoric clay;
Whoso drew the longest bow,
Ran his brother down, you know,
As we run men down to-day.

"Dowb," the first of all his race,
Met the Mammoth face to face
On the lake or in the cave,
Stole the steadiest canoe,
Ate the quarry others slew,
Died—and took the finest grave.

When they scratched the reindeer-bone,
Someone made the sketch his own,
Filched it from the artist—then,
Even in those early days,
Won a simple Viceroy's praise
Through the toil of other men.

Ere they hewed the Sphinx's visage,
Favoritism governed kissage,
Even as it does in this age.

Who shall doubt the secret hid
Under Cheops' pyramid
Was that the contractor did
Cheops out of several millions?
Or that Joseph's sudden rise
To Comptroller of Supplies
Was a fraud of monstrous size
On King Pharaoh's swart Civilians?

Thus, the artless songs I sing
Do not deal with anything
New or never said before.
As it was in the beginning,
Is to-day official sinning,
And shall be for evermore.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

THE MIMICS

AN OMAR FOR LADIES

I

One for her Club and her own Latch-key fights,
Another wastes in Study her good Nights.
Ah, take the Clothes and let the Culture go,
Nor heed the grumble of the Women's Rights!

Look at the Shop-girl all about us—"Lo,
The Wages of a month," she says, "I blow
Into a Hat, and when my hair is waved,
Doubtless my Friend will take me to the Show."

And she who saved her coin for Flannels red,
And she who caught Pneumonia instead,
Will both be Underground in Fifty Years,
And Prudence pays no Premium to the dead.

Th' exclusive Style you set your heart upon
Gets to the Bargain counters—and anon,
Like monograms on a Saleslady's tie,
Cheers but a moment—soon for you 'tis gone.

Think, in the sad Four Hundred's gilded halls,
Whose endless Leisure ev'n themselves appalls,
How Ping-pong raged so high—then faded out
To those far Suburbs that still chase its Balls.

They say Sixth Avenue and the Bowery keep
The *dernier cri* that once was far from cheap;
Green veils, one season chic—Department stores
Mark down in vain—no profit shall they reap.

II

I sometimes think that never lasts so long
The Style as when it starts a bit too strong;
That all the Pompadours the parterre boasts
Some Chorus-girl began, with Dance and Song.

And this Revival of the Chignon low
That fills the most of us with helpless Woe,
Ah, criticise it Softly! for who knows
What long-necked Peeress had to wear it so!

Ah, my belovèd, try each Style you meet;
To-day brooks no loose ends, you must be neat.
Tomorrow! why tomorrow you may be
Wearing it down your back like Marguerite!

For some we once admired, the Very Best
That ever a French hand-boned Corset prest,
Wore what they used to call Prunella Boots,
And put on Nightcaps ere they went to rest.

And we that now make fun of Waterfalls
They wore, and whom their Crinoline appalls,
Ourselves shall from old dusty Fashion plates
Assist our Children in their Costume balls.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may wear,
Before we grow so old that we don't care!
Before we have our Hats made all alike,
Sans Plumes, sans Wings, sans Chiffon, and—sans Hair!

III

Alike to her who Dines both Loud and Long,
Or her who Banting shuns the Dinner-gong,
Some Doctor from his Office chair will shout,
"It makes no Difference—both of you are Wrong!"

Why, all the Health-Reformers who discussed
High Heels and Corsets learnedly are thrust
Square-toed and Waistless forth; their Duds are scorned,
And Venus might as well have been a Bust.

Myself when slim did eagerly frequent
Delsarte and Ling, and heard great Argument
Of muscles trained to Hold me up, but still
Spent on my Modiste what I'd always spent!

With walking Clubs I did the best I could;
With my own Feet I tramped my Ten Miles, good;
And this was All that I got out of it—
I ate much more for Dinner than I should.

. . . . .

And fear not lest your Rheumatism seize
The Joy of Life from other people's Sprees;
The Art will not have Perished—*au contraire,*
Posterity will practise it with Ease!

When you and I have ceased Champagne to Sup,
Be sure there will be More to Keep it Up;
And while we pat Old Tabby by the fire,
Full many a Girl will lead her Brindled Pup.

Josephine Daskam Bacon [1876-

"WHEN LOVELY WOMAN"

AFTER GOLDSMITH

When lovely woman wants a favor,
And finds, too late, that man won't bend,
What earthly circumstance can save her
From disappointment in the end?

The only way to bring him over,
The last experiment to try,
Whether a husband or a lover,
If he have feeling is—to cry.

Phoebe Cary [1824–1871]

FRAGMENT IN IMITATION OF WORDSWORTH

There is a river clear and fair,
'Tis neither broad nor narrow;
It winds a little here and there—
It winds about like any hare;

And then it holds as straight a course
As, on the turnpike road, a horse,
Or, through the air, an arrow.

The trees that grow upon the shore
Have grown a hundred years or more;
So long there is no knowing:
Old Daniel Dobson does not know
When first those trees began to grow;
But still they grew, and grew, and grew,
As if they'd nothing else to do,
But ever must be growing.

The impulses of air and sky
Have reared their stately heads so high,
And clothed their boughs with green;
Their leaves the dews of evening quaff,—
And when the wind blows loud and keen,
I've seen the jolly timbers laugh,
And shake their sides with merry glee—
Wagging their heads in mockery.

Fixed are their feet in solid earth
Where winds can never blow;
But visitings of deeper birth
Have reached their roots below.
For they have gained the river's brink
And of the living waters drink.

There's little Will, a five years' child—
He is my youngest boy;
To look on eyes so fair and wild,
It is a very joy.
He hath conversed with sun and shower,
And dwelt with every idle flower,
As fresh and gay as them.
He loiters with the briar-rose,—
The blue-bells are his playfellows,
That dance upon their slender stem.

And I have said, my little Will,
Why should he not continue still

A thing of Nature's rearing?
A thing beyond the world's control—
A living vegetable soul,—
No human sorrow fearing.

It were a blessèd sight to see
That child become a willow-tree,
His brother trees among.
He'd be four times as tall as me,
And live three times as long.

Catherine M. Fanshawe [1765–1834]

ONLY SEVEN

AFTER WORDSWORTH

I MARVELLED why a simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
Should utter groans so very wild,
And look as pale as death.

Adopting a parental tone,
I asked her why she cried;
The damsel answered with a groan,
"I've got a pain inside!

"I thought it would have sent me mad
Last night about eleven."
Said I, "What is it makes you bad?
How many apples have you had?"
She answered, "Only seven!"

"And are you sure you took no more,
My little maid?" quoth I;
"Oh, please, sir, mother gave me four,
But *they* were in a pie!"

"If that's the case," I stammered out,
"Of course you've had eleven."
The maiden answered with a pout,
"I ain't had more nor seven!"

I wondered hugely what she meant,
And said, "I'm bad at riddles;
But I know where little girls are sent
For telling taradiddles.

"Now, if you don't reform," said I,
"You'll never go to heaven."
But all in vain; each time I try,
That little idiot makes reply,
"I ain't had more nor seven!"

POSTSCRIPT:

To borrow Wordsworth's name was wrong,
Or slightly misapplied;
And so I'd better call my song
"Lines after Ache-inside."

Henry Sambrooke Leigh [1837–1883]

LUCY LAKE

AFTER WORDSWORTH

Poor Lucy Lake was overgrown,
But somewhat underbrained.
She did not know enough, I own,
To go in when it rained.

Yet Lucy was constrained to go;
Green bedding,—you infer.
Few people knew she died, but oh,
The difference to her!

Newton Mackintosh [1858–

JANE SMITH

AFTER WORDSWORTH

I journeyed, on a winter's day,
Across the lonely wold;
No bird did sing upon the spray,
And it was very cold.

I had a coach with horses four,
  Three white (though one was black),
And on they went the common o'er,
  Nor swiftness did they lack.

A little girl ran by my side,
  And she was pinched and thin.
"Oh, please, sir, do give me a ride!
  I'm fetching mother's gin."

"Enter my coach, sweet child," said I,
  "For you shall ride with me;
And I will get you your supply
  Of mother's eau-de-vie."

The publican was stern and cold,
  And said: "Her mother's score
Is writ, as you shall soon behold,
  Behind the bar-room door! '

I blotted out the score with tears,
  And paid the money down;
And took the maid of thirteen years
  Back to her mother's town.

And though the past with surges wild
  Fond memories may sever,
The vision of that happy child
  Will leave my spirits never!

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

FATHER WILLIAM

From "Alice in Wonderland"

AFTER SOUTHEY

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
  "And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
  Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door—
Pray, what is the reason of that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his gray locks,
"I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment—one shilling the box—
Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak—
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions and that is enough,"
Said his father; "don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you downstairs!"

Lewis Carroll [1832–1898]

THE NEW ARRIVAL

AFTER CAMPBELL

THERE came to port last Sunday night
The queerest little craft,
Without an inch of rigging on;
I looked and looked—and laughed!

It seemed so curious that she
  Should cross the Unknown water,
And moor herself within my room—
  My daughter! O, my daughter!

Yet by these presents witness all
  She's welcome fifty times,
And comes consigned in hope and love—
  And common-metre rhymes.
She has no manifest but this;
  No flag floats o'er the water;
She's too new for the British Lloyds—
  My daughter! O, my daughter!

Ring out, wild bells—and tame ones too;
  Ring out the lover's moon.
Ring in the little worsted socks,
  Ring in the bib and spoon.
Ring out the muse, ring in the nurse,
  Ring in the milk and water.
Away with paper, pen, and ink—
  My daughter! O, my daughter!

George Washington Cable [1844-

DISASTER

AFTER MOORE

'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour
  My fondest hopes would not decay:
I never loved a tree or flower
  Which was the first to fade away!
The garden, where I used to delve
  Short-frocked, still yields me pinks in plenty;
The pear-tree that I climbed at twelve,
  I see still blossoming, at twenty.

I never nursed a dear gazelle.
  But I was given a paroquet—
How I did nurse him if unwell!
  He's imbecile, but lingers yet.

He's green, with an enchanting tuft;
  He melts me with his small black eye:
He'd look inimitable stuffed,
  And knows it—but he will not die!

I had a kitten—I was rich
  In pets—but all too soon my kitten
Became a full-sized cat, by which
  I've more than once been scratched and bitten;
And when for sleep her limbs she curled
  One day beside her untouched plateful,
And glided calmly from the world,
  I freely own that I was grateful.

And then I bought a dog—a queen!
  Ah, Tiny, dear departing pug!
She lives, but she is past sixteen,
  And scarce can crawl across the rug.
I loved her beautiful and kind;
  Delighted in her pert Bow-wow:
But now she snaps if you don't mind;
  'Twere lunacy to love her now.

I used to think, should e'er mishap
  Betide my crumple-visaged Ti,
In shape of prowling thief, or trap,
  Or coarse bull-terrier—I should die.
But ah! disasters have their use;
  And life might e'en be too sunshiny:
Nor would I make myself a goose,
  If some big dog should swallow Tiny.

Charles Stuart Calverley [1831–1884]

'TWAS EVER THUS

AFTER MOORE

I NEVER reared a young gazelle,
  (Because, you see, I never tried);
But had it known and loved me well,
  No doubt the creature would have died.

My rich and agèd Uncle John
  Has known me long and loves me well
But still persists in living on—
  I would he were a young gazelle.

I never loved a tree or flower;
  But, if I had, I beg to say
The blight, the wind, the sun, or shower
  Would soon have withered it away.
I've dearly loved my Uncle John,
  From childhood to the present hour,
And yet he will go living on—
  I would he were a tree or flower!

Henry Sambrooke Leigh [1837–1883]

A GRIEVANCE

AFTER BYRON

Dear Mr. Editor: I wish to say—
  If you will not be angry at my writing it—
But I've been used, since childhood's happy day,
  When I have thought of something, to inditing it;
I seldom think of things; and, by the way,
  Although this meter may not be exciting, it
Enables one to be extremely terse,
Which is not what one always is in verse.

I used to know a man,—such things befall
  The observant wayfarer through Fate's domain—
He was a man, take him for all in all,
  We shall not look upon his like again;
I know that statement's not original;
  What statement is, since Shakespeare? or, since Cain,
What murder? I believe 'twas Shakespeare said it, or
Perhaps it may have been your Fighting Editor.

Though why an Editor should fight, or why
  A Fighter should abase himself to edit,
Are problems far too difficult and high
  For me to solve with any sort of credit.

Some greatly more accomplished man than I
  Must tackle them: let's say then Shakespeare said it;
And, if he did not, Lewis Morris may
(Or even if he did). Some other day,

When I have nothing pressing to impart,
  I should not mind dilating on this matter.
I feel its import both in head and heart,
  And always did,—especially the latter.
I could discuss it in the busy mart
  Or on the lonely housetop; hold! this chatter
Diverts me from my purpose. To the point:
The time, as Hamlet said, is out of joint,

And perhaps I was born to set it right,—
  A fact I greet with perfect equanimity.
I do not put it down to "cursèd spite,"
  I don't see any cause for cursing in it. I
Have always taken very great delight
  In such pursuits since first I read divinity.
Whoever will may write a nation's songs
As long as I'm allowed to right its wrongs.

What's Eton but a nursery of wrong-righters,
  A mighty mother of effective men;
A training ground for amateur reciters,
  A sharpener of the sword as of the pen;
A factory of orators and fighters,
  A forcing-house of genius? Now and then
The world at large shrinks back, abashed and beaten,
Unable to endure the glare of Eton.

I think I said I knew a man: what then?
  I don't suppose such knowledge is forbid.
We nearly all do, more or less, know men,—
  Or think we do; nor will a man get rid
Of that delusion while he wields a pen.
  But who this man was, what, if aught, he did,
Nor why I mentioned him, I do not know,
Nor what I "wished to say" a while ago.

James Kenneth Stephen [1859–1892]

"NOT A SOU HAD HE GOT"

AFTER CHARLES WOLFE

Not a sou had he got—not a guinea or note—
And he looked confoundedly flurried,
As he bolted away without paying his shot,
And the landlady after him hurried.

We saw him again at dead of night,
When home from the club returning;
We twigged the doctor beneath the light
Of the gas-lamp brilliantly burning.

All bare and exposed to the midnight dews,
Reclined in a gutter we found him;
And he looked like a gentleman taking a snooze
With his Marshall cloak around him.

"The doctor's as drunk as the devil," we said,
And we managed a shutter to borrow;
We raised him; and sighed at the thought that his head
Would consumedly ache on the morrow.

We bore him home, and we put him to bed,
And we told his wife and his daughter
To give him next morning a couple of red-
Herrings, with soda-water.

Loudly they talked of his money that's gone,
And his lady began to upbraid him;
But little he recked, so they let him snore on
'Neath the counterpane, just as we laid him.

We tucked him in, and had hardly done,
When, beneath the window calling,
We heard the rough voice of a son of a gun
Of a watchman "One o'clock!" bawling.

Slowly and sadly we all walked down
From his room on the uppermost story;
A rushlight we placed on the cold hearth-stone,
And we left him alone in his glory.

Richard Harris Barham [1788–1845]

THE WHITING AND THE SNAIL

From "Alice in Wonderland"

AFTER MARY HOWITT

"Will you walk a little faster?" said a whiting to a snail,
"There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's treading on my tail,
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!
They are waiting on the shingle—will you come and join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?

"You can really have no notion how delightful it will be
When they take us up and throw us, with the lobsters, out to sea!"
But the snail replied, "Too far, too far!" and gave a look askance—
Said he thanked the whiting kindly, but he would not join the dance.
Would not, could not, would not, could not, would not join the dance.
Would not, could not, would not, could not, could not join the dance.

"What matters it how far we go?" his scaly friend replied.
"There is another shore, you know, upon the other side.
The further off from England the nearer is to France—
Then turn not pale, belovèd snail, but come and join the dance.
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?"

Lewis Carroll [1832–1898]

THE RECOGNITION

AFTER TENNYSON

HOME they brought her sailor son,
Grown a man across the sea,
Tall and broad and black of beard,
And hoarse of voice as man may be.

Hand to shake and mouth to kiss,
Both he offered ere he spoke;
But she said, "What man is this
Comes to play a sorry joke?"

Then they praised him,—called him "smart,"
"Tightest lad that ever stept;"
But her son she did not know,
And she neither smiled nor wept.

Rose, a nurse of ninety years,
Set a pigeon-pie in sight;
She saw him eat:—" 'Tis he! 'tis he!"
She knew him—by his appetite!

Frederick William Sawyer [1810–1875]

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM IN A NUTSHELL

AFTER TENNYSON

ONE, who is not, we see: but one, whom we see not, is;
Surely this is not that: but that is assuredly this.

What, and wherefore, and whence? for under is over and under;
If thunder could be without lightning, lightning could be without thunder.

Doubt is faith in the main: but faith, on the whole, is doubt;
We cannot believe by proof: but could we believe without?

Why, and whither, and how? for barley and rye are not clover;
Neither are straight lines curves: yet over is under and over.

Two and two may be four: but four and four are not eight;
Fate and God may be twain: but God is the same thing as fate.

Ask a man what he thinks, and get from a man what he feels;
God, once caught in the fact, shows you a fair pair of heels.

Body and spirit are twins: God only knows which is which;
The soul squats down in the flesh, like a tinker drunk in a ditch.

One and two are not one: but one and nothing is two;
Truth can hardly be false, if falsehood cannot be true.

Once the mastodon was: pterodactyls were common as cocks;
Then the mammoth was God; now is He a prize ox.

Parallels all things are: yet many of these are askew.
You are certainly I: but certainly I am not you.

Springs the rock from the plain, shoots the stream from the rock;
Cocks exist for the hen: but hens exist for the cock.

God, whom we see not, is: and God, who is not, we see;
Fiddle, we know, is diddle: and diddle, we take it, is dee.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

THE WILLOW-TREE

AFTER HOOD

Long by the willow-trees
Vainly they sought her,
Wild rang the mother's screams

O'er the gray water:
"Where is my lovely one?
Where is my daughter?

"Rouse thee, Sir Constable—
Rouse thee and look;
Fisherman, bring your net,
Boatman, your hook.
Beat in the lily-beds,
Dive in the brook!"

Vainly the constable
Shouted and called her;
Vainly the fisherman
Beat the green alder;
Vainly he flung the net,
Never it hauled her!

Mother beside the fire
Sat, her nightcap in;
Father, in easy chair,
Gloomily napping,
When at the window-sill
Came a light tapping!

And a pale countenance
Looked through the casement.
Loud beat the mother's heart,
Sick with amazement,
And at the vision which
Came to surprise her,
Shrieked in an agony—
"Lor'! it's Elizar!"

Yes, 'twas Elizabeth—
Yes, 'twas their girl;
Pale was her cheek, and her
Hair out of curl.
"Mother," the loving one,
Blushing exclaimed,
"Let not your innocent
Lizzy be blamed.

"Yesterday, going to Aunt
Jones's to tea,
Mother, dear mother, I
Forgot the door-key!
And as the night was cold
And the way steep,
Mrs. Jones kept me to
Breakfast and sleep."

Whether her Pa and Ma
Fully believed her,
That we shall never know,
Stern they received her;
And for the work of that
Cruel, though short, night
Sent her to bed without
Tea for a fortnight.

MORAL

Hey diddle diddlety,
Cat and the fiddlety,
Maidens of England, take caution by she!
Let love and suicide
Never tempt you aside,
And always remember to take the door-key.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

POETS AND LINNETS

AFTER ROBERT BROWNING

WHERE'ER there's a thistle to feed a linnet
And linnets are plenty, thistles rife—
Or an acorn-cup to catch dew-drops in it
There's ample promise of further life.
Now, mark how we begin it.

For linnets will follow, if linnets are minded,
As blows the white-feather parachute;
And ships will reel by the tempest blinded—
Aye, ships and shiploads of men to boot!
How deep whole fleets you'll find hid.

And we blow the thistle-down hither and thither
Forgetful of linnets, and men, and God.
The dew! for its want an oak will wither—
By the dull hoof into the dust is trod,
And then who strikes the cither?

But thistles were only for donkeys intended,
And that donkeys are common enough is clear,
And that drop! what a vessel it might have befriended,
Does it add any flavor to Glugabib's beer?
Well, there's my musing ended. *Tom Hood* [1835–1874]

THE JAM-POT

THE Jam-pot—tender thought!
I grabbed it—so did you.
"What wonder while we fought
Together that it flew
In shivers?" you retort.

You should have loosed your hold
One moment—checked your fist.
But, as it was, too bold
You grappled and you missed.
More plainly—you were sold.

"Well, neither of us shared
The dainty." That your plea?
"Well, neither of us cared,"
I answer. . . . "Let me see.
How have your trousers fared?"

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

BALLAD

AFTER WILLIAM MORRIS

PART I

THE auld wife sat at her ivied door,
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
A thing she had frequently done before;
And her spectacles lay on her aproned knees.

The piper he piped on the hill-top high,
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)

Till the cow said "I die," and the goose asked "Why?"
And the dog said nothing, but searched for fleas.

The farmer he strode through the square farmyard;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
His last brew of ale was a trifle hard—
The connection of which with the plot one sees.

The farmer's daughter hath frank blue eyes;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
She hears the rooks caw in the windy skies,
As she sits at her lattice and shells her peas.

The farmer's daughter hath ripe red lips;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
If you try to approach her, away she skips
Over tables and chairs with apparent ease.

The farmer's daughter hath soft brown hair;
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
And I met with a ballad, I can't say where,
Which wholly consisted of lines like these.

PART II

She sat, with her hands 'neath her dimpled cheeks,
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
And spake not a word. While a lady speaks
There is hope, but she didn't even sneeze.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her crimson cheeks,
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
She gave up mending her father's breeks,
And let the cat roll in her new chemise.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her burning cheeks,
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
And gazed at the piper for thirteen weeks;
Then she followed him out o'er the misty leas.

Her sheep followed her, as their tails did them.
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*)
And this song is considered a perfect gem,
And as to the meaning, it's what you please.

Charles Stuart Calverley [1831–1884]

THE POSTER-GIRL

AFTER DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

THE blessèd Poster-girl leaned out
From a pinky-purple heaven;
One eye was red and one was green;
Her bang was cut uneven;
She had three fingers on her hand,
And the hairs on her head were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No sunflowers did adorn,
But a heavy Turkish portiere
Was very neatly worn;
And the hat that lay along her back
Was yellow like canned corn.

It was a kind of wobbly wave
That she was standing on,
And high aloft she flung a scarf
That must have weighed a ton;
And she was rather tall—at least
She reached up to the sun.

She curved and writhed, and then she said,
Less green of speech than blue:
"Perhaps I *am* absurd—perhaps
I *don't* appeal to you;
But my artistic worth depends
Upon the point of view."

I saw her smile, although her eyes
Were only smudgy smears;
And then she swished her swirling arms,
And wagged her gorgeous ears,
She sobbed a blue-and-green-checked sob,
And wept some purple tears.

Carolyn Wells [1862–

AFTER DILETTANTE CONCETTI

AFTER DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

"Why do you wear your hair like a man,
Sister Helen?
This week is the third since you began."
"I'm writing a ballad; be still if you can,
Little brother.
(*O Mother Carey, mother!*
What chickens are these between sea and heaven?)"

"But why does your figure appear so lean,
Sister Helen?
And why do you dress in sage, sage green?"
"Children should never be heard, if seen,
Little brother!
(*O Mother Carey, mother!*
What fowls are a-wing in the stormy heaven!)"

"But why is your face so yellowy white,
Sister Helen?
And why are your skirts so funnily tight?"
"Be quiet, you torment, or how can I write,
Little brother?
(*O Mother Carey, mother!*
How gathers thy train to the sea from the heaven!)"

"And who's Mother Carey, and what is her train,
Sister Helen?
And why do you call her again and again?"
"You troublesome boy, why that's the refrain,
Little brother.
(*O Mother Carey, mother!*
What work is toward in the startled heaven?)"

"And what's a refrain? What a curious word,
Sister Helen!
Is the ballad you're writing about a sea-bird?"
"Not at all; why should it be? Don't be absurd,

Little brother.
(*O Mother Carey, mother!*
Thy brood flies lower as lowers the heaven.)"

(*A big brother speaketh:*)

"The refrain you've studied a meaning had,
Sister Helen!
It gave strange force to a weird ballad.
But refrains have become a ridiculous 'fad',
Little brother.
And *Mother Carey, mother,*
Has a bearing on nothing in earth or heaven.

"But the finical fashion has had its day,
Sister Helen.
And let's try in the style of a different lay
To bid it adieu in poetical way,
Little brother.
So, Mother Carey, mother!
Collect your chickens and go to—heaven."

(*A pause. Then the big brother singeth, accompanying himself in a plaintive wise on the triangle:*)

"Look in my face. My name is Used-to-was,
I am also called Played-out and Done-to-death,
And It-will-wash-no-more. Awakeneth
Slowly, but sure awakening it has,
The common-sense of man; and I, alas!
The ballad-burden trick, now known too well,
Am turned to scorn, and grown contemptible—
A too transparent artifice to pass.

"What a cheap dodge I am! The cats who dart
Tin-kettled through the streets in wild surprise
Assail judicious ears not otherwise;
And yet no critics praise the urchin's 'art',
Who to the wretched creature's caudal part
Its foolish empty-jingling 'burden' ties."

Henry Duff Traill [1842–1900]

IF

AFTER SWINBURNE

If life were never bitter,
And love were always sweet,
Then who would care to borrow
A moral from to-morrow—
If Thames would always glitter,
And joy would ne'er retreat,
If life were never bitter,
And love were always sweet!

If care were not the waiter
Behind a fellow's chair,
When easy-going sinners
Sit down to Richmond dinners,
And life's swift stream flows straighter,
By Jove, it would be rare,
If care were not the waiter
Behind a fellow's chair.

If wit were always radiant,
And wine were always iced,
And bores were kicked out straightway
Through a convenient gateway;
Then down the year's long gradient
'Twere sad to be enticed,
If wit were always radiant,
And wine were always iced.

Mortimer Collins [1827–1876]

NEPHELIDIA

AFTER SWINBURNE

From the depth of the dreamy decline of the dawn through a notable nimbus of nebulous noonshine,
Pallid and pink as the palm of the flag-flower that flickers with fear of the flies as they float,

Are the looks of our lovers that lustrously lean from a marvel of mystic, miraculous moonshine,
These that we feel in the blood of our blushes that thicken and threaten with throbs through the throat?
Thicken and thrill as a theatre thronged at appeal of an actor's appalled agitation,
Fainter with fear of the fires of the future than pale with the promise of pride in the past;
Flushed with the famishing fulness of fever that reddens with radiance of rathe recreation,
Gaunt as the ghastliest of glimpses that gleam through the gloom of the gloaming when ghosts go aghast?

Nay, for the nick of the tick of the time is a tremulous touch on the temples of terror,
Strained as the sinews yet strenuous with strife of the dead who is dumb as the dust-heaps of death;
Surely no soul is it, sweet as the spasm of erotic, emotional, exquisite error,
Bathed in the balms of beatified bliss, beatific itself by beatitude's breath.
Surely no spirit or sense of a soul that was soft to the spirit and soul of our senses
Sweetens the stress of suspiring suspicion that sobs in the semblance and sound of a sigh;
Only this oracle opens Olympian in mystical moods and triangular tenses,—
"Life is the lust of a lamp for the light that is dark till the dawn of the day when we die."

Mild is the mirk and monotonous music of memory, melodiously mute as it may be,
While the hope in the heart of a hero is bruised by the breach of men's rapiers, resigned to the rod;
Made meek as a mother whose bosom-beats bound with the bliss-bringing bulk of a balm-breathing baby,
As they grope through the graveyard of creeds under skies growing green at a groan for the grimness of God.

Blank is the book of his bounty beholden of old, and its
binding is blacker than bluer:
Out of blue into black is the scheme of the skies, and their
dews are the wine of the blood-shed of things;
Till the darkling desire of delight shall be free as a fawn
that is freed from the fangs that pursue her,
Till the heart-beats of hell shall be hushed by a hymn
from the hunt that has harried the kennel of kings.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

COMMONPLACES

AFTER HEINE

Rain on the face of the sea,
Rain on the sodden land,
And the window-pane is blurred with rain
As I watch it, pen in hand.

Mist on the face of the sea,
Mist on the sodden land,
Filling the vales as daylight fails,
And blotting the desolate sand.

Voices from out of the mist,
Calling to one another:
"Hath love an end, thou more than friend,
Thou dearer than ever brother?"

Voices from out of the mist,
Calling and passing away;
But I cannot speak, for my voice is weak,
And. . . . this is the end of my lay.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

THE PROMISSORY NOTE

AFTER POE

In the lonesome latter years
(Fatal years!)
To the dropping of my tears
Danced the mad and mystic spheres

In a rounded, reeling rune,
'Neath the moon,
To the dripping and the dropping of my tears.
Ah, my soul is swathed in gloom,
(Ulalume!)
In a dim Titanic tomb,
For my gaunt and gloomy soul
Ponders o'er the penal scroll,
O'er the parchment (not a rhyme),
Out of place,—out of time,—
I am shredded, shorn, unshifty,
(Oh, the fifty!)
And the days have passed, the three,
Over me!
And the debit and the credit are as one to him and me!

'Twas the random runes I wrote
At the bottom of the note,
(Wrote and freely
Gave to Greeley)
In the middle of the night,
In the mellow, moonless night,
When the stars were out of sight,
When my pulses, like a knell,
(Israfel!)
Danced with dim and dying fays,
O'er the ruins of my days,
O'er the dimeless, timeless days,
When the fifty, drawn at thirty,
Seeming thrifty, yet the dirty
Lucre of the market, was the most that I could raise!

Fiends controlled it,
(Let him hold it!)
Devils held me for the inkstand and the pen;
Now the days of grace are o'er,
(Ah, Lenore!)
I am but as other men;
What is time, time, time,

To my rare and runic rhyme,
To my random, reeling rhyme,
By the sands along the shore,
Where the tempest whispers, "Pay him!" and I answer,
"Nevermore!"

Bayard Taylor [1825–1878]

MRS. JUDGE JENKINS

BEING THE ONLY GENUINE SEQUEL TO "MAUD MULLER"

AFTER WHITTIER

MAUD MULLER all that summer day
Raked the meadow sweet with hay;

Yet, looking down the distant lane,
She hoped the Judge would come again.

But when he came, with smile and bow,
Maud only blushed, and stammered, "Ha-ow?"

And spoke of her "pa," and wondered whether
He'd give consent they should wed together.

Old Muller burst in tears, and then
Begged that the Judge would lend him "ten";

For trade was dull and wages low,
And the "craps," this year, were somewhat slow.

And ere the languid summer died,
Sweet Maud became the Judge's bride.

But on the day that they were mated,
Maud's brother Bob was intoxicated;

And Maud's relations, twelve in all,
Were very drunk at the Judge's hall;

And when the summer came again,
The young bride bore him babies twain;

And the Judge was blest, but thought it strange
That bearing children made such a change.

For Maud grew broad, and red, and stout,
And the waist that his arm once clasped about

Was more than he now could span; and he
Sighed as he pondered, ruefully,

How that which in Maud was native grace
In Mrs. Jenkins was out of place;

And thought of the twins, and wished that they
Looked less like the men who raked the hay

On Muller's farm, and dreamed with pain
Of the day he wandered down the lane.

And, looking down that dreary track,
He half regretted that he came back.

For, had he waited, he might have wed
Some maiden fair and thoroughbred;

For there be women as fair as she,
Whose verbs and nouns do more agree.

Alas for maiden! alas for judge!
And the sentimental,—that's one-half "fudge";

For Maud soon thought the Judge a bore,
With all his learning and all his lore;

And the Judge would have bartered Maud's fair face
For more refinement and social grace.

If, of all words of tongue and pen,
The saddest are, "It might have been,"

More sad are these we daily see:
"It is, but hadn't ought to be."

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

THE MODERN HIAWATHA

From "The Song of Milkanwatha"

He killed the noble Mudjokivis,
With the skin he made him mittens,
Made them with the fur side inside,
Made them with the skin side outside;
He, to get the warm side inside,
Put the inside skin side outside:
He, to get the cold side outside,
Put the warm side fur side inside:
That's why he put the fur side inside,
Why he put the skin side outside,
Why he turned them inside outside.

George A. Strong [1832–1912]

HOW OFTEN

AFTER LONGFELLOW

They stood on the bridge at midnight,
In a park not far from the town;
They stood on the bridge at midnight,
Because they didn't sit down.

The moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church spire;
The moon rose o'er the city,
And kept on rising higher.

How often, oh! how often
They whispered words so soft;
How often, oh! how often,
How often, oh! how oft.

Ben King [1857–1894]

"IF I SHOULD DIE TO-NIGHT"

AFTER MEYERS

If I should die to-night
And you should come to my cold corpse and say,
Weeping and heartsick o'er my lifeless clay—
If I should die to-night,

And you should come in deepest grief and woe—
And say: "Here's that ten dollars that I owe,"
I might arise in my large white cravat
And say, "What's that?"

If I should die to-night
And you should come to my cold corpse and kneel,
Clasping my bier to show the grief you feel,
I say, if I should die to-night
And you should come to me, and there and then
Just even hint at paying me that ten,
I might arise the while,
But I'd drop dead again.

Ben King [1857–1894]

SINCERE FLATTERY

OF W. W. (AMERICANUS)

THE clear cool note of the cuckoo which has ousted the legitimate nest-holder,
The whistle of the railway guard dispatching the train to the inevitable collision,
The maiden's monosyllabic reply to a polysyllabic proposal,
The fundamental note of the last trump, which is presumably D natural;
All of these are sounds to rejoice in, yea, to let your very ribs re-echo with:
But better than all of them is the absolutely last chord of the apparently inexhaustible pianoforte player.

James Kenneth Stephen [1859–1892]

CULTURE IN THE SLUMS

INSCRIBED TO AN INTENSE POET

I. RONDEAU

"O CRIKEY, Bill!" she ses to me, she ses.
"Look sharp," ses she, "with them there sossiges.
Yea! sharp with them there bags of mysteree!
For lo!" she ses, "for lo! old pal," ses she,
"I'm blooming peckish, neither more nor less."

Was it not prime—I leave you all to guess
How prime!—to have a Jude in love's distress
Come spooning round, and murmuring balmilee,
"O crikey, Bill!"

For in such rorty wise doth Love express
His blooming views, and asks for your address,
And makes it right, and does the gay and free.
I kissed her—I did so! And her and me
Was pals. And if that ain't good business,
"O crikey, Bill!"

II. VILLANELLE

Now ain't they utterly too-too
(She ses, my Missus mine, ses she),
Them flymy little bits of Blue.

Joe, just you kool 'em—nice and skew
Upon our old meogginee,
Now ain't they utterly too-too?

They're better than a pot'n' a screw,
They're equal to a Sunday spree,
Them flymy little bits of Blue!

Suppose I put 'em up the flue,
And booze the profits, Joe? Not me.
Now ain't they utterly too-too?

I do the 'Igh Art fake, I do.
Joe, I'm consummate; and I *see*
Them flymy little bits of Blue.

Which, Joe, is why I ses ter you—
Æsthetic-like, and limp, and free—
Now *ain't* they utterly too-too,
Them flymy little bits of Blue?

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

THE POETS AT TEA

I.—(MACAULAY)

Pour, varlet, pour the water,
The water steaming hot!
A spoonful for each man of us,
Another for the pot!
We shall not drink from amber,
No Capuan slave shall mix
For us the snows of Athos
With port at thirty-six;
Whiter than snow the crystals
Grown sweet 'neath tropic fires,
More rich the herb of China's field,
The pasture-lands more fragrance yield;
Forever let Britannia wield
The teapot of her sires!

II.—(TENNYSON)

I think that I am drawing to an end:
For on a sudden came a gasp for breath,
And stretching of the hands, and blinded eyes,
And a great darkness falling on my soul.
O Hallelujah! . . . . Kindly pass the milk.

III.—(SWINBURNE)

As the sin that was sweet in the sinning
Is foul in the ending thereof,
As the heat of the summer's beginning
Is past in the winter of love:
O purity, painful and pleading!
O coldness, ineffably gray!
O hear us, our handmaid unheeding,
And take it away!

IV.—(COWPER)

The cosy fire is bright and gay,
The merry kettle boils away

And hums a cheerful song.
I sing the saucer and the cup;
Pray, Mary, fill the teapot up,
And do not make it strong.

V.—(BROWNING)

Tut! Bah! We take as another case—
Pass the pills on the window-sill; notice the capsule
(A sick man's fancy, no doubt, but I place
Reliance on trade-marks, Sir)—so perhaps you'll
Excuse the digression—this cup which I hold
Light-poised—Bah, it's spilt in the bed!—well, let's on go—
Hold Bohea and sugar, Sir; if you were told
The sugar was salt, would the Bohea be Congo?

VI.—(WORDSWORTH)

"Come, little cottage girl, you seem
To want my cup of tea;
And will you take a little cream?
Now tell the truth to me."

She had a rustic, woodland grin,
Her cheek was soft as silk,
And she replied, "Sir, please put in
A little drop of milk."

"Why, what put milk into your head?
'Tis cream my cows supply;"
And five times to the child I said,
"Why, pig-head, tell me, why?"

"You call me pig-head," she replied;
"My proper name is Ruth.
I called that milk"—she blushed with pride—
"You bade me speak the truth."

VII.—(POE)

Here's a mellow cup of tea—golden tea!
What a world of rapturous thought its fragrance brings to me!
Oh, from out the silver cells
How it wells!
How it smells!
Keeping tune, tune, tune,
To the tintinnabulation of the spoon.
And the kettle on the fire
Boils its spout off with desire,
With a desperate desire
And a crystalline endeavor
Now, now to sit, or never,
On the top of the pale-faced moon,
But he always came home to tea, tea, tea, tea, tea,
Tea to the *n*-th.

VIII.—(ROSSETTI)

The lilies lie in my lady's bower,
(O weary mother, drive the cows to roost),
They faintly droop for a little hour;
My lady's head droops like a flower.

She took the porcelain in her hand
(O weary mother, drive the cows to roost);
She poured; I drank at her command;
Drank deep, and now—you understand!
(O weary mother, drive the cows to roost).

IX.—(BURNS)

Weel, gin ye speir, I'm no inclined,
Whusky or tay—to state my mind
Fore ane or ither;
For, gin I tak the first, I'm fou,
And gin the next, I'm dull as you:
Mix a' thegither.

X.—(WALT WHITMAN)

One cup for my self-hood,
Many for you. Allons, camerados, we will drink together,
O hand-in-hand! That tea-spoon, please, when you've
done with it.
What butter-colored hair you've got. I don't want to be
personal.
All right, then, you needn't. You're a stale-cadaver.
Eighteen-pence if the bottles are returned.
Allons, from all bat-eyed formulas.

Barry Pain [18 –

WORDSWORTH

Two voices are there: one is of the deep;
It learns the storm cloud's thunderous melody,
Now roars, now murmurs with the changing sea,
Now birdlike pipes, now closes soft in sleep;
And one is of an old half-witted sheep
Which bleats articulate monotony,
And indicates that two and one are three,
That grass is green, lakes damp, and mountains steep:
And, Wordsworth, both are thine: at certain times
Forth from the heart of thy melodious rhymes
The form and pressure of high thoughts will burst;
At other times—good Lord! I'd rather be
Quite unacquainted with the A, B, C,
Than write such hopeless rubbish as thy worst.

James Kenneth Stephen [1859–1892]

SONS OF THE EMERALD ISLE

FATHER O'FLYNN

Of priests we can offer a charmin' variety,
Far renowned for larnin' and piety;
Still, I'd advance ye widout impropriety,
Father O'Flynn as the flower of them all.

Here's a health to you, Father O'Flynn,
Sláinte, and *sláinte*, and *sláinte* agin;
Powerfulest preacher, and
Tinderest teacher, and
Kindliest creature in ould Donegal.

Don't talk of your Provost and Fellows of Trinity,
Famous forever at Greek and Latinity,
Faix! and the divels and all at Divinity—
Father O'Flynn 'd make hares of them all!
Come, I vinture to give ye my word,
Niver the likes of his logic was heard,
Down from mythology
Into thayology,
Troth! and conchology if he'd the call.

Och! Father O'Flynn, you've the wonderful way wid you,
All ould sinners are wishful to pray wid you,
All the young childer are wild for to play wid you,
You've such a way wid you, Father avick!
Still, for all you've so gentle a soul,
Gad, you've your flock in the grandest control,
Checking the crazy ones,
Coaxin' onaisy ones,
Liftin' the lazy ones on wid the stick.

And, though quite avoidin' all foolish frivolity,
Still, at all seasons of innocent jollity,
Where was the play-boy could claim an equality
At comicality, Father, wid you?
Once the Bishop looked grave at your jest,
Till this remark set him off wid the rest:
"Is it lave gaiety
All to the laity?
Cannot the clargy be Irishmen too?"

Here's a health to you, Father O'Flynn,
Slâinte, and *slâinte*, and *slâinte* agin;
Powerfulest preacher, and
Tinderest teacher, and
Kindliest creature in ould Donegal.

Alfred Perceval Graves [1846–

FATHER MOLLOY

OR, THE CONFESSION

PADDY MCCABE was dying one day,
And Father Molloy he came to confess him;
Paddy prayed hard he would make no delay,
But forgive him his sins and make haste for to bless him.
"First tell me your sins," says Father Molloy,
"For I'm thinking you've not been a very good boy."
"Oh," says Paddy, "so late in the evenin', I fear
'Twould throuble you such a long story to hear,
For you've ten long miles o'er the mountains to go,
While the road *I've* to travel 's much longer you know.
So give us your blessin' and get in the saddle;
To tell all my sins my poor brain it would addle;
And the docther gave ordhers to keep me so quiet—
'Twould disturb me to tell all my sins, if I'd thry it;
And your Riverence has towld us, unless we tell *all*,
'Tis worse than not makin' confession at all.
So I'll say in a word I'm no very good boy—
And, therefore, your blessin', sweet Father Molloy."

"Well, I'll read from a book," says Father Molloy,
"The manifold sins that humanity's heir to;
And when you hear those that your conscience annoy,
You'll just squeeze my hand, as acknowledging thereto."
Then the father began the dark roll of iniquity,
And Paddy, thereat, felt his conscience grow rickety,
And he gave such a squeeze that the priest gave a roar—
"Oh, murdher!" says Paddy, "don't read any more,
For, if you keep readin', by all that is thrue,
Your Riverence's fist will be soon black and blue;
Besides, to be throubled my conscience begins,
That your Riverence should have any hand in my sins;
So you'd betther suppose I committed them all,
For whether they're great ones, or whether they're small,
Or if they're a dozen, or if they're fourscore,
'Tis your Riverence knows how to absolve them, astore;
So I'll say in a word, I'm no very good boy—
And, therefore, your blessin', sweet Father Molloy."

"Well," says Father Molloy, "if your sins I forgive,
So you must forgive all your enemies truly;
And promise me also that, if you should live,
You'll leave off your old tricks, and begin to live newly."
"I forgive ev'rybody," says Pat, with a groan,
"Except that big vagabone Micky Malone;
And him I will murdher if ever I can—"
"Tut, tut!" says the priest, "you're a very bad man;
For without your forgiveness, and also repentance,
You'll ne'er go to Heaven, and that is my sentence."
"Poo!" says Paddy McCabe, "that's a very hard case—
With your Riverence and Heaven I'm content to make pace;
But with Heaven and your Riverence I wondher—*Och hone*—
You would think of comparin' that blackguard Malone—
But since I'm hard pressed and that I *must* forgive,
I forgive—if I die—but as sure as I live
That ugly blackguard I will surely desthroy!—
So, *now* for your blessin', sweet Father Molloy."

Samuel Lover [1797–1868]

PADDY O'RAFTHER

PADDY, in want of a dinner one day,
Credit all gone, and no money to pay,
Stole from a priest a fat pullet, they say,
And went to confession just after;
"Your riv'rince," says Paddy, "I stole this fat hen."
"What, what!" says the priest, "at your ould thricks again?
Faith, you'd rather be stalin' than sayin' *amen*,
Paddy O'Rafther!"

"Sure, you wouldn't be angry," says Pat, "if you knew
That the best of intintions I had in my view—
For I stole it to make it a prisint to you,
And you can absolve me afther."
"Do you think," says the priest, "I'd partake of your theft?
Of your seven small senses you must be bereft—
You're the biggest blackguard that I know, right and left,
Paddy O'Rafther."

"Then what shall I do with the pullet," says Pat,
"If your riv'rince won't take it? By this and by that
I don't know no more than a dog or a cat
What your riv'rince would have me be afther."
"Why, then," says his rev'rence, "you sin-blinded owl,
Give back to the man that you stole from his fowl:
For if you do not, 'twill be worse for your sowl,
Paddy O'Rafther."

Says Paddy, "I asked him to take it—'tis thrue
As this minit I'm talkin', your riv'rince, to you;
But he wouldn't resaive it—so what can I do?"
Says Paddy, nigh choken with laughter.
"By my throth," says the priest, "but the case is absthruse;
If he won't take his hen, why the man is a goose:
'Tis not the first time my advice was no use,
Paddy O'Rafther.

"But, for sake of your sowl, I would sthrongly advise
To some one in want you would give your supplies—
Some widow, or orphan, with tears in their eyes;

And *then* you may come to *me* afther."
So Paddy went off to the brisk Widow Hoy,
And the pullet between them was eaten with joy,
And, says she, " 'Pon my word, you're the cleverest boy,
Paddy O'Rafther!"

Then Paddy went back to the priest the next day,
And told him the fowl he had given away
To a poor lonely widow, in want and dismay,
The loss of her spouse weeping afther.
"Well, now," says the priest, "I'll absolve you, my lad,
For repentantly making the best of the bad,
In feeding the hungry and cheering the sad,
Paddy O'Rafther!"

Samuel Lover [1797–1868]

LARRIE O'DEE

Now the Widow McGee,
And Larrie O'Dee,
Had two little cottages out on the green,
With just room enough for two pig-pens between.
The widow was young and the widow was fair,
With the brightest of eyes and the brownest of hair,
And it frequently chanced, when she came in the morn,
With the swill for her pig, Larrie came with the corn,
And some of the ears that he tossed from his hand
In the pen of the widow were certain to land.

One morning said he:
"Och! Misthress McGee,
It's a waste of good lumber, this runnin' two rigs,
Wid a fancy purtition betwane our two pigs!"
"Indade, sir, it is!" answered Widow McGee,
With the sweetest of smiles upon Larrie O'Dee.
"And thin, it looks kind o' hard-hearted and mane,
Kapin' two friendly pigs so exsaidenly near
That whiniver one grunts the other can hear,
And yit kape a cruel purtition betwane."

"Schwate Widow McGee,"
Answered Larrie O'Dee,
"If ye fale in your heart we are mane to the pigs,
Ain't we mane to ourselves to be runnin' two rigs?
Och! it made me heart ache when I paped through the cracks
Of me shanty, lasht March, at yez swingin' yer axe;
An' a bobbin' yer head an a-shtompin' yer fate,
Wid yer purty white hands jisht as red as a bate,
A-shplittin' yer kindlin'-wood out in the shtorm,
When one little shtove it would kape us both warm!"

"Now, piggy," says she,
"Larrie's courtin' o' me,
Wid his dilicate tinder allusions to you;
So now yez must tell me jisht what I must do:
For, if I'm to say yes, shtir the swill wid yer snout;
But if I'm to say no, ye must kape yer nose out.
Now, Larrie, for shame! to be bribin' a pig
By tossin' a handful of corn in its shwig!"
"Me darlint, the piggy says yes," answered he.
And that was the courtship of Larrie O'Dee.

William W. Fink [18 –

THE IRISHMAN AND THE LADY

THERE was a lady lived at Leith,
A lady very stylish, man;
And yet, in spite of all her teeth,
She fell in love with an Irishman—
A nasty, ugly Irishman,
A wild, tremendous Irishman,
A tearing, swearing, thumping, bumping, ranting, roaring Irishman.

His face was no ways beautiful,
For with small-pox 'twas scarred across;
And the shoulders of the ugly dog
Were almost double a yard across.

Oh, the lump of an Irishman,
The whiskey-devouring Irishman,
The great he-rogue with his wonderful brogue—the fighting, rioting Irishman.

One of his eyes was bottle-green,
And the other eye was out, my dear;
And the calves of his wicked-looking legs
Were more than two feet about, my dear.
Oh, the great big Irishman,
The rattling, battling Irishman—
The stamping, ramping, swaggering, staggering, leathering swash of an Irishman.

He took so much of Lundy-foot
That he used to snort and snuffle—O!
And in shape and size the fellow's neck
Was as bad as the neck of a buffalo.
Oh, the horrible Irishman,
The thundering, blundering Irishman—
The slashing, dashing, smashing, lashing, thrashing, hashing Irishman.

His name was a terrible name, indeed,
Being Timothy Thady Mulligan;
And whenever he emptied his tumbler of punch
He'd not rest till he filled it full again.
The boozing, bruising Irishman,
The 'toxicated Irishman—
The whiskey, frisky, rummy, gummy, brandy, no dandy Irishman.

This was the lad the lady loved,
Like all the girls of quality;
And he broke the skulls of the men of Leith,
Just by the way of jollity.
Oh, the leathering Irishman,
The barbarous, savage Irishman—
The hearts of the maids, and the gentlemen's heads, were bothered I'm sure by this Irishman.

William Maginn [1793–1842]

IRISH ASTRONOMY

A VERITABLE MYTH, TOUCHING THE CONSTELLATION OF O'RYAN, IGNORANTLY AND FALSELY SPELLED ORION

O'RYAN was a man of might
Whin Ireland was a nation,
But poachin' was his heart's delight
And constant occupation.
He had an ould militia gun,
And sartin sure his aim was;
He gave the keepers many a run
And wouldn't mind the game laws.

St. Pathrick wanst was passin' by
O'Ryan's little houldin',
And, as the saint felt wake and dhry,
He thought he'd enther bould in.
"O'Ryan," says the saint, "avick!
To praich at Thurles I'm goin',
So let me have a rasher quick,
And a dhrop of Innishowen."

"No rasher will I cook for you,
While betther is to spare, sir,
But here's a jug of mountain dew,
And there's a rattlin' hare, sir."
St. Pathrick he looked mighty sweet,
And says he, "Good luck attind you,
And, when you're in your windin' sheet,
It's up to heaven I'll sind you."

O'Ryan gave his pipe a whiff—
"Them tidin's is thransportin';
But may I ax your saintship if
There's any kind of sportin'?"
St. Pathrick said, "A Lion's there,
Two Bears, a Bull, and Cancer"—
"Bedad," says Mick, "the huntin's rare;
St. Pathrick, I'm your man, sir."

So, to conclude my song aright,
For fear I'd tire your patience,
You'll see O'Ryan any night
Amid the constellations.
And Venus follows in his track,
Till Mars grows jealous raally,
But, faith, he fears the Irish knack
Of handling the shillaly.

Charles Graham Halpine [1829–1868]

THE FIDDLER OF DOONEY

When I play on my fiddle in Dooney,
Folk dance like a wave of the sea;
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Moharabuiee.

I passed my brother and cousin:
They read in their books of prayer;
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.

When we come at the end of time,
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate;

For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle,
And the merry love to dance:

And when the folk there spy me,
They all come up to me,
With "Here is the fiddler of Dooney!"
And dance like a wave of the sea.

William Butler Yeats [1865–

THE BIRTH OF ST. PATRICK

On the eighth day of March it was, some people say,
That Saint Pathrick at midnight he first saw the day;
While others declare 'twas the ninth he was born,
And 'twas all a mistake between midnight and morn;
For mistakes will occur in a hurry and shock,
And some blamed the babby—and some blamed the clock—
Till with all their cross-questions sure no one could know
If the child was too fast, or the clock was too slow.

Now the first faction-fight in owld Ireland, they say,
Was all on account of Saint Pathrick's birthday:
Some fought for the eighth—for the ninth more would die,
And who wouldn't see right, sure they blackened his eye!
At last, both the factions so positive grew,
That each kept a birthday, so Pat then had two,
Till Father Mulcahy, who showed them their sins,
Said, "No one could have two birthdays, but a twins."

Says he, "Boys, don't be fightin' for eight or for nine,
Don't be always dividin'—but sometimes combine;
Combine eight with nine, and seventeen is the mark,
So let that be his birthday."—"Amen," says the clerk.
"If he wasn't a twins, sure our hist'ry will show
That, at least, he's worth any two saints that we know!"
Then they all got blind dhrunk—which complated their bliss,
And we keep up the practice from that day to this.

Samuel Lover [1797–1864]

SAINT PATRICK

St. Patrick was a gentleman,
Who came of decent people;
He built a church in Dublin town,
And on it put a steeple.
His father was a Gallagher;
His mother was a Brady;
His aunt was an O'Shaughnessy,
His uncle an O'Grady.

So, success attend St. Patrick's fist,
For he's a saint so clever;
Oh! he gave the snakes and toads a twist,
And bothered them forever!

The Wicklow hills are very high,
And so's the Hill of Howth, sir;
But there's a hill, much bigger still,
Much higher nor them both, sir:
'Twas on the top of this high hill
St. Patrick preached his sarmint
That drove the frogs into the bogs,
And banished all the varmint.

There's not a mile in Ireland's isle
Where dirty varmin musters,
But where he put his dear fore-foot,
And murdered them in clusters.
The toads went pop, the frogs went hop,
Slap-dash into the water;
And the snakes committed suicide
To save themselves from slaughter.

Nine hundred thousand reptiles blue
He charmed with sweet discourses,
And dined on them at Killaloe
In soups and second courses.
Where blind-worms crawling in the grass
Disgusted all the nation,
He gave them a rise, which opened their eyes
To a sense of their situation.

No wonder that those Irish lads
Should be so gay and frisky,
For sure St. Pat he taught them that,
As well as making whiskey;
No wonder that the saint himself
Should understand distilling,
Since his mother kept a shebeen-shop
In the town of Enniskillen.

O, was I but so fortunate
As to be back in Munster,
'Tis I'd be bound that from that ground
I never more would once stir.
For there St. Patrick planted turf,
And plenty of the praties,
With pigs galore, ma gra, ma 'store,
And cabbages—and ladies!
So, success attend St. Patrick's fist,
For he's a saint so clever;
O, he gave the snakes and toads a twist
And bothered them forever!

Henry Bennett [1785– ?]

MR. MOLONY'S ACCOUNT OF THE BALL

GIVEN TO THE NEPAULESE AMBASSADOR BY THE PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL COMPANY

O WILL ye choose to hear the news?
Bedad, I cannot pass it o'er:
I'll tell you all about the Ball
To the Naypaulase Ambassador.
Begor! this fête all balls does bate,
At which I've worn a pump, and I
Must here relate the splendthor great
Of th' Oriental Company.

These men of sinse dispoised expinse,
To fête these black Achilleses.
"We'll show the blacks," says they, "Almack's,
And take the rooms at Willis's."
With flags and shawls, for these Nepauls,
They hung the rooms of Willis up,
And decked the walls, and stairs, and halls
With roses and with lilies up.

And Jullien's band it tuck its stand
So sweetly in the middle there,
And soft bassoons played heavenly chunes,
And violins did fiddle there.

And when the Coort was tired of spoort,
I'd lave you, boys, to think there was
A nate buffet before them set,
Where lashins of good dhrink there was!

At ten before the ball-room door,
His moighty Excellency was;
He smoiled and bowed to all the crowd,
So gorgeous and immense he was.
His dusky shuit, sublime and mute,
Into the doorway followed him;
And O the noise of the blackguard boys,
As they hurrood and hollowed him!

The noble Chair stud at the stair,
And bade the dthrums to thump; and he
Did thus evince, to that Black Prince,
The welcome of his Company.
O fair the girls, and rich the curls,
And bright the oys, you saw there, was;
And fixed each oye ye there could spoi,
On Gineral Jung Bahawther was!

This Gineral great then tuck his sate,
With all the other ginerals,
(Bedad, his troat, his belt, his coat,
All bleezed with precious minerals);
And as he there, with princely air,
Recloinin on his cushion was,
All round about his royal chair,
The squeezin and the pushin was.

O Pat, such girls, such Jukes and Earls,
Such fashion and nobilitee!
Just think of Tim, and fancy him
Amidst the hoigh gentility!
There was Lord De L'Huys, and the Portygeese
Ministher and his lady there,
And I reckonized, with much surprise,
Our messmate, Bob O'Grady, there;

There was Baroness Brunow, that looked like Juno,
And Baroness Rehausen there,
And Countess Roullier, that looked peculiar
Well, in her robes of gauze in there.
There was Lord Crowhurst (I knew him first
When only Mr. Pips he was),
And Mick O'Toole, the great big fool,
That after supper tipsy was.

There was Lord Fingall and his ladies all,
And Lords Killeen and Dufferin,
And Paddy Fife, with his fat wife,—
I wondther how he could stuff her in.
There was Lord Belfast, that by me passed,
And seemed to ask how should *I* go there?
And the Widow Macrae, and Lord A. Hay,
And the Marchioness of Sligo there.

Yes, Jukes and Earls, and diamonds and pearls,
And pretty girls, was spoorting there;
And some beside (the rogues!) I spied,
Behind the windies, coorting there.
O, there's one I know, bedad, would show
As beautiful as any there;
And I'd like to hear the pipers blow,
And shake a fut with Fanny there!

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

BACHELOR'S HALL

Bachelor's Hall! what a quare-lookin' place it is!
Kape me from sich all the days of me life!
Sure, but I think what a burnin' disgrace it is,
Niver at all to be gettin' a wife.

Say the old bachelor, gloomy an' sad enough,
Placin' his tay-kettle over the fire;
Soon it tips over—Saint Patrick! he's mad enough,
If he were prisent, to fight with the squire!

Now, like a pig in a mortar-bed wallowin',
  Say the old bachelor kneading his dough;
Troth, if his bread he could ate without swallowin',
  How it would favor his palate, ye know!

He looks for the platter—Grimalkin is scourin' it!
  Sure, at a baste like that, swearin' 's no sin;
His dishcloth is missing; the pigs are devourin' it—
  Thunder and turf! what a pickle he's in!

When his male's over, the table's left sittin' so;
  Dishes, take care of yourselves, if ye can;
Divil a drop of hot water will visit ye,—
  Och, let him alone for a baste of a man!

Pots, dishes, pans, an' such grasy commodities,
  Ashes and praty-skins, kiver the floor;
His cupboard's a storehouse of comical oddities,
  Sich as had niver been neighbors before.

Late in the night, when he goes to bed shiverin',
  Niver a bit is the bed made at all;
He crapes like a terrapin under the kiverin';—
  Bad luck to the pictur of Bachelor's Hall!

John Finley [1796–1866]

THE SABINE FARMER'S SERENADE

'Twas on a windy night,
  At two o'clock in the morning,
An Irish lad so tight,
  All wind and weather scorning,
At Judy Callaghan's door,
  Sitting upon the palings,
His love-tale he did pour,
  And this was part of his wailings:—
    Only say
  You'll be Mrs. Brallaghan;
    Don't say nay,
  Charming Judy Callaghan.

Oh! list to what I say,
Charms you've got like Venus;
Own your love you may,
There's but the wall between us.
You lie fast asleep
Snug in bed and snoring;
Round the house I creep,
Your hard heart imploring.

I've got a pig and a sow,
I've got a sty to sleep 'em
A calf and a brindled cow,
And a cabin too, to keep 'em;
Sunday hat and coat,
An old gray mare to ride on,
Saddle and bridle to boot,
Which you may ride astride on.

I've got an acre of ground,
I've got it set with praties;
I've got of 'baccy a pound,
I've got some tea for the ladies;
I've got the ring to wed,
Some whiskey to make us gaily;
I've got a feather bed
And a handsome new shillelagh.

You've got a charming eye,
You've got some spelling and reading
You've got, and so have I,
A taste for genteel breeding;
You're rich, and fair, and young,
As everybody's knowing;
You've got a decent tongue
Whene'er 'tis set a-going.

For a wife till death
I am willing to take ye;
But, och! I waste my breath,
The devil himself can't wake ye.

'Tis just beginning to rain,
So I'll get under cover;
To-morrow I'll come again,
And be your constant lover.
Only say
You'll be Mrs. Brallaghan;
Don't say nay,
Charming Judy Callaghan.
Francis Sylvester Mahony [1804–1866]

THE WIDOW MALONE

Did ye hear of the Widow Malone,
Ohone!
Who lived in the town of Athlone,
Alone?
Oh! she melted the hearts
Of the swains in them parts,
So lovely the Widow Malone,
Ohone!
So lovely the Widow Malone.

Of lovers she had a full score,
Or more;
And fortunes they all had galore,
In store;
From the minister down
To the Clerk of the Crown,
All were courting the Widow Malone,
Ohone!
All were courting the Widow Malone.

But so modest was Mistress Malone,
'Twas known
No one ever could see her alone,
Ohone!
Let them ogle and sigh,
They could ne'er catch her eye,
So bashful the Widow Malone,
Ohone!
So bashful the Widow Malone.

Till one Mister O'Brien from Clare,—
How quare!
It's little for blushing they care
Down there—
Put his arm round her waist,
Took ten kisses at laste—
"Oh," says he, "you're my Molly Malone,
My own;—
"Oh," says he, "you're my Molly Malone!"

And the widow they all thought so shy,
My eye!
Ne'er thought of a simper or sigh—
For why?
But, "Lucius," says she,
"Since you've now made so free,
You may marry your Molly Malone,
Ohone!
You may marry your Molly Malone."

There's a moral contained in my song,
Not wrong;
And, one comfort, it's not very long,
But strong:
If for widows you die,
Learn *to kiss*, not to sigh,
For they're all like sweet Mistress Malone,
Ohone!
Oh! they're very like Mistress Malone!

Charles James Lever [1806–1872]

WIDOW MACHREE

From "Handy Andy"

Widow Machree, it's no wonder you frown,
Och hone! Widow Machree,
Faith, it ruins your looks, that same dirty black gown,
Och hone! Widow Machree.
How altered your air,
With that close cap you wear—
'Tis destroying your hair

Which should be flowing free;
Be no longer a churl
Of its black silken curl,
Och hone! Widow Machree!

Widow Machree, now the summer is come,
Och hone! Widow Machree,
When everything smiles, should a beauty look glum?
Och hone! Widow Machree.
See, the birds go in pairs,
And the rabbits and hares,—
Why, even the bears
Now in couples agree;
And the mute little fish,
Though they can't spake, they wish,—
Och hone! Widow Machree.

Widow Machree, and when winter comes in,
Och hone! Widow Machree,
To be poking the fire all alone is a sin,
Och hone! Widow Machree.
Sure the shovel and tongs
To each other belongs,
And the kettle sings songs
Full of family glee;
While alone with your cup,
Like a hermit, you sup,
Och hone! Widow Machree.

And how do you know, with the comforts I've towld,
Och hone! Widow Machree,
But you're keeping some poor fellow out in the cowld?
Och hone! Widow Machree.
With such sins on your head
Sure your peace would be fled,
Could you sleep in your bed
Without thinking to see
Some ghost or some sprite,
That would wake you each night,
Crying, "Och hone! Widow Machree"?

Then take my advice, darling Widow Machree,
Och hone! Widow Machree,
And, with my advice, faith, I wish you'd take me,
Och hone! Widow Machree.
You'd have me to desire
Then to stir up the fire,
And sure Hope is no liar
In whispering to me,
That the ghosts would depart,
When you'd me near your heart,
Och hone! Widow Machree!

Samuel Lover [1797–1868]

THE PEACEABLE RACE

"Who says that the Irish are fighters be birth?"
Says little Dan Crone.
"Faix, there's not a more peaceable race on th' earth,
If ye l'ave 'em alone.

"Tim O'Toole? Well, I grant ye now, there is a lad
That's beset wid the curse o' pugnacity bad,
But he's jisht th' ixception that's provin' the rule;
An' what else could ye ask from a lad like O'Toole?
Shure, he's sich a big mountain o' muscle and bone,
Sizin' up to the heft o' some siventeen stone,
That he fair aggravates iv'ry other bould buck
To be wishful to thump him a little for luck,
An' to prove that there's others as clever as him.
Now, I ask ye, suppose ye was sturdy as Tim,
Don't ye think 'twould be right ye should take a delight
In defindin' yer title an' testin' yer might?"
Says little Dan Crone.

"Is it me? Arrah! now it is jokin' ye are.
But I bid ye be careful an' not go too far.
Shure, it's true I'm no more nor the height o' yer waist,
But there's many a bigger has sampled a taste
O' the knuckles that's bunched in this little ould fisht.
Where's the dog wouldn't fight whin his tail gets a twisht?

Do I hunt fur the throuble? Mayhap, now, it's thrue
Upon certain occasions that's jisht what I do.
Shure, how else would they know—I'm that stunted an' small—
I'd the heart of a man in me body at all?"
Says little Dan Crone.

"Well, thin, keep yer opinion. 'Tis little it's worth,"
Says little Dan Crone.
"Faix, we're jisht the most peaceable race on the earth,
If ye l'ave us alone."

Thomas Augustin Daly [1871–

THE RECRUIT

Sez Corporal Madden to Private McFadden:
"Bedad, yer a bad 'un!
Now turn out yer toes!
Yer belt is unhookit,
Yer cap is on crookit,
Ye may not be dhrunk,
But, be jabers, ye look it!
Wan—two!
Wan—two!
Ye monkey-faced divil, I'll jolly ye through!
Wan—two!—
Time! Mark!
Ye march like the aigle in Cintheral Parrk!"

Sez Corporal Madden to Private McFadden:
"A saint it ud sadden
To dhrill such a mug!
Eyes front!—ye baboon, ye!—
Chin up!—ye gossoon, ye!
Ye've jaws like a goat—
Halt! ye leather-lipped loon, ye!
Wan—two!
Wan—two!

Ye whiskered orang-outang, I'll fix you!
Wan—two!—
Time! Mark!
Ye've eyes like a bat!—can ye see in the dark?"

Sez Corporal Madden to Private McFadden:
"Yer figger wants padd'n'—
Sure, man, ye've no shape!
Behind ye yer shoulders
Stick out like two bowlders;
Yer shins is as thin
As a pair of pen-holders!
Wan—two!
Wan—two!
Yer belly belongs on yer back, ye Jew!
Wan—two!—
Time! Mark!
I'm dhry as a dog—I can't shpake but I bark!"

Sez Corporal Madden to Private McFadden:
"Me heart it ud gladden
To blacken yer eye.
Ye're gettin' too bold, ye
Compel me to scold ye,—
'Tis halt! that I say,—
Will ye heed what I told ye?
Wan—two!
Wan—two!
Be jabers, I'm dhryer than Brian Boru!
Wan—two!—
Time! Mark!
What's wur-ruk for chickens is sport for the lark!"

Sez Corporal Madden to Private McFadden:
"I'll not stay a gadd'n
Wid dagoes like you!
I'll travel no farther,
I'm dyin' for—wather;—
Come on, if ye like,—
Can ye loan me a quather?

Ya-as, you,
What,—two?
And ye'll pay the potheen? Ye're a daisy! Whurroo!
You'll do!
Whist! Mark!
The Rigiment's flatthered to own ye, me spark!"

Robert William Chambers [1865–

FINNIGIN TO FLANNIGAN

SUPERINTINDINT wuz Flannigan;
Boss av the siction wuz Finnigin;
Whiniver the kyars got offen the thrack
An' muddled up things t' th' divil an' back,
Finnigin writ it to Flannigan,
Afther the wreck wuz all on agin;
That is, this Finnigin
Repoorted to Flannigan.

Whin Finnigin furst writ to Flannigan,
He writed tin pages—did Finnigin,
An' he tould jist how the smash occurred;
Full minny a tajus, blunderin' wurrd
Did Finnigin write to Flannigan
Afther the kyars had gone on agin.
That wuz how Finnigin
Repoorted to Flannigan.

Now Flannigan knowed more than Finnigin—
He'd more idjucation—had Flannigan;
An' it wore'm clane an' complately out
To tell what Finnigin writ about
In his writin' to Musther Flannigan.
So he writed back to Finnigin:
"Don't do sich a sin agin;
Make 'em brief, Finnigin!"

Whin Finnigin got this from Flannigan,
He blushed rosy rid—did Finnigin;
An' he said: "I'll gamble a whole month's pa-ay
That it will be minny an' minny a da-ay

Befoore Sup'rintindint, that's Flannigan,
Gits a whack at this very same sin agin.
From Finnigin to Flannigan
Repoorts won't be long agin."

. . . . . .

Wan da-ay on the siction av Finnigin,
On the road sup'rintinded be Flannigan,
A rail give way on a bit av a curve
An' some kyars wint off as they made the shwerve.
"There's nobody hurted," sez Finnigin,
"But repoorts must be made to Flannigan."
An' he winked at McGorrigan,
As married a Finnigin.

He wuz shantyin' thin, wuz Finnigin,
As minny a railroader's been agin,
An' the shmoky ol' lamp wuz burnin' bright
In Finnigin's shanty all that night—
Bilin' down his repoort, wuz Finnigin!
An' he writed this here: "Musther Flannigan:
Off agin, on agin,
Gone agin.—Finnigin."

Strickland W. Gillilan [1869–

BARNEY McGEE

Barney McGee, there's no end of good luck in you,
Will-o'-the-wisp, with a flicker of Puck in you,
Wild as a bull-pup and all of his pluck in you,—
Let a man tread on your coat and he'll see!—
Eyes like the lakes of Killarney for clarity,
Nose that turns up without any vulgarity,
Smile like a cherub, and hair that is carroty,—
Wow, you're a rarity, Barney McGee!
Mellow as Tarragon, prouder than Aragon—
Hardly a paragon, you will agree—
Here's all that's fine to you!
Books and old wine to you!
Girls be divine to you, Barney McGee!

Lucky the day when I met you unwittingly,
Dining where vagabonds came and went flittingly.
Here's some *Barbera* to drink it befittingly,
That day at *Silvio's*, Barney McGee!
Many's the time we have quaffed our Chianti there,
Listened to Silvio quoting us Dante there,—
Once more to drink *Nebiolo spumante* there,
How we'd pitch Pommery into the sea!
There where the gang of us met ere Rome rang of us,
They had the hang of us to a degree.
How they would trust to you!
That was but just to you.
Here's o'er their dust to you, Barney McGee!

Barney McGee, when you're sober you scintillate,
But when you're in drink you're the pride of the intellect;
Divil a one of us ever came in till late,
Once at the bar where you happened to be—
Every eye there like a spoke in you centering,
You with your eloquence, blarney, and bantering—
All Vagabondia shouts at your entering,
King of the Tenderloin, Barney McGee!
There's no satiety in your society
With the variety of your *esprit.*
Here's a long purse to you,
And a great thirst to you!
Fate be no worse to you, Barney McGee!

Och, and the girls whose poor hearts you deracinate,
Whirl and bewilder and flutter and fascinate!
Faith, it's so killing you are, you assassinate,—
Murder's the word for you, Barney McGee!
Bold when they're sunny and smooth when they're showery,—
Oh, but the style of you, fluent and flowery!
Chesterfield's way, with a touch of the Bowery!
How would they silence you, Barney *machree?*
Naught can your gab allay, learned as Rabelais
(You in his abbey lay once on a spree).
Here's to the smile of you
(Oh, but the guile of you!)
And a long while of you, Barney McGee!

Facile with phrases of length and Latinity,
Like *honorificabilitudinity*,
Where is the maid could resist your vicinity,
Wiled by the impudent grace of your plea?
Then your vivacity and pertinacity
Carry the day with the divil's audacity;
No mere veracity robs your sagacity
Of perspicacity, Barney McGee.
When all is new to them, what will you do to them?
Will you be true to them? Who shall decree?
Here's a fair strife to you!
Health and long life to you!
And a great wife to you, Barney McGee!

Barney McGee, you're the pick of gentility;
Nothing can phase you, you've such a facility;
Nobody ever yet found your utility,—
That is the charm of you, Barney McGee;
Under conditions that others would stammer in,
Still unperturbed as a cat or a Cameron,
Polished as somebody in the Decameron,
Putting the glamor on prince or Pawnee!
In your meanderin', love, and philanderin',
Calm as a mandarin sipping his tea!
Under the art of you,
Parcel and part of you,
Here's to the heart of you, Barney McGee!

You who were ever alert to befriend a man,
You who were ever the first to defend a man,
You who had always the money to lend a man,
Down on his luck and hard up for a V!
Sure, you'll be playing a harp in beatitude
(And a quare sight you will be in that attitude)—
Some day, where gratitude seems but a platitude,
You'll find your latitude, Barney McGee.
That's no flim-flam at all, frivol or sham at all,
Just the plain— Damn it all, have one with me!
Here's luck and more to you!
Friends by the score to you,
True to the core to you, Barney McGee!

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

PIPE AND CAN

A RELIGIOUS USE OF TOBACCO

THE Indian weed now withered quite;
Green at morn, cut down at night;
Shows thy decay: all flesh is hay:
  Thus think, then drink Tobacco.

And when the smoke ascends on high,
Think thou behold'st the vanity
Of worldly stuff, gone with a puff:
  Thus think, then drink Tobacco.

But when the pipe grows foul within,
Think of thy soul defiled with sin,
And that the fire doth it require:
  Thus think, then drink Tobacco.

The ashes, that are left behind,
May serve to put thee still in mind
That unto dust return thou must:
  Thus think, then drink Tobacco.

Robert Wisdome (?) [?–1568]

ODE TO TOBACCO

THOU who, when fears attack,
Bid'st them avaunt, and Black
Care, at the horseman's back
    Perching, unseatest;
Sweet when the morn is gray;
Sweet, when they've cleared away
Lunch; and at close of day
    Possibly sweetest:

I have a liking old
For thee, though manifold
Stories, I know, are told,

Not to thy credit;
How one (or two at most)
Drops make a cat a ghost—
Useless, except to roast—
Doctors have said it:

How they who use fusees
All grow by slow degrees
Brainless as chimpanzees,
Meagre as lizards;
Go mad, and beat their wives;
Plunge (after shocking lives)
Razors and carving-knives
Into their gizzards.

Confound such knavish tricks!
Yet know I five or six
Smokers who freely mix
Still with their neighbors;
Jones—(who, I'm glad to say,
Asked leave of Mrs. J.)—
Daily absorbs a clay
After his labors.

Cats may have had their goose
Cooked by tobacco-juice;
Still why deny its use
Thoughtfully taken?
We're not as tabbies are:
Smith, take a fresh cigar!
Jones, the tobacco-jar!
Here's to thee, Bacon!

Charles Stuart Calverley [1831–1884]

THE PIPE OF TOBACCO

Let the toper regale in his tankard of ale,
Or with alcohol moisten his thrapple,—
Only give me, I pray, a good pipe of soft clay,
Nicely tapered and thin in the stapple;—

And I shall puff, puff—let who will say enough!
No luxury else I'm in lack o',—
No malice I hoard 'gainst Queen, Prince, Duke, or Lord,
While I pull at my Pipe of Tobacco.

When I feel the hot strife of the battle of life,
And the prospect is aught but enticin'—
Mayhap some real ill, like a protested bill,
Dims the sunshine that tinged the horizon,—
Only let me puff, puff—be they ever so rough,
All the sorrows of life I lose track o';
The mists disappear, and the vista is clear,
With a soothing mild Pipe of Tobacco.

And when joy after pain, like the sun after rain,
Stills the waters long turbid and troubled,
That life's current may flow with a ruddier glow,
And the sense of enjoyment be doubled,—
Oh! let me puff, puff—till I feel *quantum suff.*
Such luxury still I'm in lack o'!
Be joy ever so sweet, it would be incomplete
Without a good Pipe of Tobacco.

Should my recreant muse—sometimes apt to refuse
The guidance of bit and of bridle—
Still blankly demur, spite of whip and of spur,
Unimpassioned, inconstant, or idle,—
Only let me puff, puff—till the brain cries enough;—
Such excitement is all I'm in lack o';
And the poetic vein soon to fancy gives rein,
Inspired by a Pipe of Tobacco.

And when with one accord, round the jovial board,
In friendship our bosoms are glowing,
While with toast and with song we the evening prolong,
And with nectar the goblets are flowing—
Still let us puff, puff—be life smooth, be it rough,
Such enjoyment we're ever in lack o':
The more peace and good-will will abound as we fill
A jolly good Pipe of Tobacco!

John Usher [?]

INTER SODALES

Over a pipe the Angel of Conversation
Loosens with glee the tassels of his purse,
And, in a fine spiritual exaltation,
Hastens, a rosy spendthrift, to disburse
The coins new-minted of imagination.

An amiable, a delicate animation
Informs our thought, and earnest we rehearse
The sweet old farce of mutual admiration
Over a pipe.

Heard in this hour's delicious divagation
How soft the song! the epigram how terse!
With what a genius for administration
We rearrange the rumbling universe,
And map the course of man's regeneration
Over a pipe!

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

AN INVITATION

I beg you come tonight and dine.
A welcome waits you, and sound wine,—
The Roederer chilly to a charm,
As Juno's breath the claret warm,
The sherry of an ancient brand.
No Persian pomp, you understand,—
A soup, a fish, two meats, and then
A salad fit for aldermen
(When aldermen, alas the days!
Were really worth their *mayonnaise*);
A dish of grapes whose clusters won
Their bronze in Carolinian sun;
Next, cheese—for you the Neufchâtel,
A bit of Cheshire likes me well;
Café au lait or coffee black,
With Kirsch or Kümmel or cognac

(The German band in Irving Place
By this time purple in the face);
Cigars and pipes. These being through,
Friends shall drop in, a very few—
Shakespeare and Milton, and no more.
When these are guests I bolt the door,
With "Not at home" to anyone
Excepting Alfred Tennyson.

Unknown

AD MINISTRAM*

AFTER HORACE

Dear Lucy, you know what my wish is,—
I hate all your Frenchified fuss;
Your silly entrées and made dishes
Were never intended for us.
No footman in lace and in ruffles
Need dangle behind my arm-chair;
And never mind seeking for truffles,
Although they be ever so rare.

But a plain leg of mutton, my Lucy,
I prithee get ready at three:
Have it smoking, and tender and juicy,
And what better meat can there be?
And when it has feasted the master,
'Twill amply suffice for the maid;
Meanwhile I will smoke my canaster,
And tipple my ale in the shade.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

A SALAD

To make this condiment, your poet begs
The pounded yellow of two hard-boiled eggs;
Two boiled potatoes, passed through kitchen sieve,
Smoothness and softness to the salad give;
Let onion atoms lurk within the bowl,
And, half-suspected, animate the whole.
Of mordant mustard add a single spoon,
Distrust the condiment that bites so soon;

* For the original of this poem see page 3577.

But deem it not, thou man of herbs, a fault,
To add a double quantity of salt;
Four times the spoon with oil from Lucca drown,
And twice with vinegar procured from town;
And, lastly, o'er the flavored compound toss
A magic soupçon of anchovy sauce.
Oh, green and glorious! Oh, herbaceous treat!
'Twould tempt the dying anchorite to eat:
Back to the world he'd turn his fleeting soul,
And plunge his fingers in the salad-bowl!
Serenely full, the epicure would say,
Fate cannot harm me, I have dined to-day.

Sydney Smith [1771–1845]

VERSES PLACED OVER THE DOOR AT THE ENTRANCE INTO THE APOLLO ROOM AT THE DEVIL TAVERN

Welcome all who lead or follow,
To the Oracle of Apollo—
Here he speaks out of his pottle,
Or the tripos, his tower bottle:
All his answers are divine,
Truth itself doth flow in wine.
Hang up all the poor hop-drinkers,
Cries old Sim, the king of skinkers;
He the half of life abuses,
That sits watering with the Muses.
Those dull girls no good can mean us;
Wine it is the milk of Venus,
And the poet's horse accounted:
Ply it, and you all are mounted.
'Tis the true Phœbian liquor,
Cheers the brain, makes wit the quicker,
Pays all debts, cures all diseases,
And at once three senses pleases.
Welcome all who lead or follow,
To the Oracle of Apollo.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

LINES ON THE MERMAID TAVERN

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Dressed as though bold Robin Hood
Would, with his Maid Marian,
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away
Nobody knew whither, till
An Astrologer's old quill
To a sheepskin gave the story,—
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new-old Sign
Sipping beverage divine,
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac!

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known—
Happy field or mossy cavern—
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

John Keats [1795–1821]

"GIVE ME ALE"

When as the chill Sirocco blows,
And Winter tells a heavy tale;
When pyes and daws and rooks and crows
Sit cursing of the frosts and snows;
Then give me ale.

Ale in a Saxon rumkin then,
  Such as will make grimalkin prate;
Bids valor burgeon in tall men,
Quickens the poet's wit and pen,
    Despises fate.

Ale, that the absent battle fights,
  And frames the march of Swedish drum,
Disputes with princes, laws, and rights,
What's done and past tells mortal wights,
    And what's to come.

Ale, that the plowman's heart up-keeps
  And equals it with tyrants' thrones,
That wipes the eye that over-weeps,
And lulls in sure and dainty sleeps
    The o'er-wearied bones.

Grandchild of Ceres, Bacchus' daughter,
  Wine's emulous neighbor, though but stale,
Ennobling all the nymphs of water,
And filling each man's heart with laughter—
    Ha! give me ale!

Unknown.

"JOLLY GOOD ALE AND OLD"

From "Gammer Gurton's Needle"

I CANNOT eat but little meat,
  My stomach is not good;
But sure I think that I can drink
  With him that wears a hood.
Though I go bare, take ye no care,
  I nothing am a-cold;
I stuff my skin so full within
  Of jolly good ale and old.
    Back and side go bare, go bare;
    Both foot and hand go cold;
    But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
    Whether it be new or old.

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast,
And a crab laid in the fire;
A little bread shall do me stead;
Much bread I not desire.
No frost nor snow, no wind, I trow,
Can hurt me if I wold;
I am so wrapped and thoroughly lapped
Of jolly good ale and old.

And Tib, my wife, that as her life
Loveth well good ale to seek,
Full oft drinks she till ye may see
The tears run down her cheek:
Then doth she trowl to me the bowl
Even as a maltworm should,
And saith, "Sweetheart, I took my part
Of this jolly good ale and old."

Now let them drink till they nod and wink,
Even as good fellows should do;
They shall not miss to have the bliss
Good ale doth bring men to;
And all poor souls that have scoured bowls
Or have them lustily trolled,
God save the lives of them and their wives,
Whether they be young or old.
Back and side go bare, go bare;
Both foot and hand go cold;
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

John Still [1543?–1608]

DRINK TO-DAY

From "The Bloody Brother"

Drink to-day, and drown all sorrow;
You shall perhaps not do it to-morrow:
Best, while you have it, use your breath;
There is no drinking after death.

Wine works the heart up, wakes the wit,
There is no cure 'gainst age but it:
It helps the headache, cough, and phthisic,
And is for all diseases physic.

Then let us swill, boys, for our health;
Who drinks well, loves the commonwealth.
And he that will to bed go sober
Falls with the leaf still in October.

John Fletcher [1579–1625]

CORONEMUS NOS ROSIS ANTEQUAM MARCESCANT

Let us drink and be merry, dance, joke, and rejoice,
With claret and sherry, theorbo and voice!
The changeable world to our joy is unjust,
All treasure's uncertain,
Then down with your dust!
In frolics dispose your pounds, shillings, and pence,
For we shall be nothing a hundred years hence.

We'll sport and be free with Moll, Betty, and Dolly,
Have oysters and lobsters to cure melancholy:
Fish-dinners will make a man spring like a flea,
Dame Venus, love's lady,
Was born of the sea:
With her and with Bacchus we'll tickle the sense,
For we shall be past it a hundred years hence.

Your most beautiful bride who with garlands is crowned
And kills with each glance as she treads on the ground,
Whose lightness and brightness doth shine in such splendor
That none but the stars
Are thought fit to attend her,
Though now she be pleasant and sweet to the sense,
Will be damnable mouldy a hundred years hence.

Then why should we turmoil in cares and in fears,
Turn all our tranquill'ty to sighs and to tears?

Let's eat, drink, and play till the worms do corrupt us,
'Tis certain, *Post mortem*
Nulla voluptas.
For health, wealth and beauty, wit, learning and sense,
Must all come to nothing a hundred years hence.

Thomas Jordan [1612?–1685]

THE EPICURE

AFTER ANACREON

Fill the bowl with rosy wine,
Around our temples roses twine,
And let us cheerfully awhile,
Like the wine and roses, smile.
Crowned with roses, we contemn
Gyges' wealthy diadem.

To-day is ours; what do we fear?
To-day is ours; we have it here!
Let's treat it kindly, that it may
Wish, at least, with us to stay.
Let's banish business, banish sorrow,
To the gods belongs to-morrow.

Abraham Cowley [1618–1667]

DRINKING

AFTER ANACREON

The thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
And drinks, and gapes for drink again;
The plants suck in the earth, and are,
With constant drinking, fresh and fair;
The sea itself (which one would think
Should have but little need of drink),
Drinks twice ten thousand rivers up,
So filled that they o'erflow the cup.
The busy sun (and one would guess
By's drunken fiery face no less),

Drinks up the sea, and, when he's done,
The moon and stars drink up the sun:
They drink and dance by their own light;
They drink and revel all the night.
Nothing in nature's sober found,
But an eternal "health" goes round.
Fill up the bowl then, fill it high—
Fill all the glasses there; for why
Should every creature drink but I?
Why, men of morals, tell me why?

Abraham Cowley [1618–1667]

THE WINTER GLASS

THEN let the chill Sirocco blow,
And gird us round with hills of snow;
Or else go whistle to the shore,
And make the hollow mountains roar.

Whilst we together jovial sit
Careless, and crowned with mirth and wit;
Where though bleak winds confine us home,
Our fancies round the world shall roam.

We'll think of all the friends we know,
And drink to all worth drinking to:
When having drank all thine and mine,
We rather shall want health than wine.

But where friends fail us, we'll supply
Our friendships with our charity.
Men that remote in sorrows live,
Shall by our lusty brimmers thrive.

We'll drink the wanting into wealth,
And those that languish into health,
The afflicted into joy, the oppressed
Into security and rest.

The worthy in disgrace shall find
Favor return again more kind,
And in restraint who stifled lie,
Shall taste the air of liberty.

The brave shall triumph in success,
The lovers shall have mistresses,
Poor unregarded virtue praise,
And the neglected poet bays.

Thus shall our healths do others good,
Whilst we ourselves do all we would;
For freed from envy and from care,
What would we be but what we are?

'Tis the plump grape's immortal juice
That does this happiness produce,
And will preserve us free together,
Maugre mischance, or wind and weather.

Then let old Winter take his course,
And roar abroad till he be hoarse,
And his lungs crack with ruthless ire,
It shall but serve to blow our fire.

Let him our little castle ply
With all his loud artillery,
Whilst sack and claret man the fort,
His fury shall become our sport.

Or, let him Scotland take, and there
Confine the plotting Presbyter;
His zeal may freeze, whilst we, kept warm
With love and wine, can know no harm.

Charles Cotton [1630–1687]

HARRY CAREY'S GENERAL REPLY, TO THE LIBELLING GENTRY, WHO ARE ANGRY AT HIS WELFARE

With an honest old friend and a merry old song,
And a flask of old port, let me sit the night long,
And laugh at the malice of those who repine
That they must swig porter while I can drink wine.

I envy no mortal though ever so great,
Nor scorn I a wretch for his lowly estate;
But what I abhor and esteem as a curse
Is poorness of Spirit, not poorness of Purse.

Then dare to be generous, dauntless, and gay,
Let's merrily pass life's remainder away;
Upheld by our friends, we our foes may despise,
For the more we are envied, the higher we rise.

Henry Carey [? –1743]

GAFFER GRAY

"Ho! why dost thou shiver and shake,
Gaffer Gray,
And why doth thy nose look so blue?"
" 'Tis the weather that's cold,
'Tis I'm grown very old,
And my doublet is not very new,
Well-a-day!"

"Then line that warm doublet with ale,
Gaffer Gray,
And warm thy old heart with a glass."
"Nay, but credit I've none,
And my money's all gone;
Then say how may that come to pass?
Well-a-day!"

"Hie away to the house on the brow,
Gaffer Gray,
And knock at the jolly priest's door."
"The priest often preaches
Against worldly riches,
But ne'er gives a mite to the poor,
Well-a-day!"

"The lawyer lives under the hill,
Gaffer Gray,
Warmly fenced both in back and in front."

"He will fasten his locks,
And will threaten the stocks,
Should he evermore find me in want.
Well-a-day!"

"The squire has fat beeves and brown ale,
Gaffer Gray,
And the season will welcome you there."
"His fat beeves and his beer,
And his merry new year,
Are all for the flush and the fair,
Well-a-day!"

"My keg is but low, I confess,
Gaffer Gray,
What then? While it lasts, man, we'll live."
"The poor man alone,
When he hears the poor moan,
Of his morsel a morsel will give,
Well-a-day."

Thomas Holcroft [1745–1809]

"A REASON FAIR TO FILL MY GLASS"

I've oft been asked by prosing souls
And men of sober tongue,
What joys there are in draining bowls
And tippling all night long?
But though these cautious knaves I scorn,
For once I'll not disdain
To tell them why I drink till morn
And fill my glass again.

'Tis by the glow my bumper gives
Life's picture's mellow made;
The fading light then brightly lives,
And softly sinks the shade:
Some happier tint still rises there
With every drop I drain,
And that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

My muse, too, when her wings are dry,
No frolic flight will take,
But round the bowl she'll dip and fly
Like swallows round a lake;
Then if the nymphs will have their share
Before they'll bless their swain,
Why that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

In life I've rung all changes through,
Run every pleasure down
'Mid each extreme of folly, too,
And lived with half the town;
For me there's nothing new or rare
Till wine deceives my brain,
And that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

There's many a lad I knew is dead,
And many a lass grown old,
And as the lesson strikes my head
My weary heart grows cold;
But wine awhile drives off despair,
Nay, bids a hope remain,
Why, that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

I find too when I stint my glass
And sit with sober air,
I'm posed by some dull reasoning ass
Who treads the path of care;
Or, harder still, am doomed to bear
Some coxcomb's fribbling strain,
And that I'm sure's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

Though hipped and vexed at England's fate
In these convulsive days,
I can't endure the ruined state
My sober eye surveys;

But through the bottle's dazzling glare
The gloom is seen less plain,
And that I think's a reason fair
To fill my glass again.

Charles Morris [1745–1838]

"LET THE TOAST PASS"

From "The School for Scandal"

HERE'S to the maiden of bashful fifteen,
Here's to the widow of fifty;
Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,
And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.

Let the toast pass,
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize,
Now to the maid who has none, sir;
Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,
And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow,
And to her that's as brown as a berry;
Here's to the wife, with a face full of woe,
And now to the girl that is merry.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,
Young or ancient, I care not a feather;
So fill the pint bumper quite up to the brim,
So fill up your glasses, nay fill to the brim,
And let us e'en toast them together.

Let the toast pass,
Drink to the lass,
I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan [1751–1816]

THE YEAR THAT'S AWA'

HERE'S to the year that's awa'!
We will drink it in strong and in sma';
And here's to ilk bonnie young lassie we lo'ed,
While swift flew the year that's awa'.

Here's to the sodger who bled,
And the sailor who bravely did fa';
Their fame is alive though their spirits are fled
On the wings of the year that's awa'.

Here's to the friends we can trust
When storms of adversity blaw;
May they live in our songs and be nearest our hearts,
Nor depart like the year that's awa'.

John Dunlop [1755–1820]

JOHN BARLEYCORN

THERE were three kings into the east,
Three kings both great and high;
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn should die.

They took a plough and ploughed him down,
Put clods upon his head;
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
John Barleycorn was dead.

But the cheerful spring came kindly on,
And showers began to fall:
John Barleycorn got up again,
And sore surprised them all.

The sultry suns of summer came,
And he grew thick and strong;
His head weel armed wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

The sober autumn entered mild,
When he grew wan and pale;
His bending joints and drooping head
Showed he began to fail.

His color sickened more and more,
He faded into age;
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.

They've ta'en a weapon, long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee;
Then tied him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgelled him full sore;
They hung him up before the storm,
And turned him o'er and o'er.

They filled up a darksome pit
With water to the brim:
They heaved in John Barleycorn,
There let him sink or swim.

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him further woe:
And still, as signs of life appeared,
They tossed him to and fro.

They wasted o'er a scorching flame
The marrow of his bones;
But a miller used him worst of all,
For he crushed him 'tween two stones.

And they hae ta'en his very heart's blood,
And drank it round and round,
And still the more and more they drank,
Their joy did more abound.

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
Of noble enterprise;
For if you do but taste his blood,
'Twill make your courage rise.

'Twill make a man forget his woe;
'Twill heighten all his joy:
'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
Though the tear were in her eye.

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
Each man a glass in hand;
And may his great posterity
Ne'er fail in old Scotland!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"FILL THE BUMPER FAIR"

Fill the bumper fair!
Every drop we sprinkle
O'er the brow of Care
Smooths away a wrinkle.
Wit's electric flame
Ne'er so swiftly passes
As when through the frame
It shoots from brimming glasses.
Fill the bumper fair!
Every drop we sprinkle
O'er the brow of Care
Smooths away a wrinkle.

Sages can, they say,
Grasp the lightning's pinions,
And bring down its ray
From the starred dominions:—
So we, Sages, sit,
And, 'mid bumpers bright'ning,
From the Heaven of Wit
Draw down all its lightning.

Wouldst thou know what first
Made our souls inherit
This ennobling thirst
From wine's celestial spirit?
It chanced upon that day,
When, as bards inform us,
Prometheus stole away
The living fires that warm us:

The careless Youth, when up
To Glory's fount aspiring,
Took nor urn nor cup
To hide the pilfered fire in.—
But, oh his joy, when, round
The halls of Heaven spying,
Among the stars he found
A bowl of Bacchus lying!

Some drops were in that bowl,
Remains of last night's pleasure,
With which the Sparks of Soul
Mixed their burning treasure.
Hence the goblet's shower
Hath such spells to win us;
Hence its mighty power
O'er the flame within us.
Fill the bumper fair!
Every drop we sprinkle
O'er the brow of Care
Smooths away a wrinkle.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"WREATHE THE BOWL"

Wreathe the bowl
With flowers of soul,
The brightest Wit can find us;
We'll take a flight
Towards heaven to-night,

And leave dull earth behind us!
Should Love amid
The wreaths be hid
That Joy, the enchanter, brings us,
No danger fear
While wine is near—
We'll drown him if he stings us.
Then, wreathe the bowl
With flowers of soul,
The brightest Wit can find us;
We'll take a flight
Towards heaven to-night,
And leave dull earth behind us!

'Twas nectar fed
Of old, 'tis said,
Their Junos, Joves, Apollos;
And man may brew
His nectar too;
The rich receipt's as follows:—
Take wine like this;
Let looks of bliss
Around it well be blended;
Then bring Wit's beam
To warm the stream,
And there's your nectar splendid!
So wreathe the bowl
With flowers of soul,
The brightest Wit can find us;
We'll take a flight
Towards heaven to-night,
And leave dull earth behind us!

Say, why did Time
His glass sublime
Fill up with sands unsightly,
When wine, he knew,
Runs brisker through,
And sparkles far more brightly?
Oh, lend it us,
And, smiling thus,

The glass in two we'd sever,
Make pleasure glide
In double tide,
And fill both ends forever!
Then wreathe the bowl
With flowers of soul,
The brightest Wit can find us;
We'll take a flight
Towards heaven to-night,
And leave dull earth behind us!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

SAINT PERAY

When to any saint I pray,
It shall be to Saint Peray.
He alone, of all the brood,
Ever did me any good:
Many I have tried that are
Humbugs in the calendar.

On the Atlantic, faint and sick,
Once I prayed Saint Dominick:
He was holy, sure, and wise;—
Was 't not he that did devise
Auto da Fès and rosaries?—
But for one in my condition
This good saint was no physician.

Next, in pleasant Normandie,
I made a prayer to Saint Denis,
In the great cathedral, where
All the ancient kings repose;
But, how I was swindled there
At the "Golden Fleece,"—he knows!

In my wanderings, vague and various,
Reaching Naples—as I lay
Watching Vesuvius from the bay,
I besought Saint Januarius.
But I was a fool to try him;

Naught I said could liquefy him;
And I swear he did me wrong,
Keeping me shut up so long
In that pest-house, with obscene
Jews and Greeks and things unclean—
What need had I of quarantine?

In Sicily at least a score,—
In Spain about as many more,—
And in Rome almost as many
As the loves of Don Giovanni,
Did I pray to—sans reply;
Devil take the tribe!—said I.

Worn with travel, tired and lame,
To Assisi's walls I came:
Sad and full of homesick fancies,
I addressed me to Saint Francis:
But the beggar never did
Anything as he was bid,
Never gave me aught—but fleas,—
Plenty had I at Assise.

But in Prôvence, near Vaucluse,
  Hard by the Rhone, I found a Saint
Gifted with a wondrous juice,
  Potent for the worst complaint.

'Twas at Avignon that first—
In the witching time of thirst—
To my brain the knowledge came
Of this blessed Catholic's name;
Forty miles of dust that day
Made me welcome Saint Peray.

Though till then I had not heard
Aught about him, ere a third
Of a litre passed my lips,
All saints else were in eclipse.
For his gentle spirit glided
  With such magic into mine,
That methought such bliss as I did
  Poet never drew from wine.

Rest he gave me and refection,—
Chastened hopes, calm retrospection,—
Softened images of sorrow,
Bright forebodings for the morrow,—
Charity for what is past,—
Faith in something good at last.

Now, why should any almanack
The name of this good creature lack?
Or wherefore should the breviary
Omit a saint so sage and merry?
The Pope himself should grant a day
Especially to Saint Peray.
But, since no day hath been appointed,
On purpose, by the Lord's anointed,
Let us not wait—we'll do him right;
Send round your bottles, Hal—and set your night.

Thomas William Parsons [1819–1892]

SPARKLING AND BRIGHT

Sparkling and bright in liquid light,
Does the wine our goblets gleam in;
With hue as red as the rosy bed
Which a bee would choose to dream in.
Then fill to-night, with hearts as light,
To loves as gay and fleeting
As bubbles that swim on the beaker's brim,
And break on the lips while meeting.

Oh! if Mirth might arrest the flight
Of Time through Life's dominions,
We here a while would now beguile
The graybeard of his pinions,
To drink to-night, with hearts as light,
To loves as gay and fleeting
As bubbles that swim on the beaker's brim,
And break on the lips while meeting.

But since Delight can't tempt the wight,
Nor fond Regret delay him,
Nor Love himself can hold the elf,
Nor sober Friendship stay him,
We'll drink to-night, with hearts as light,
To loves as gay and fleeting
As bubbles that swim on the beaker's brim,
And break on the lips while meeting.

Charles Fenno Hoffman [1806–1884]

THE MAHOGANY TREE

Christmas is here:
Winds whistle shrill,
Icy and chill,
Little care we:
Little we fear
Weather without,
Sheltered about
The Mahogany Tree.

Once on the boughs
Birds of rare plume
Sang, in its bloom;
Night-birds are we:
Here we carouse,
Singing like them,
Perched round the stem
Of the jolly old tree.

Here let us sport,
Boys, as we sit;
Laughter and wit
Flashing so free.
Life is but short—
When we are gone,
Let them sing on
Round the old tree.

Evenings we knew,
Happy as this;

Faces we miss,
Pleasant to see.
Kind hearts and true,
Gentle and just,
Peace to your dust!
We sing round the tree.

Care, like a dun,
Lurks at the gate:
Let the dog wait;
Happy we'll be!
Drink, every one;
Pile up the coals,
Fill the red bowls
Round the old tree!

Drain we the cup.—
Friend, art afraid?
Spirits are laid
In the Red Sea.
Mantle it up;
Empty it yet;
Let us forget,
Round the old tree.

Sorrows, begone!
Life and its ills,
Duns and their bills,
Bid we to flee.
Come with the dawn,
Blue-devil sprite,
Leave us to-night
Round the old tree.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

TODLIN' HAME

When I ha'e a saxpence under my thoom,
Then I get credit in ilka toun;
But aye when I'm puir they bid me gang by,
Oh, poverty parts gude company!

Todlin' hame, todlin' hame,
Couldna' my love come todlin' hame?

Fair fa' the gudewife, and send her gude sale;
She gi'es us white bannocks to relish her ale;
Syne, if that her tippeny chance to be sma',
We tak' a gude scour o't, and ca't awa.
Todlin' hame, todlin' hame,
As round as a neep come todlin' hame.

My kimmer and I lay down to sleep,
Wi' twa pint-stoups at our bed's feet;
And aye when we wakened, we drank them dry.
What think ye o' my wee kimmer and I?
Todlin' butt, and todlin' ben,
Sae round as my love comes todlin' hame.

Leeze me on liquor, my todlin' dow,
Ye're aye gude-humored when weetin' your mou'!
When sober sae sour, ye'll fecht wi' a flea,
That 'tis a blithe nicht to the bairns and me,
When, todlin' hame, todlin' hame,
When, round as a neep, ye come todlin' hame.

Unknown

THE CRUISKEEN LAWN

Let the farmer praise his grounds,
Let the huntsman praise his hounds,
The shepherd his dew-scented lawn;
But I, more blest than they,
Spend each happy night and day
With my charming little cruiskeen lawn, lawn, lawn,
My charming little cruiskeen lawn.

Gra machree ma cruiskeen,
Slainté geal mavourneen,
's gra machree a cooleen bawn.
Gra machree ma cruiskeen,
Slainté geal mavourneen,
Gra machree a cooleen bawn, bawn, bawn,
's gra machree a cooleen bawn.

Immortal and divine,
Great Bacchus, god of wine,
  Create me by adoption your son;
In hope that you'll comply,
My glass shall ne'er run dry,
  Nor my smiling little cruiskeen lawn.

And when grim death appears,
In a few but pleasant years,
  To tell me that my glass has run;
I'll say, Begone, you knave,
For bold Bacchus gave me leave
  To take another cruiskeen lawn.

Then fill your glasses high,
Let's not part with lips a-dry,
  Though the lark now proclaims it is dawn;
And since we can't remain,
May we shortly meet again,
  To fill another cruiskeen lawn.

Unknown

GIVE ME THE OLD

Old wine to drink!
  Ay, give the slippery juice
That drippeth from the grape thrown loose
  Within the tun;
Plucked from beneath the cliff
Of sunny-sided Teneriffe,
  And ripened 'neath the blink
    Of India's sun!
    Peat whiskey hot,
Tempered with well-boiled water!
These make the long night shorter,—
    Forgetting not
Good stout old English porter.

Old wood to burn!
Ay, bring the hill-side beech
From where the owlets meet and screech,

And ravens croak;
The crackling pine, and cedar sweet;
Bring too a clump of fragrant peat,
Dug 'neath the fern;
The knotted oak,
A fagot too, perhap,
Whose bright flame, dancing, winking,
Shall light us at our drinking;
While the oozing sap
Shall make sweet music to our thinking.

Old books to read!
Ay, bring those nodes of wit,
The brazen-clasped, the vellum writ,
Time-honored tomes!
The same my sire scanned before,
The same my grandsire thumbèd o'er,
The same his sire from college bore,
The well-earned meed
Of Oxford's domes:
Old Homer blind,
Old Horace, rake Anacreon, by
Old Tully, Plautus, Terence lie;
Mort Arthur's olden minstrelsie,
Quaint Burton, quainter Spenser, ay!
And Gervase Markham's venerie—
Nor leave behind
The Holye Book by which we live and die.

Old friends to talk!
Ay, bring those chosen few,
The wise, the courtly, and the true,
So rarely found;
Him for my wine, him for my stud,
Him for my easel, distich, bud
In mountain-walk!
Bring Walter good,
With soulful Fred, and learnèd Will,
And thee, my alter ego (dearer still
For every mood).

These add a bouquet to my wine!
These add a sparkle to my pine!
If these I tine,
Can books, or fire, or wine be good?
Robert Hinckley Messinger [1811–1874]

THE SPIRIT OF WINE

The Spirit of Wine
Sang in my glass, and I listened
With love to his odorous music,
His flushed and magnificent song.

—"I am health, I am heart, I am life!
For I give for the asking
The fire of my father, the Sun,
And the strength of my mother, the Earth.
Inspiration in essence,
I am wisdom and wit to the wise,
His visible muse to the poet,
The soul of desire to the lover,
The genius of laughter to all.

"Come, lean on me, ye that are weary!
Rise, ye faint-hearted and doubting!
Haste, ye that lag by the way!
I am Pride, the consoler;
Valor and Hope are my henchmen;
I am the Angel of Rest.

"I am life, I am wealth, I am fame:
For I captain an army
Of shining and generous dreams;
And mine, too, all mine, are the keys
Of that secret spiritual shrine,
Where, his work-a-day soul put by,
Shut in with his saint of saints—
With his radiant and conquering self—
Man worships, and talks, and is glad.

"Come, sit with me, ye that are lonely,
Ye that are paid with disdain,
Ye that are chained, and would soar!
I am beauty and love;
I am friendship, the comforter;
I am that which forgives and forgets."—

The Spirit of Wine
Sang in my heart, and I triumphed
In the savor and scent of his music,
His magnetic and mastering song.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

"DAY AND NIGHT MY THOUGHTS INCLINE"

Day and night my thoughts incline
To the blandishments of wine:
Jars were made to drain, I think,
Wine, I know, was made to drink.

When I die, (the day be far!)
Should the potters make a jar
Out of this poor clay of mine,
Let the jar be filled with wine!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825–1903]

FALSTAFF'S SONG

Where's he that died o' Wednesday?
What place on earth hath he?
A tailor's yard beneath, I wot,
Where worms approaching be;
For the wight that died o' Wednesday,
Just laid the light below,
Is dead as the varlet turned to clay
A score of years ago.

Where's he that died o' Sabba' day?
Good Lord, I'd not be he!
The best of days is foul enough
From this world's fare to flee;

And the saint that died o' Sabba' day,
With his grave turf yet to grow,
Is dead as the sinner brought to pray
A hundred years ago.

Where's he that died o' yesterday?
What better chance hath he
To clink the can and toss the pot
When this night's junkets be?
For the lad that died o' yesterday
Is just as dead—ho! ho!—
As the whoreson knave men laid away
A thousand years ago.

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

THE MALTWORM'S MADRIGAL

I DRINK of the Ale of Southwark, I drink of the Ale of Chepe;
At noon I dream on the settle; at night I cannot sleep;
For my love, my love it groweth; I waste me all the day;
And when I see sweet Alison, I know not what to say.

The sparrow when he spieth his Dear upon the tree,
He beateth-to his little wing; he chirketh lustily;
But when I see sweet Alison, the words begin to fail;
I wot that I shall die of Love—an I die not of Ale.

Her lips are like the muscadel; her brows are black as ink;
Her eyes are bright as beryl stones that in the tankard wink;
But when she sees me coming, she shrilleth out—"Te-Hee!
Fye on thy ruddy nose, Cousin, what lackest thou of me?

"Fye on thy ruddy nose, Cousin! Why be thine eyes so small?
Why go thy legs tap-lappetty like men that fear to fall?
Why is thy leathern doublet besmeared with stain and spot?
Go to. Thou art no man (she saith)—thou art a Pottle-pot!"

"No man," i' faith. "No man!" she saith. And "Pottle-pot" thereto!
"Thou sleepest like our dog all day; thou drink'st as fishes do."
I would that I were Tibb the dog; he wags at her his tail;
Or would that I were fish, in truth, and all the sea were Ale!

So I drink of the Ale of Southwark, I drink of the Ale of Chepe;
All day I dream in the sunlight; I dream and eke I weep,
But little lore of loving can any flagon teach,
For when my tongue is loosèd most, then most I lose my speech.

Austin Dobson [1840–

THE POWER OF MALT

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,
There's brisker pipes than poetry.
Say, for what were hop-yards meant,
Or why was Burton built on Trent?
Oh, many a peer of England brews
Livelier liquor than the Muse,
And malt does more than Milton can
To justify God's ways to man.
Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink
For fellows whom it hurts to think:
Look into the pewter pot
To see the world as the world's not.

Alfred Edward Housman [1859–

A STEIN SONG

From "Spring"

Give a rouse, then, in the Maytime
For a life that knows no fear!
Turn night-time into daytime
With the sunlight of good cheer!
For it's always fair weather
When good fellows get together,
With a stein on the table and a good song ringing clear.

When the wind comes up from Cuba,
And the birds are on the wing,
And our hearts are patting juba
To the banjo of the spring,
Then it's no wonder whether
The boys will get together,
With a stein on the table and a cheer for everything.

For we're all frank-and-twenty
When the spring is in the air;
And we've faith and hope a-plenty,
And we've life and love to spare;
And it's birds of a feather
When we all get together,
With a stein on the table and a heart without a care.

For we know the world is glorious,
And the goal a golden thing,
And that God is not censorious
When his children have their fling;
And life slips its tether
When the boys get together,
With a stein on the table in the fellowship of spring.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

THE KAVANAGH

A STONE jug and a pewter mug,
And a table set for three!
A jug and a mug at every place,
And a biscuit or two with Brie!
Three stone jugs of Cruiskeen Lawn,
And a cheese like crusted foam!
The Kavanagh receives to-night!
McMurrough is at home!

We three and the barley-bree!
And a health to the one away,
Who drifts down careless Italy,
God's wanderer and estray!

For friends are more than Arno's store
Of garnered charm, and he
Were blither with us here the night
Than Titian bids him be.

Throw ope the window to the stars,
And let the warm night in!
Who knows what revelry in Mars
May rhyme with rouse akin?
Fill up and drain the loving cup
And leave no drop to waste!
The moon looks in to see what's up—
Begad, she'd like a taste!

What odds if Leinster's kingly roll
Be now an idle thing?
The world is his who takes his toll,
A vagrant or a king.
What though the crown be melted down,
And the heir a gypsy roam?
The Kavanagh receives to-night!
McMurrough is at home!

We three and the barley-bree!
And the moonlight on the floor!
Who were a man to do with less?
What emperor has more?
Three stone jugs of Cruiskeen Lawn,
And three stout hearts to drain
A slanter to the truth in the heart of youth
And the joy of the love of men.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

GLINTS O' SUNSHINE

SONG

From "Love's Labor's Lost"

I—SPRING

When daisies pied, and violets blue,
And lady-smocks all silver-white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo, — O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo, — O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

II — WINTER

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who,—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who,—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

THE WIDOW

THE widow can bake, and the widow can brew,
The widow can shape, an' the widow can sew,
An' mony braw things the widow can do;
Then have at the widow, my laddie.
Wi' courage attack her baith early an' late;
To kiss her an' clap her ye maunna be blate:
Speak weel, an' do better: for that's the best gate
To win a young widow, my laddie.

The widow she's youthfu', an' never ae hair
The waur o' the wearing, an' has a good skair
O' everything lovely; she's witty an' fair,
An' has a rich jointure, my laddie.
What could ye wish better, your pleasure to crown,
Than a widow, the bonniest toast in the town,
Wi' naithing but draw in your stool and sit down,
An' sport wi' the widow, my laddie.

Then till her, an' kill her wi' courtesy dead,
Though stark love an' kindness be a' ye can plead;
Be heartsome an' airy, an' hope to succeed
Wi' a bonny gay widow, my laddie.
Strike iron while it's het, if ye'd have it to wald;
For fortune ay favors the active an' bauld,
But ruins the wooer that's thoughtless an' cauld,
Unfit for the widow, my laddie.

Allan Ramsay [1686–175?]

SNEEZING

What a moment, what a doubt!
All my nose is inside out, —
All my thrilling, tickling caustic,
Pyramid rhinocerostic,
Wants to sneeze and cannot do it!
How it yearns me, thrills me, stings me,
How with rapturous torment wrings me!
Now says, "Sneeze, you fool,—get through it."
Shee—shee—oh! 'tis most del-ishi—
Ishi—ishi—most del-ishi!
(Hang it, I shall sneeze till spring!)
Snuff is a delicious thing.

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

CAUTIONARY VERSES TO YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES

My little dears, who learn to read, pray early learn to shun
That very silly thing indeed which people call a pun;
Read Entick's rules, and 'twill be found how simple an offence
It is to make the self-same sound afford a double sense.

For instance, ale may make you ail, your aunt an ant may kill,
You in a vale may buy a veil, and Bill may pay the bill.
Or if to France your bark you steer, at Dover, it may be
A peer appears upon the pier, who, blind, still goes to sea.

Thus one might say, when to a treat good friends accept our greeting,
'Tis meet that men who meet to eat should eat their meat when meeting.
Brawn on the board's no bore indeed, although from boar prepared;
Nor can the fowl, on which we feed, foul feeding be declared.

Thus one ripe fruit may be a pear, and yet be pared again,
And still be one, which seemeth rare until we do explain.

It therefore should be all your aim to speak with ample care:
For who, however fond of game, would choose to swallow hair?

A fat man's gait may make us smile, who have no gate to close:
The farmer sitting on his stile no stylish person knows:
Perfumers men of scents must be; some Scilly men are bright;
A brown man oft deep read we see, a black a wicked wight.

Most wealthy men good manors have, however vulgar they;
And actors still the harder slave, the oftener they play;
So poets can't the baize obtain, unless their tailors choose;
While grooms and coachmen, not in vain, each evening seek the Mews.

The dyer who by dyeing lives, a dire life maintains;
The glazier, it is known, receives his profits from his panes:
By gardeners thyme is tied, 'tis true, when spring is in its prime;
But time or tide won't wait for you, if you are tied for time.

Then now you see, my little dears, the way to make a pun;
A trick which you, through coming years, should sedulously shun:
The fault admits of no defence; for wheresoe'er 'tis found,
You sacrifice for sound the sense: the sense is never sound.

So let your words and actions too, one single meaning prove,
And, just in all you say or do, you'll gain esteem and love:
In mirth and play no harm you'll know, when duty's task is done;
But parents ne'er should let you go unpunished for a pun.

Theodore Edward Hook [1788–1841]

A CREDO

For the sole edification
Of this decent congregation,
Goodly people, by your grant
I will sing a holy chant—

I will sing a holy chant.
If the ditty sound but oddly,
'Twas a father, wise and godly,
Sang it so long ago—
Then sing as Martin Luther sang,
As Doctor Martin Luther sang:
"Who loves not wine, woman, and song,
He is a fool his whole life long!"

He, by custom patriarchal,
Loved to see the beaker sparkle;
And he thought the wine improved,
Tasted by the lips he loved—
By the kindly lips he loved.
Friends, I wish this custom pious
Duly were observèd by us,
To combine love, song, wine,
And sing as Martin Luther sang,
As Doctor Martin Luther sang:
"Who loves not wine, woman, and song,
He is a fool his whole life long!"

Who refuses this our Credo,
And who will not sing as we do,
Were he holy as John Knox,
I'd pronounce him heterodox!
I'd pronounce him heterodox,
And from out this congregation,
With a solemn commination,
Banish quick the heretic,
Who will not sing as Luther sang,
As Doctor Martin Luther sang:
"Who loves not wine, woman, and song,
He is a fool his whole life long!"

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

THE LAY OF THE LEVITE

There is a sound that's dear to me,
It haunts me in my sleep;
I wake, and, if I hear it not,
I cannot choose but weep.

Above the roaring of the wind,
  Above the river's flow,
Methinks I hear the mystic cry
  Of "Clo!—old Clo!"

The exile's song, it thrills among
  The dwellings of the free;
Its sound is strange to English ears,
  But 'tis not strange to me;
For it hath shook the tented field
  In ages long ago,
And hosts have quailed before the cry
  Of "Clo!—old Clo!"

O, lose it not! forsake it not,
  And let no time efface
The memory of that solemn sound,
  The watchword of our race;
For not by dark and eagle eye,
  The Hebrew shall ye know,
So well as by the plaintive cry
  Of "Clo!—old Clo!"

Even now, perchance, by Jordan's banks,
  Or Sidon's sunny walls,
Where, dial-like, to portion time
  The palm-tree's shadow falls,
The pilgrims, wending on their way,
  Will linger as they go,
And listen to the distant cry
  Of "Clo!—old Clo!"

William Edmondstoune Aytoun [1813–1865]

EARLY RISING

"God bless the man who first invented sleep!"
  So Sancho Panza said, and so say I:
And bless him, also, that he didn't keep
  His great discovery to himself; nor try
To make it—as the lucky fellow might—
A close monopoly by patent-right!

Yes; bless the man who first invented sleep
(I really can't avoid the iteration);
But blast the man, with curses loud and deep,
Whate'er the rascal's name, or age, or station,
Who first invented, and went round advising,
That artificial cut-off,—Early Rising!

"Rise with the lark, and with the lark to bed,"
Observes some solemn, sentimental owl;
Maxims like these are very cheaply said:
But, ere you make yourself a fool or fowl,
Pray, just inquire about his rise and fall,
And whether larks have any beds at all!

The time for honest folks to be abed
Is in the morning, if I reason right;
And he who cannot keep his precious head
Upon his pillow till it's fairly light,
And so enjoy his forty morning winks,
Is up to knavery, or else—he drinks!

Thomson, who sang about the "Seasons," said
It was a glorious thing to *rise* in season;
But then he said it—lying—in his bed,
At ten o'clock, A. M.,—the very reason
He wrote so charmingly. The simple fact is,
His preaching wasn't sanctioned by his practice.

'Tis, doubtless, well to be sometimes awake,—
Awake to duty, and awake to truth,—
But when, alas! a nice review we take
Of our best deeds and days, we find, in sooth,
The hours that leave the slightest cause to weep
Are those we passed in childhood, or asleep!

'Tis beautiful to leave the world awhile
For the soft visions of the gentle night;
And free, at last, from mortal care or guile,
To live as only in the angels' sight,
In sleep's sweet realm so cozily shut in,
Where, at the worst, we only *dream* of sin!

So let us sleep and give the Maker praise.
I like the lad who, when his father thought
To clip his morning nap by hackneyed phrase
Of vagrant worm by early songster caught,
Cried, "Served him right!—it's not at all surprising;
The worm was punished, sir, for early rising!"

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

EL CAPITAN-GENERAL

THERE was a captain-general who ruled in Vera Cruz,
And what we used to hear of him was always evil news:
He was a pirate on the sea—a robber on the shore,
The Señor Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador.

There was a Yankee skipper who round about did roam;
His name was Stephen Folger, and Nantucket was his home:
And having gone to Vera Cruz, he had been skinned full sore
By the Señor Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador.

But having got away alive, though all his cash was gone,
He said, "If there is vengeance, I will surely try it on!
And I do wish I may be damned if I don't clear the score
With Señor Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador!"

He shipped a crew of seventy men—well-armèd men were they,
And sixty of them in the hold he darkly stowed away;
And, sailing back to Vera Cruz, was sighted from the shore
By the Señor Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador.

With twenty-five soldados he came on board so pleased,
And said, "*Maldito* Yankee—again your ship is seized.
How many sailors have you got?" Said Folger, "Ten—no more,"
To the Captain Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador.

"But come into my cabin and take a glass of wine.
I do suppose, as usual, I'll have to pay a fine:

I have got some old Madeira, and we'll talk the matter o'er—
My Captain Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador."

And as over that Madeira the captain-general boozed,
It seemed to him as if his head was getting quite confused;
For it happened that some morphine had travelled from "the store"
To the glass of Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador.

"What is it makes the vessel roll? What sounds are these I hear?
It seems as if the rising waves were beating on my ear!"—
"Oh, it is the breaking of the surf—just that and nothing more,
My Captain Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador!"

The governor was in a sleep which muddled all his brains;
The seventy men had got his gang and put them all in chains;
And when he woke the following day he could not see the shore,
For he was out on the blue water—the Don San Salvador.

"Now do you see that yard-arm—and understand the thing?"
Said Captain Folger. "For all from that yard-arm you shall swing,
Or forty thousand dollars you shall pay me from your store,
My Captain Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador."

The Capitano took a pen—the order he did sign—
"O Señor Yankee! but you charge amazing high for wine!"
But 'twas not till the draft was paid they let him go ashore,
El Señor Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador.

The greatest sharp some day will find another sharper wit;
It always makes the Devil laugh to see a biter bit;
It takes two Spaniards any day to come a Yankee o'er—
Even two like Don Alonzo Estabán San Salvador.

Charles Godfrey Leland [1824–1903]

THE LEGEND OF HEINZ VON STEIN

Out rode from his wild, dark castle
The terrible Heinz von Stein;
He came to the door of a tavern,
And gazed on the swinging sign.

He sat himself down at a table,
And growled for a bottle of wine;
Up came with a flask and a corkscrew
A maiden of beauty divine.

Then, seized with a deep love-longing,
He uttered, "O damosel mine,
Suppose you just give a few kisses
To the valorous Ritter von Stein!"

But she answered, "The kissing business
Is entirely out of my line;
And I certainly will not begin it
On a countenance ugly as thine!"

Oh, then the bold knight was angry,
And cursed both coarse and fine;
And asked, "How much is the swindle
For your sour and nasty wine?"

And fiercely he rode to the castle,
And sat himself down to dine;
And this is the dreadful legend
Of the terrible Heinz von Stein.

Charles Godfrey Leland [1824–1903]

HALLOWE'EN

Of a' the festivals we hear,
Frae Handsel-Monday till New Year,
There's few in Scotland held mair dear
For mirth, I ween,
Or yet can boast o' better cheer,
Than Hallowe'en.

Langsyne indeed, as now in climes
Where priests for siller pardon crimes,
The kintry 'round in Popish rhymes
  Did pray and graen;
But customs vary wi' the times
  At Hallowe'en.

Ranged round a bleezing ingleside,
Where nowther cauld nor hunger bide,
The farmer's house, wi' secret pride,
  Will a' convene;
For that day's wark is thrown aside
  At Hallowe'en.

Placed at their head the gudewife sits,
And deals round apples, pears, and nits;
Syne tells her guests, how, at sic bits
  Where she has been,
Bogle's ha'e gart folk tyne their wits
  At Hallowe'en.

Grieved, she recounts how, by mischance,
Puir pussy's forced a' night to prance
Wi' fairies, wha in thousands dance
  Upon the green,
Or sail wi' witches owre to France
  At Hallowe'en.

Syne, issued frae the gardy-chair,
For that's the seat of empire there,
To co'er the table wi' what's rare,
  Commands are gi'en;
That a' fu' daintily may fare
  At Hallowe'en.

And when they've toomed ilk heapit plate,
And a' things are laid out o' gate,
To ken their matrimonial mate,
  The youngsters keen
Search a' the dark decrees o' fate
  At Hallowe'en.

A' things prepared in order due,
Gosh guide's! what fearfu' pranks ensue!
Some i' the kiln-pat thraw a clew,
At whilk, bedene,
Their sweethearts by the far end pu'
At Hallowe'en.

Ithers, wi' some uncanny gift,
In an auld barn a riddle lift,
Where, thrice pretending corn to sift,
Wi' charms between,
Their joy appears, as white as drift,
At Hallowe'en.

But 'twere a langsome tale to tell
The gates o' ilka charm and spell;
Ance, gaen to saw hampseed himsel',
Puir Jock Maclean,
Plump in a filthy peat-pot fell
At Hallowe'en.

Half filled wi' fear, and droukit weel,
He frae the mire dught hardly speel;
But frae that time the silly chiel
Did never grien
To cast his cantrips wi' the Deil
At Hallowe'en.

O Scotland! famed for scenes like this,
That thy sons walk where wisdom is,
Till death in everlasting bliss
Shall steek their e'en,
Will ever be the constant wish
of
Jockie Mein.

John Mayne [1759–1836]

YAW, DOT IS SO!

Yaw, dot is so! yaw, dot is so!
"Dis vorldt vas all a fleeting show!"
I shmokes mine pipe,
I trinks mine bier,

Und efry day to vork I go;
"Dis vorldt vas all a fleeting show;"
Yaw, dot is so!

Yaw, dot is so! yaw, dot is so!
I don't got mooch down here below.
I eadt und trink,
I vork und sleep,
Und find out, as I oldter grow,
I haf a hardter row to hoe;
Yaw, dot is so!

Yaw, dot is so! yaw, dot is so!
Dis vorldt don't gife me half a show;
Somedings to vear,
Some food to eadt;
Vot else? Shust vait a minude, dough;
Katrina, und der poys! oho!
Yaw, dot is so!

Yaw, dot is so! yaw, dot is so!
Dis vorldt don't been a fleeting show.
I haf mine frau,
I haf mine poys
To sheer me, daily, as I go;
Dot's pest as anydings I know;
Yaw, dot is so!

Charles Follen Adams [1842–

TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Two honder year ago de worl' is purty slow,
Even folk upon dis countree 's not so smart,
Den who is travel roun' an' look out de pleasan' groun'
For geev' de Yankee peop' a leetle start?
I'll tole you who dey were, de beeg, rough voyageurs,
Wit' deir cousin w'at you call coureurs de bois,
Dat's fightin' all de tam, an' never care a dam,
An' ev'ry wan dem feller he's come from Canadaw
Baptême!
He's comin' all de way from Canadaw.

But He watch dem, le bon Dieu, for He's got some work to do,
An' He won't trust ev'rybody, no siree!
Only full-blood Canadien, lak Marquette an' Hennepin,
An' w'at you t'ink of Louis Verandrye?
On church of Bonsecours! makin' ready for de tour,
See dem down upon de knee, all prayin' dere—
Wit' de paddle on de han' ev'ry good Canadien man,
An' affer dey be finish, hooraw for anyw'ere.
Yass, sir!
Dey're ready now for goin' anyw'ere.

De nort' win' know dem well, an' de prairie grass can tell
How offen it is trample by de ole tam botte sauvage—
An' gray wolf on hees den kip very quiet, w'en
He hear dem boy a' singin' upon de long portage,
An' de night would fin' dem lie wit' deir faces on de sky,
An' de breeze would come an' w'isper on deir ear
'Bout de wife an' sweetheart dere on Soreal an' Trois Rivieres
Dey may never leev to see anoder year.
Dat's true,
Dey may never leev to kiss anoder year.

An' you'll know de place dey go, from de canyon down below,
Or de mountain wit' hees nose above de cloud,
De lak among de hill, w'ere de grizzly drink hees fill,
Or de rapid on de reever roarin' loud.
Ax de wil' deer if de flash of de ole Tree Reever sash
He don't see it on de woods of Illinois,
An' de musk-ox as he go, w'ere de camp-fire melt de snow,
De smell he still remember of tabac Canadien!
Ha! Ha!
It's hard forgettin' smell of tabac Canadien!

So, ma frien', de Yankee man, he mus' try an' understan',
W'en he holler for dat flag de Star an' Stripe,
If he's little win' still lef' an' no danger hurt hese'f,
Den he better geev anoder cheer, ba cripe!
For de flag of la belle France, dat show de way across
From Louisbourg to Florida an' back.

So raise it ev'ryw'ere, lak' de ole tam voyageurs,
W'en you hear of de la Salle an' Cadillac—
Hooraw!
For de flag of de la Salle an' Cadillac.

William Henry Drummond [1854–1907]

WRECK OF THE "JULIE PLANTE"

On wan dark night on Lac St. Pierre,
De win' she blow, blow, blow,
An' de crew of de wood scow "Julie Plante"
Got scar't an' run below;
For de win' she blow lak hurricane,
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow bus' up on Lac St. Pierre,
Wan arpent from de shore.

De Captinne walk on de fronte deck,
An' walk de hin' deck, too—
He call de crew from up de hole
He call de cook also.
De cook she's name was Rosie,
She come from Montreal,
Was chambre maid on lumber barge,
On de Grande Lachine Canal.

De win' she blow from nor'—eas'—wes'—
De sout' win' she blow, too,
W'en Rosie cry, "Mon cher Captinne,
Mon cher, w'at I shall do?"
Den de Captinne t'row de big ankerre,
But still de scow she dreef,
De crew he can't pass on de shore,
Becos' he los' hees skeef.

De night was dark, lak' one black cat,
De wave run high an' fas',
W'en de Captinne tak' de Rosie girl
An' tie her to de mas'.

Den he also tak' de life preserve,
An' jomp off on de lak',
An' say, "Good by, ma Rosie dear,
I go drown for your sak'."

Nex' mornin' very early,
'Bout ha'f-pas' two—t'ree—four—
De Captinne, scow, an' de poor Rosie
Was corpses on de shore;
For de win' she blow lak' hurricane
Bimeby she blow some more,
An' de scow bus' up on Lac St. Pierre,
Wan arpent from de shore.

MORAL

Now, all good wood scow sailor man
Tak' warning by dat storm,
An' go an' marry some nice French girl
An' leev on wan beeg farm;
De win' can blow lak' hurricane,
An' s'pose she blow some more,
You can't get drown on Lac St. Pierre,
So long you stay on shore.

William Henry Drummond [1854–1907]

HUMPTY DUMPTY

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall:
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall:
Not all the king's horses nor all the king's men
Could set Humpty Dumpty up again."

Full many a project that never was hatched
Falls down, and gets shattered beyond being patched;
And luckily, too! for if all came to chickens,
Then things without feathers might go to the dickens.

If each restless unit that moves among men
Might climb to a place with the privileged "ten,"
Pray tell us where all the commotion would stop!
Must the whole pan of milk, forsooth, rise to the top?

If always the statesman attained to his hopes,
And grasped the great helm, who would stand by the ropes?
Or if all dainty fingers their duties might choose,
Who would wash up the dishes, and polish the shoes?

Suppose every aspirant writing a book
Contrived to get published, by hook or by crook;
Geologists then of a later creation
Would be startled, I fancy, to find a formation
Proving how the poor world did most woefully sink
Beneath mountains of paper, and oceans of ink!

Or even suppose all the women were married;
By whom would superfluous babies be carried?
Where would be the good aunts that should knit all the stockings?
Or nurses, to do up the singings and rockings?
Wise spinsters, to lay down their wonderful rules,
And with theories rare to enlighten the fools,—
Or to look after orphans, and primary schools?

No! Failure's a part of the infinite plan;
Who finds that he can't, must give way to who can;
And as one and another drops out of the race.
Each stumbles at last to his suitable place.

So the great scheme works on,—though, like eggs from the wall,
Little single designs to such ruin may fall,
That not all the world's might, of its horses or men,
Could set their crushed hopes at the summit again.

Adeline D. T. Whitney [1824–1906]

STRICTLY GERM-PROOF

The Antiseptic Baby and the Prophylactic Pup
Were playing in the garden when the Bunny gamboled up;
They looked upon the Creature with a loathing undisguised;—
It wasn't Disinfected and it wasn't Sterilized.

They said it was a Microbe and a Hotbed of Disease;
They steamed it in a vapor of a thousand-odd degrees;
They froze it in a freezer that was cold as Banished Hope
And washed it in permanganate with carbolated soap.

In sulphrueted hydrogen they steeped its wiggly ears;
They trimmed its frisky whiskers with a pair of hard-boiled shears;
They donned their rubber mittens and they took it by the hand
And 'lected it a member of the Fumigated Band.

There's not a Micrococcus in the garden where they play;
They bathe in pure iodoform a dozen times a day;
And each imbibes his rations from a Hygienic Cup—
The Bunny and the Baby and the Prophylactic Pup.

Arthur Guiterman [1871–

CAVE SEDEM!

Beware the deadly Sitting habit,
Or, if you sit, be like the rabbit,
Who keepeth ever on the jump
By springs concealed beneath his rump.

A little ginger 'neath the tail
Will oft for lack of brains avail;
Eschew the dull and slothful Seat,
And move about with willing feet!

Man was not made to sit a-trance,
And press, and press, and press his pants;
But rather, with an open mind,
To circulate among his kind.

And so, my son, avoid the snare
Which lurks within a cushioned chair;
To run like hell, it has been found,
Both feet must be upon the ground.

Theodore F. MacManus [18

REVIVAL HYMN

From "Uncle Remus"

Oh, whar shill we go w'en de great day comes,
Wid de blowin' er de trumpits en de bangin' er de drums?
How many po' sinners'll be kotched out late
En fine no latch ter de golden gate?
No use fer ter wait twel ter-morrer!
De sun mustn't set on yo' sorrer,
Sin's es sharp ez a bamboo-brier—
Oh, Lord! fetch the mo'ners up higher!

W'en de nashuns er de earf is a-stan'in' all aroun',
Who's a gwine ter be choosen fer ter w'ar de glory-crown?
Who's gwine fer ter stan' stiff-kneed en bol',
En answer to der name at de callin' er de roll?
You better come now ef you comin'—
Ole Satun is loose en a bummin'—
De wheels er distruckshun is a hummin'—
Oh, come 'long, sinner, ef you comin'!

De song er salvashun is a mighty sweet song,
En de Pairidise win' blow fur en blow strong,
En Aberham's bosom, hit's saft en hit's wide,
En right dar's de place whar de sinners oughter hide!
Oh, you nee'nter be a stoppin' en a lookin';
Ef you fool wid ole Satun you'll git took in;
You'll hang on de aidge en get shook in,
Ef you keep on a stoppin' en a lookin'.

De time is right now, en dish yer's de place—
Let de sun er salvashun shine squar' in yo' face;
Fight de battles er de Lord, fight soon en fight late,
En you'll allers fine a latch ter de golden gate.
No use fer ter wait twel ter-morrer,
De sun mustn't set on yo' sorrer—
Sin's es sharp ez a bamboo-brier,
Ax de Lord fer ter fetch you up higher!

Joel Chandler Harris [1848–1908]

THE POWER OF PRAYER

THE FIRST STEAMBOAT UP THE ALABAMA

You, Dinah! Come and set me whar de ribber-roads does
meet.
De Lord, *He* made dese black-jack roots to twis' into a seat.
Umph, dar! De Lord have mussy on dis blin' ole nigger's
feet.

It pear to me dis mornin' I kin smell de fust o' June,
I 'clar, I b'lieve dat mockin'-bird could play de fiddle soon!
Dem yonder town-bells sounds like dey was ringin' in de
moon.

Well, ef dis nigger *is* been blin' for fo'ty years or mo',
Dese ears dey sees de world, like th'u' de cracks dat's in de
do';
For de Lord has built dis cabin wid de winders hind and 'fo'.

I know my front ones *is* stopped up, and things is sort o'
dim;
But den, th'u' *dem* temptations vain won't leak in on ole
Jim!
De back ones shows me earth enough, aldo' dey's mons'ous
slim.

And as for Hebben—bless de Lord, and praise His holy name!
Dat shines in all de co'ners o' dis cabin jes' de same
As ef dat cabin hadn't nar a plank upon de frame!

Who *call* me? Listen down the ribber, Dinah! Don't you
hyar
Somebody holl'in' "*Hoo, Jim, hoo?*" My Sarah died las'
y'ar;
Is dat black angel done come back to call ole Jim from hyar?

My stars! dat can't be Sarah—shuh, jes' listen, Dinah, *now!*
What kin be comin' up dat bend, a-makin' sich a row?
Fus' bellerin', like a pawin' bull, den squealin' like a sow!

De Lord 'a' massy sakes alive! jes' hear—*Ker-woof! Ker-woof!*
De Debble's comin' round dat bend—he's comin', shuh enuff,
A-splashin' up de water wid his tail and wid his hoof!

I'se pow'ful skeered; but neversomeless I ain't gwine run away;
I'm gwine to stan' stiff-legged for de Lord dis blessed day;
You screech, and howl, and swish de water, Satan! Let us pray:

O hebbenly Mahs'r, what Thou willest dat mus' be jes' so,
And ef Thou hast bespoke de word, some nigger's boun' to go.
Den, Lord, please take ole Jim, and lef young Dinah hyar below!

Scuse Dinah, scuse her, Mahs'r; for she's sich a little chile,
She hardly jes' begin to scramble up the home-yard stile;
But dis old traveller's feet been tired dis many an' many a mile.

I'sĕ wufless as de rotten pole o' las' year's fodder-stack;
De rheumatiz done bit my bones: you hyar 'em crack and crack?
I can't sit down 'dout gruntin' like 'twas breakin' o' my back.

What use de wheel when hub and spokes is warped and split and rotten?
What use dis dried up cotton-stalk when Life done picked my cotton?
I'se like a word, dat somebody done said, and den forgotten.

But Dinah! Shuh! dat gal jes' like dis little hick'ry-tree,
De sap 's jis risin' in her; she do grow owdaciouslee—
Lord, ef you's clarin' de underbrush, don't cut her down—cut me!

I would not proud presume—but yet I'll boldly make reques',
Sence Jacob had dat wastlin' match, I, too, gwine do my bes';
When Jacob got all underholt, de Lord He answered, Yes!

And what for waste de wittles now, and th'ow away de bread?
Jes' for to strength dese idle hands to scratch dis ole bald head?
Tink of de 'conomy, Mahs'r, ef dis ole Jim was dead!

Stop; ef I don't believe de Debble's gone on up de stream!
Jes' now he squealed down dar: — hush; dat's a mighty
weakly scream!
Yes, sir, he's gone, he's gone; — he snort 'way off, like in a
dream!

O glory, hallelujah to de Lord dat reigns on high!
De Debble's fa'rly skeered to def; he done gone flyin' by;
I know'd he could'n' stan' dat pra'r, I felt my Mahs'r nigh!

You, Dinah, ain't you' shamed now dat you didn't trust to
grace?
I heerd you thrashin' th'u' de bushes when he showed his
face!
You fool, you t'ink de Debble couldn't beat *you* in a race?

I tell you, Dinah, jes' as sure as you is standin' dar,
When folks start prayin', answer-angels drops down th'u'
de a'r;
Yea, Dinah, whar 'ould you be now, exceptin' fur dat pra'r?

Sidney and Clifford Lanier

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

You, Nebuchadnezzah, whoa, sah!
Whar is you tryin' to go, sah?
I'd hab you fur to know, sah,
I's a-holdin' ob de lines.
You better stop dat prancin',
You's paw'ful fond ob dancin',
But I'll bet my yeah's advancin'
Dat I'll cure you ob yo' shines.

Look heah, mule! Better min' out;
Fus' t'ing you know you'll fin' out
How quick I'll w'ar dis line out
On yo' ugly stubbo'n back;
You needn't try to steal up
An' lif' dat precious heel up;
You's got to plough dis fiel' up,
You has, sah, fur a fac'.

Dar, *dat's* de way to do it!
He's comin' right down to it;
Jes' watch him ploughin' troo it!
  Dis nigger ain't no fool.
Some folks dey would 'a' beat him:
Now, dat would only heat him;
I know jes' how to treat him:
  You mus' *reason* wid a mule.

He minds me like a nigger.
If he wuz only bigger
He'd fotch a mighty figger,
  He would, I *tell* you! Yes, sah!
See how he keeps a-clickin'!
He's as gentle as a chicken,
And nebber thinks o' kickin'—
  Whoa, dar! Nebuchadnezzah!

. . . . . .

Is dis heah me, or not me?
Or is de debbil got me?
Wuz dat a cannon shot me?
  Hab I laid heah more'n a week?
Dat mule do kick amazin'—
De beast was sp'iled in raisin'!
By now I 'spect he's grazin'
  On de odder side de creek.

Irwin Russell [1853–1879]

KENTUCKY PHILOSOPHY

You Wi'yum, come 'ere, suh, dis minute. Wut dat you got under dat box?
I don't want no foolin'—you hear me? Wut you say? Ain't nu'h'n but *rocks?*
'Peahs ter me you's owdashus pertickler. S'posin' dey's uv a new kine.
I'll des take a look at dem rocks. Hi yi! does you think dat I's bline?

I calls dat a plain watermillion, you scamp, en I knows whah it growed;
It come fum de Jimmerson cawn fiel', dah on t'er side er de road.
You stole it, you rascal—you stole it! I watched you fum down in de lot.
En time I gits th'ough wid you, nigger, you won't eb'n be a grease spot!

I'll fix you. Mirandy! *Mirandy!* go cut me a hick'ry—make 'ase!
En cut me de toughes' an keenes' you c'n fine anywhah on de place.
I'll l'arn you, Mr. Wi'yum Joe Vetters, ter steal en ter lie, you young sinner,
Disgracin' yo' ole Christian mammy, en makin' her leave cookin' dinner!

Now ain't you ashamed er yo'se'f, suh? I is. I's ashamed you's my son!
En de holy accorjun angel he's ashamed er wut you has done;
En he done tuk it down up yander in coal-black, blood-red letters—
"One watermillion stoled by Wi'yum Josephus Vetters."

En wut you s'posin' Brer Bascom, yo' teacher at Sunday school,
'Ud say ef he knowed how you's broke de good Lawd's Gol'n Rule?
Boy, whah's de raisin' I give you? Is you boun' fuh ter be a black villiun?
I's s'prised dat a chile er yo' mammy 'ud steal any man's watermillion.

En I's now gwiner cut it right open, en you shain't have narry bite,
Fuh a boy who'll steal watermillions—en dat in de day's broad light—

Ain't—*Lawdy!* it's GREEN! Mirandy! Mi-ran-dy! come on wi' dat switch!
Well, stealin' a g-r-e-e-n watermillion! who ever heerd tell er des sich?
Cain't tell w'en dey's ripe? W'y, you thump 'um, en w'en dey go pank dey is green;
But when dey go *punk*, now you mine me, dey's ripe—en dat's des wut I mean.
E ɔ nex' time you hooks watermillions—*you* heered me, you ign'ant young hunk,
Ef you don't want a lickin' all over, be sho dat dey allers go "punk!"

Harrison Robertson [1856–

A PLANTATION DITTY

De gray owl sing fum de chimbly top:
"Who—who—is—you-oo?"
En I say: "Good Lawd, hit's des po' me,
En I ain't quite ready fer de Jasper Sea;
I'm po' en sinful, en you 'lowed I'd be;
Oh, wait, good Lawd, 'twell ter-morrer!"

De gray owl sing fum de cypress tree:
"Who—who—is—you-oo?"
En I say: "Good Lawd, ef you look you'll see
Hit ain't nobody but des po' me,
En I like ter stay 'twell my time is free;
Oh, wait, good Lawd, 'twell ter-morrer!"

Frank Lebby Stanton [1857–

ANGELINA

WHEN de fiddle gits to singin' out a ol' Vahginny reel,
An' you 'mence to feel a ticklin' in yo' toe an' in yo' heel;
Ef you t'ink you got 'uligion an' you wants to keep it, too,
You jes' bettah tek a hint an' git yo'self clean out o' view.
Case de time is mighty temptin' when de chune is in de swing,
Fu' a darky, saint or sinner man, to cut de pigeon-wing.
An' you couldn't he'p f'om dancin' ef yo' feet was boun' wif twine,
When Angelina Johnson comes a-swingin' down de line.

Don't you know Miss Angelina? She's de da'lin' of de place.
W'y, dey ain't no high-toned lady wif sich mannahs an' sich grace.
She kin move across de cabin, wif its planks all rough an' wo',
Jes' de same's ef she was dancin' on ol' mistus' ball-room flo'.
Fact is, you do' see no cabin—evaht'ing you see look grand,
An' dat one ol' squeaky fiddle soun' to you jes' lak a ban';
Cotton britches look lak broadclof an' a linsey dress look fine,
When Angelina Johnson comes a-swingin' down de line.

Some folks say dat dancin's sinful, an' de blessed Lawd, dey say,
Gwine to punish us fu' steppin' w'en we hyeah de music play.
But I tell you I don' b'lieve it, fu' de Lawd is wise and good,
An' he made de banjo's metal an' he made de fiddle's wood,
An' he made de music in dem, so I don' quite t'ink he'll keer
Ef our feet keeps time a little to de melodies we hyeah.
W'y, dey's somep'n downright holy in de way our faces shine,
When Angelina Johnson comes a-swingin' down de line.

Angelina steps so gentle, Angelina bows so low,
An' she lif' huh sku't so dainty dat huh shoetop skacely show:
An' dem teef o' huh'n a-shinin', ez she tek you by de han'—
Go 'way, people, d' ain't anothah sich a lady in de lan'!
When she's movin' thoo de figgers er a-dancin' by huhse'f,
Folks jes' stan' stock-still a-sta'in', an' dey mos' nigh hol's dey bref;
An' de young mens, dey's a-sayin', "I's gwine mek dat damsel mine,"
When Angelina Johnson comes a-swingin' down de line.

Paul Laurence Dunbar [1872–1906]

LAY OF ANCIENT ROME

Oh, the Roman was a rogue,
He erat was, you bettum;
He ran his automobilis
And smoked his cigarettum;

He wore a diamond studibus
And elegant cravattum,
A maxima cum laude shirt,
And such a stylish hattum!

He loved the luscious hic-hæc-hoc,
And bet on games and equi;
At times he won; at others, though,
He got it in the nequi;
He winked (quo usque tandem?)
At puellas on the Forum,
And sometimes even made
Those goo-goo oculorum!

He frequently was seen
At combats gladiatorial,
And ate enough to feed
Ten boarders at Memorial;
He often went on sprees
And said, on starting homus,
"Hic labor—opus est,
Oh, where's my hic—hic—domus?"

Although he lived in Rome—
Of all the arts the middle—
He was (excuse the phrase)
A horrid individ'l;
Ah! what a different thing
Was the homo (dative, hominy)
Of far away B. C.
From us of Anno Domini.

Thomas Ybarra [1880–

THE WISDOM OF FOLLY

The cynics say that every rose
Is guarded by a thorn that grows
To spoil our posies:
But I no pleasure therefore lack;
I keep my hands behind my back
When smelling roses.

'Tis proved that Sodom's appletarts
Have ashes as component parts
For those that steal them:
My soul no disillusion seeks;
I love my apples' rosy cheeks,
But never peel them.

Though outwardly a gloomy shroud,
The inner half of every cloud
Is bright and shining:
I therefore turn my clouds about
And always wear them inside out
To show the lining.

Our idols' feet are made of clay;
So stony-hearted critics say
With scornful mockings:
My images are deified
Because I keep them well supplied
With shoes and stockings.

My *modus operandi* this—
To take no heed of what's amiss;
And not a bad one:
Because as Shakespeare used to say
A merry heart goes twice the way
That tires a sad one.

Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler [1873–

THE POST THAT FITTED

Though tangled and twisted the course of true love.
This ditty explains
No tangle's so tangled it cannot improve
If the Lover has brains.

ERE the steamer bore him Eastward, Sleary was engaged to marry
An attractive girl at Tunbridge, whom he called "my little Carrie."
Sleary's pay was very modest; Sleary was the other way.
Who can cook a two-plate dinner on eight paltry dibs a day?

Long he pondered o'er the question in his scantly furnished
quarters—
Then proposed to Minnie Boffkin, eldest of Judge Boffkin's
daughters.
Certainly an impecunious Subaltern was not a catch,
But the Boffkins knew that Minnie mightn't make another
match.

So they recognized the business, and, to feed and clothe the
bride,
Got him made a Something Something somewhere on the
Bombay side,
Anyhow, the billet carried pay enough for him to marry—
As the artless Sleary put it: "Just the thing for me and
Carrie."

Did he, therefore, jilt Miss Boffkin—impulse of a baser
mind?
No! He started epileptic fits of an appalling kind.
(Of his *modus operandi* only this much I could gather:—
"Pears' shaving sticks will give you little taste and lots of
lather.")

Frequently in public places his affliction used to smite
Sleary with distressing vigor—always in the Boffkins' sight.
Ere a week was over, Minnie weepingly returned his ring,
Told him his "unhappy weakness" stopped all thought of
marrying.

Sleary bore the information with a chastened holy joy,—
Epileptic fits don't matter in Political employ,—
Wired three short words to Carrie—took his ticket, packed
his kit—
Bade farewell to Minnie Boffkin in one last, long, lingering fit.

Four weeks later, Carrie Sleary read—and laughed until she
wept—
Mrs. Boffkin's warning letter on the "wretched epilept."
Year by year, in pious patience, vengeful Mrs. Boffkin sits
Waiting for the Sleary babies to develop Sleary's fits.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

JUST NONSENSE

NO!

No sun—no moon!
No morn—no noon—
  No dawn—no dusk—no proper time of day—
No sky—no earthly view—
No distance looking blue—
  No road—no street—no "t'other side the way"—
No end to any Row—
No indications where the Crescents go—
No top to any steeple—
  No recognitions of familiar people—
No courtesies for showing 'em—
No knowing 'em!
  No travelling at all—no locomotion,
  No inkling of the way—no notion—
"No go"—by land or ocean—
No mail—no post—
No news from any foreign coast—
  No park—no ring—no afternoon gentility—
No company—no nobility—
  No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
    No comfortable feel in any member—
    No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
      No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds,
        November!

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

TO MINERVA

FROM THE GREEK

My temples throb, my pulses boil,
  I'm sick of Song, and Ode, and Ballad—
So, Thyrsis, take the Midnight Oil,
  And pour it on a lobster salad.

My brain is dull, my sight is foul,
I cannot write a verse, or read,—
Then, Pallas, take away thine Owl,
And let us have a lark instead.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

THE ALPHABET

A is an Angel of blushing eighteen;
B is the Ball where the Angel was seen;
C is the Chaperon, who cheated at cards;
D is the Deuxtemps with Frank of the Guards;
E is the Eye, killing slowly but surely;
F is the Fan whence it peeped so demurely;
G is the Glove of superlative kid;
H is the Hand which it spitefully hid;
I is the Ice which the fair one demanded;
J is the Juvenile that dainty who handed;
K is the Kerchief, a rare work of art;
L is the Lace which composed the chief part;
M is the old Maid who watched the chits dance;
N is the Nose she turned up at each glance;
O is the Olga (just then in its prime);
P is the Partner who wouldn't keep time;
Q is a Quadrille put instead of the Lancers;
R is the Remonstrances made by the dancers;
S is the Supper where all went in pairs;
T is the Twaddle they talked on the stairs;
U is the Uncle who "thought we'd be goin'";
V is the Voice which his niece replied "No" in;
W is the Waiter who sat up till eight;
X is the exit, not rigidly straight;
Y is the Yawning fit caused by the Ball;
Z stands for Zero, or nothing at all.

Charles Stuart Calverley [1831–1884]

A TRAGIC STORY

There lived a sage in days of yore,
And he a handsome pigtail wore;
But wondered much, and sorrowed more,
Because it hung behind him.

He mused upon this curious case,
And swore he'd change the pigtail's place,
And have it hanging at his face,
Not dangling there behind him.

Says he, "The mystery I've found,—
I'll turn me round,"—he turned him round;
But still it hung behind him.

Then round and round, and out and in,
All day the puzzled sage did spin;
In vain—it mattered not a pin,—
The pigtail hung behind him.

And right, and left, and round about,
And up, and down, and in, and out
He turned; but still the pigtail stout
Hung steadily behind him.

And though his efforts never slack,
And though he twist, and twirl, and tack,
Alas! still faithful to his back,
The pigtail hangs behind him.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

THE JUMBLIES

They went to sea in a sieve, they did;
In a sieve they went to sea;
In spite of all their friends could say,
On a winter's morn, on a stormy day,
In a sieve they went to sea.
And when the sieve turned round and round,
And every one cried, "You'll all be drowned!"
They called aloud, "Our sieve ain't big;
But we don't care a button; we don't care a fig:
In a sieve we'll go to sea!"
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live:
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue;
And they went to sea in a sieve.

They sailed away in a sieve, they did,
  In a sieve they sailed so fast,
With only a beautiful pea-green veil
Tied with a ribbon, by way of a sail,
  To a small tobacco-pipe mast.
And every one said who saw them go,
"Oh! won't they be soon upset, you know?
For the sky is dark, and the voyage is long;
And, happen what may, it's extremely wrong
  In a sieve to sail so fast."

The water it soon came in, it did;
  The water it soon came in:
So, to keep them dry, they wrapped their feet
In a pinky paper all folded neat:
  And they fastened it down with a pin.
And they passed the night in a crockery-jar;
And each of them said, "How wise we are!
Though the sky be dark, and the voyage be long
Yet we never can think we were rash or wrong,
  While round in our sieve we spin."

And all night long they sailed away;
  And, when the sun went down,
They whistled and warbled a moony song
To the echoing sound of a coppery gong,
  In the shade of the mountains brown,
"O Timballoo! How happy we are
When we live in a sieve and a crockery-jar!
And all night long, in the moonlight pale,
We sail away with a pea-green sail
  In the shade of the mountains brown."

They sailed to the Western Sea, they did,—
  To a land all covered with trees:
And they bought an owl, and a useful cart,
And a pound of rice, and a cranberry-tart,
  And a hive of silvery bees;
And they bought a pig, and some green jackdaws,
And a lovely monkey with lollipop paws,

And forty bottles of ring-bo-ree,
And no end of Stilton cheese:

And in twenty years they all came back,—
In twenty years or more;
And every one said, "How tall they've grown!
For they've been to the Lakes, and the Torrible Zone,
And the hills of the Chankly Bore."
And they drank their health, and gave them a feast
Of dumplings made of beautiful yeast;
And every one said, "If we only live,
We, too, will go to sea in a sieve,
To the hills of the Chankly Bore."
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live:
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue;
And they went to sea in a sieve.

Edward Lear [1812–1888]

THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat:
They took some honey, and plenty of money
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
"O lovely Pussy, O Pussy, my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl,
How charmingly sweet you sing!
Oh! let us be married; too long we have tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?"
They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the bong-tree grows;
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood,

With a ring at the end of his nose,
His nose,
His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."
So they took it away, and were married next day
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

Edward Lear [1812–1888]

THE POBBLE WHO HAS NO TOES

The Pobble who has no toes
Had once as many as we;
When they said, "Some day you may lose them all;"
He replied, "Fish fiddle-de-dee!"
And his Aunt Jobiska made him drink
Lavender water tinged with pink,
For she said, "The World in general knows
There's nothing so good for a Pobble's toes!"

The Pobble who has no toes
Swam across the Bristol Channel;
But before he set out he wrapped his nose
In a piece of scarlet flannel.
For his Aunt Jobiska said, "No harm
Can come to his toes if his nose is warm;
And it's perfectly known that a Pobble's toes
Are safe,—provided he minds his nose."

The Pobble swam fast and well,
And when boats or ships came near him,
He tinkledy-binkledy-winkled a bell,
So that all the world could hear him.

And all the Sailors and Admirals cried,
When they saw him nearing the further side,—
"He has gone to fish, for his Aunt Jobiska's
Runcible Cat with crimson whiskers!"

But before he touched the shore,—
The shore of the Bristol Channel,—
A sea-green Porpoise carried away
His wrapper of scarlet flannel.
And when he came to observe his feet,
Formerly garnished with toes so neat,
His face at once became forlorn
On perceiving that all his toes were gone!

And nobody ever knew,
From that dark day to the present,
Whoso had taken the Pobble's toes,
In a manner so far from pleasant.
Whether the shrimps or crawfish gray,
Or crafty Mermaids stole them away—
Nobody knew; and nobody knows
How the Pobble was robbed of his twice five toes!

The Pobble who has no toes
Was placed in a friendly Bark,
And they rowed him back, and carried him up
To his Aunt Jobiska's Park.
And she made him a feast, at his earnest wish,
Of eggs and buttercups fried with fish;
And she said, "It's a fact the whole world knows,
That Pobbles are happier without their toes."

Edward Lear [1812–1888]

THE COURTSHIP OF THE YONGHY-BONGHY-BÒ

On the Coast of Coromandel
Where the early pumpkins blow,
In the middle of the woods
Lived the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

Two old chairs, and half a candle,
One old jug without a handle,—
These were all his worldly goods:
In the middle of the woods,
These were all the worldly goods,
Of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
Of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

Once, among the Bong-trees walking
Where the early pumpkins blow,
To a little heap of stones
Came the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
There he heard a Lady talking
To some milk-white Hens of Dorking,—
"'Tis the Lady Jingly Jones!
On that little heap of stones
Sits the Lady Jingly Jones!"
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

"Lady Jingly! Lady Jingly!
Sitting where the pumpkins blow,
Will you come and be my wife?"
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
"I am tired of living singly,—
On this coast so wild and shingly,—
I'm a-weary of my life;
If you'll come and be my wife,
Quite serene would be my life!"
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

"On this Coast of Coromandel,
Shrimps and water-cresses grow,
Prawns are plentiful and cheap,"
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
"You shall have my chairs and candle,
And my jug without a handle!
Gaze upon the rolling deep
(Fish is plentiful and cheap);
As the sea, my love is deep!"
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

Lady Jingly answered sadly,
And her tears began to flow,—
"Your proposal comes too late,
Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
I would be your wife most gladly!"
(Here she twirled her fingers madly,)
"But in England I've a mate!
Yes! you've asked me far too late,
For in England I've a mate,
Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

"Mr. Jones—(his name is Handel,—
Handel Jones, Esquire, & Co.)
Dorking fowls delights to send,
Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
Keep, oh! keep your chairs and candle,
And your jug without a handle,—
I can merely be your friend!
—Should my Jones more Dorkings send,
I will give you three, my friend!
Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

"Though you've such a tiny body,
And your head so large doth grow,—
Though your hat may blow away,
Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!
Though you're such a Hoddy Doddy,—
Yet I wish that I could modify the words I needs must say!
Will you please to go away?
That is all I have to say,
Mr. Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò!"

Down the slippery slopes of Myrtle,
Where the early pumpkins blow,
To the calm and silent sea
Fled the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
There, beyond the Bay of Gurtle,
Lay a large and lively Turtle;—

"You're the Cove," he said, "for me;
On your back beyond the sea,
Turtle, you shall carry me!"
Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

Through the silent-roaring ocean
Did the Turtle swiftly go;
Holding fast upon his shell
Rode the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
With a sad primeval motion
Towards the sunset isles of Boshen
Still the Turtle bore him well.
Holding fast upon his shell,
"Lady Jingly Jones, farewell!"
Sang the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

From the Coast of Coromandel,
Did that Lady never go;
On that heap of stones she moans
For the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.
On that Coast of Coromandel,
In his jug without a handle,
Still she weeps and daily mourns;
On that little heap of stones
To her Dorking Hens she moans
For the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò,
For the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

Edward Lear [1812–1888]

NONSENSE VERSES

THERE was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said, "It is just what I feared!
Two Owls and a Hen,
Four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!"

There was an Old Man in a tree,
Who was horribly bored by a bee;
When they said, "Does it buzz?"
He replied, "Yes, it does!
It's a regular brute of a bee!"

There was an Old Man in a boat,
Who said, "I'm afloat! I'm afloat!"
When they said, "No, you ain't!"
He was ready to faint,
That unhappy Old Man in a boat.

There was an Old Man with a poker,
Who painted his face with red ochre;
When they said, "You're a Guy!"
He made no reply,
But knocked them all down with his poker.

There was an Old Man who said, "Hush!
I perceive a young bird in this bush!"
When they said, "Is it small?"
He replied, "Not at all!
It is four times as big as the bush!"

Edward Lear [1812–1888]

THE TURTLE AND FLAMINGO

A LIVELY young turtle lived down by the banks
Of a dark rolling stream called the Jingo,
And one summer day, as he went out to play,
Fell in love with a charming flamingo—
An enormously genteel flamingo!
An expansively crimson flamingo!
A beautiful, bouncing flamingo!

Spake the turtle in tones like a delicate wheeze:
"To the water I've oft seen you in go,
And your form has impressed itself deep on my shell,
You perfectly modeled flamingo!
You tremendously 'A 1' flamingo!
You inex-pres-*si*-ble flamingo!

" To be sure I'm a turtle, and you are a belle,
And *my* language is not your fine lingo;
But smile on me, tall one, and be my bright flame,
You miraculous, wondrous flamingo!
You blazingly beauteous flamingo!

You turtle-absorbing flamingo!
You inflammably gorgeous flamingo!"

Then the proud bird blushed redder than ever before,
And that was quite un-nec-es-*sa*-ry,
And she stood on one leg and looked out of one eye,
The position of things for to vary,—
This aquatical, musing flamingo!
This dreamy, uncertain flamingo!
This embarrassing, harassing flamingo!

Then she cried to the quadruped, greatly amazed:
"Why your passion toward *me* do you hurtle?
I'm an ornithological wonder of grace,
And you're an illogical turtle,—
A waddling, impossible turtle!
A low-minded, grass-eating turtle!
A highly improbable turtle!"

Then the turtle sneaked off with his nose to the ground,
And never more looked at the lasses;
And falling asleep, while indulging his grief,
Was gobbled up whole by Agassiz,—
The peripatetic Agassiz!
The turtle-dissecting Agassiz!
The illustrious, industrious Agassiz!

Go with me to Cambridge some cool, pleasant day,
And the skeleton lover I'll show you:
He's in a hard case, but he'll look in your face,
Pretending (the rogue!) he don't know you!
Oh, the deeply deceptive young turtle!
The double-faced, glassy-cased turtle!
The *green*, but a vêry *mock*-turtle!

James Thomas Fields [1816–1881]

JABBERWOCKY

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
  Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
  And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought.—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Lewis Carroll [1832–1898]

THE GARDENER'S SONG

From "Sylvie and Bruno"

He thought he saw an Elephant,
That practised on a fife:
He looked again, and found it was
A letter from his wife.
"At length I realize," he said,
"The bitterness of life!"

He thought he saw a Buffalo
Upon the chimney-piece:
He looked again, and found it was
His Sister's Husband's Niece.
"Unless you leave this house," he said,
"I'll send for the Police!"

He thought he saw a Rattlesnake
That questioned him in Greek:
He looked again, and found it was
The Middle of Next Week.
"The one thing I regret," he said,
"Is that it cannot speak!"

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk
Descending from the 'bus:
He looked again, and found it was
A Hippopotamus.
"If this should stay to dine," he said,
"There won't be much for us!"

He thought he saw a Kangaroo
That worked a coffee-mill:
He looked again, and found it was
A Vegetable-Pill.
"Were I to swallow this," he said,
"I should be very ill!"

He thought he saw a Coach-and-Four
That stood beside his bed:
He looked again, and found it was
A Bear without a Head.
"Poor thing," he said, "poor silly thing!
It's waiting to be fed!"

He thought he saw an Albatross
That fluttered round the lamp:
He looked again, and found it was
A Penny-Postage-Stamp.
"You'd best be getting home," he said:
"The nights are very damp!"

He thought he saw a Garden Door
That opened with a key:
He looked again, and found it was
A Double-Rule-of-Three:
"And all its mystery," he said,
"Is clear as day to me!"

Lewis Carroll [1832–1898]

THE WALRUS AND THE CARPENTER

From "Through the Looking-Glass"

THE sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done—
"It's very rude of him," she said,
"To come and spoil the fun!"

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand:
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
"If this were only cleared away,"
They said, "it *would* be grand!"

"If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose," the Walrus said,
"That they could get it clear?"
"I doubt it," said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

"O Oysters, come and walk with us!"
The Walrus did beseech.
"A pleasant talk, a pleasant walk,
Along the briny beach:
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each."

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said:
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head—
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster-bed.

But four young Oysters hurried up,
All eager for the treat:
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat—
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more—
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
"To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings."

"But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
"Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!"
"No hurry!" said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.

"A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,
"Is what we chiefly need:
Pepper and vinegar besides
Are very good indeed—
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
"After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do!"
"The night is fine," the Walrus said.
"Do you admire the view?

"It was so kind of you to come!
And you are very nice!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
"Cut us another slice.
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
I've had to ask you twice!"

"It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
"To play them such a trick,
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
"The butter's spread too thick!"

"I weep for you," the Walrus said:
"I deeply sympathize."
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

"O Oysters," said the Carpenter,
"You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?"
But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.

Lewis Carroll [1832–1898]

SONGS WITHOUT SENSE

For the Parlor and Piano

I.—THE PERSONIFIED SENTIMENTAL

AFFECTION'S charm no longer gilds
The idol of the shrine;
But cold Oblivion seeks to fill
Regret's ambrosial wine.
Though Friendship's offering buried lies
'Neath cold Aversion's snow,
Regard and Faith will ever bloom
Perpetually below.

I see thee whirl in marble halls,
In Pleasure's giddy train;
Remorse is never on that brow,
Nor Sorrow's mark of pain.
Deceit has marked thee for her own;
Inconstancy the same;
And Ruin wildly sheds its gleam
Athwart thy path of shame.

II.—THE HOMELY PATHETIC

THE dews are heavy on my brow;
My breath comes hard and low;
Yet, mother dear, grant one request,
Before your boy must go.
Oh! lift me ere my spirit sinks,
And ere my senses fail:
Place me once more, O mother dear!
Astride the old fence-rail.

The old fence-rail, the old fence-rail!
How oft these youthful legs,
With Alice' and Ben Bolt's, were hung
Across those wooden pegs.
'Twas there the nauseating smoke
Of my first pipe arose:
O mother dear! these agonies
Are far less keen than those.

I know where lies the hazel dell,
Where simple Nellie sleeps;
I know the cot of Nellie Moore,
And where the willow weeps.
I know the brook-side and the mill,
But all their pathos fails
Beside the days when once I sat
Astride the old fence-rails.

III.—SWISS AIR

I'M a gay tra, la, la,
With my fal, lal, la, la,
And my bright——
And my light——
Tra, la, le. (Repeat)

Then laugh, ha, ha, ha,
And ring, ting, ling, ling,
And sing fal, la, la,
La, la, le. (Repeat)

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

THE LOVERS

Sally Salter, she was a young teacher who taught,
And her friend, Charley Church, was a preacher who praught,
Though his enemies called him a screecher who scraught.

His heart, when he saw her, kept sinking and sunk,
And his eye, meeting hers, began winking, and wunk;
While she, in her turn, kept thinking, and thunk.

He hastened to woo her, and sweetly he wooed,
For his love grew until to a mountain it grewed,
And what he was longing to do then he doed.

In secret he wanted to speak, and he spoke,
To seek with his lips what his heart long had soke;
So he managed to let the truth leak, and it loke.

He asked her to ride to the church, and they rode;
They so sweetly did glide that they both thought they glode,
And they came to the place to be tied, and were toed.

Then homeward, he said, let us drive, and they drove,
And as soon as they wished to arrive, they arrove,
For whatever he couldn't contrive, she controve.

The kiss he was dying to steal, then he stole;
At the feet where he wanted to kneel then he knole;
And he said, "I feel better than ever I fole."

So they to each other kept clinging, and clung,
While Time his swift circuit was winging, and wung;
And this was the thing he was bringing, and brung:

The man Sally wanted to catch, and had caught;
That she wanted from others to snatch, and had snaught;
Was the one that she now liked to scratch, and she scraught.

And Charley's warm love began freezing, and froze,
While he took to teazing, and cruelly toze
The girl he had wished to be squeezing, and squoze.

"Wretch!" he cried, when she threatened to leave him, and left,
"How could you deceive me, as you have deceft?"
And she answered, "I promised to cleave, and I've cleft."

Phœbe Cary (?) [1824–1871]

THE TWINS

In form and feature, face and limb,
I grew so like my brother,
That folks got taking me for him,
And each for one another.
It puzzled all our kith and kin,
It reached a fearful pitch;
For one of us was born a twin,
Yet not a soul knew which.

One day, to make the matter worse,
Before our names were fixed,
As we were being washed by nurse,
We got completely mixed;
And thus, you see, by fate's decree,
Or rather nurse's whim,
My brother John got christened me,
And I got christened him.

This fatal likeness even dogged
My footsteps when at school,
And I was always getting flogged,
For John turned out a fool.
I put this question, fruitlessly,
To every one I knew,
"What *would* you do, if you were me,
To prove that you were *you?*"

Our close resemblance turned the tide
Of my domestic life,
For somehow, my intended bride
Became my brother's wife.

In fact, year after year the same
Absurd mistakes went on,
And when I died, the neighbors came
And buried brother John.

Henry Sambrooke Leigh [1837–1883]

A THRENODY

The Ahkoond of Swat is dead—*London Papers*

WHAT, what, what,
What's the news from Swat?
Sad news,
Bad news,
Comes by the cable led
Through the Indian Ocean's bed,
Through the Persian Gulf, the Red
Sea and the Med-
Iterranean—he's dead;
The Ahkoond is dead!

For the Ahkoond I mourn,
Who wouldn't?
He strove to disregard the message stern,
But he Ahkoodn't.
Dead, dead, dead;
(Sorrow, Swats!)
Swats wha hae wi' Ahkoond bled,
Swats whom he hath often led
Onward to a gory bed,
Or to victory,
As the case might be,
Sorrow, Swats!
Tears shed,
Shed tears like water.
Your great Ahkoond is dead!
That Swats the matter!

Mourn, city of Swat!
Your great Ahkoond is not,
But lain 'mid worms to rot.
His mortal part alone, his soul was caught

(Because he was a good Ahkoond)
Up to the bosom of Mahound.
Though earthy walls his frame surround
(Forever hallowed be the ground!)
And sceptics mock the lowly mound
And say "He's now of no Ahkoond!"
His soul is in the skies,—
The azure skies that bend above his loved
Metropolis of Swat.
He sees with larger, other eyes,
Athwart all earthly mysteries—
He knows what's Swat.

Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
With a noise of mourning and of lamentation!
Let Swat bury the great Ahkoond
With the noise of the mourning
Of the Swattish nation!
Fallen is at length
Its tower of strength,
Its sun is dimmed ere it had nooned;
Dead lies the great Ahkoond,
The great Ahkoond of Swat
Is not!

George Thomas Lanigan [1845–1886]

THE FASTIDIOUS SERPENT

THERE was a snake that dwelt in Skye,
Over the misty sea, oh;
He lived upon nothing but gooseberry-pie
For breakfast, dinner, and tea, oh.

Now gooseberry-pie—as is very well known—
Over the misty sea, oh,
Is not to be found under every stone,
Nor yet upon every tree, oh.

And being so ill to please with his meat,
Over the misty sea, oh,
The snake had sometimes nothing to eat,
And an angry snake was he, oh.

Then he'd flick his tongue and his head he'd shake,
Over the misty sea, oh,
Crying, "Gooseberry-pie! For goodness' sake
Some gooseberry-pie for me, oh!"

And if gooseberry-pie was not to be had,
Over the misty sea, oh,
He'd twine and twist like an eel gone mad,
Or a worm just stung by a bee, oh.

But though he might shout and wriggle about,
Over the misty sea, oh,
The snake had often to go without
His breakfast, dinner, and tea, oh.

Henry Johnstone [1844–

MY RECOLLECTEST THOUGHTS

My recollectest thoughts are those
Which I remember yet;
And bearing on, as you'd suppose,
The things I don't forget.

But my resemblest thoughts are less
Alike than they should be;
A state of things, as you'll confess,
You very seldom see.

And yet the mos est thought I love
Is what no one believes—
That I'm the sole survivor of
The famous Forty Thieves!

Charles Edward Carryl [1841–

MR. FINNEY'S TURNIP

Mr. Finney had a turnip
And it grew behind the barn;
And it grew and it grew,
And that turnip did no harm.

There it grew and it grew
Till it could grow no longer;
Then his daughter Lizzie picked it
And put it in the cellar.

There it lay and it lay
Till it began to rot;
And his daughter Susie took it
And put it in the pot.

And they boiled it and boiled it
As long as they were able;
And then his daughters took it
And put it on the table.

Mr. Finney and his wife
They sat them down to sup;
And they ate and they ate
And they ate that turnip up.

Unknown

THE SIEGE OF BELGRADE

An Austrian army, awfully arrayed,
Boldly by battery besieged Belgrade;
Cossack commanders cannonading come,
Dealing destruction's devastating doom.
Every endeavor engineers essay
For fame, for fortune,—fighting furious fray:
Generals 'gainst generals grapple—gracious God
How honors Heaven heroic hardihood!
Infuriate, indiscriminate in ill,
Kindred kill kinsmen—kinsmen kindred kill!
Labor low levels loftiest, longest lines;
Men march 'mid mounds, 'mid moles, 'mid murderous mines.
Now noisy, noxious numbers notice naught
Of outward obstacles opposing ought:
Poor patriots, partly purchased, partly pressed,
Quite quailing, quaking, quickly quarter quest.

Reason returns, religious right redounds,
Suwarrow stops such sanguinary sounds:
Truce to thee, Turkey—triumph to thy train!
Unjust, unwise, unmerciful Ukraine!
Vanish vain victory! vanish victory vain!
Why wish we warfare? Wherefore welcome were
Xerxes, Ximenes, Xanthus, Xaviere?
Yield, yield, ye youths! ye yeomen, yield your yell!
Zeno's, Zarpatus', Zoroaster's zeal,
All, all arouse! all against arms appeal!

Unknown

ELLEN M'JONES ABERDEEN

Macphairson Clonglocketty Angus M'Clan
Was the son of an elderly laboring man.
You've guessed him a Scotchman, shrewd reader, at sight,
And p'r'aps altogether, shrewd reader, you're right.

From the bonnie blue Forth to the lovely Deeside,
Round by Dingwall and Wrath to the mouth of the Clyde,
There wasn't a child, or woman, or man
Who could pipe with Clonglocketty Angus M'Clan.

No other could wake such detestable groans,
With reed and with chanter—with bag and with drones:
All day and all night he delighted the chiels
With sniggering pibrochs and jiggety reels.

He'd clamber a mountain and squat on the ground,
And the neighboring maidens would gather around
To list to his pipes and to gaze in his een,
Especially Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen.

All loved their M'Clan, save a Sassenach brute,
Who came to the Highlands to fish and to shoot;
He dressed himself up in a Highlander way,
Though his name it was Pattison Corby Torbay.

Torbay had incurred a good deal of expense
To make him a Scotchman in every sense;
But this is a matter, you'll readily own,
That isn't a question of tailors alone.

A Sassenach chief may be bonily built,
He may purchase a sporran, a bonnet, and kilt;
Stick a skeän in his hose—wear an acre of stripes—
But he cannot assume an affection for pipes.

Clonglocketty's pipings all night and all day
Quite frenzied poor Pattison Corby Torbay:
The girls were amused at his singular spleen,
Especially Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen.

"Macphairson Clonglocketty Angus, my lad,
With pibrochs and reels you are driving me mad.
If you really must play on that cursed affair,
My goodness! play something resembling an air."

Boiled over the blood of Macphairson M'Clan—
The Clan of Clonglocketty rose as one man:
For all were enraged at the insult, I ween!—
Especially Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen.

"Let's show," said M'Clan, "to this Sassenach loon
That the bagpipes *can* play him a regular tune.
Let's see," said M'Clan, as he thoughtfully sat,
"'In My Cottage' is easy—I'll practice at that."

He blew at his "Cottage," and blew with a will,
For a year, seven months, and a fortnight, until
(You'll hardly believe it) M'Clan, I declare,
Elicited something resembling an air.

It was wild—it was fitful—as wild as the breeze—
It wandered about into several keys;
It was jerky, spasmodic, and harsh, I'm aware,
But still it distinctly suggested an air.

The Sassenach screamed and the Sassenach danced,
He shrieked in his agony, bellowed and pranced;
And the maidens who gathered rejoiced at the scene,
Especially Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen.

"Hech gather, hech gather, hech gather around:
And fill a' yer lugs wi' the exquisite sound.

An air frae the bagpipes—beat that if ye can!
Hurrah for Clonglocketty Angus M'Clan!"

The fame of his piping spread over the land;
Respectable widows proposed for his hand,
And maidens came flocking to sit on the green,
Especially Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen.

One morning the fidgety Sassenach swore
He'd stand it no longer—he drew his claymore,
And (this was, I think, in extremely bad taste),
Divided Clonglocketty close to the waist.

Oh! loud were the wailings for Angus M'Clan,
Oh! deep was the grief for that excellent man,
The maids stood aghast at the horrible scene,
Especially Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen.

It sorrowed poor Pattison Corby Torbay
To find them "take on" in this serious way.
He pitied the poor little fluttering birds,
And solaced their souls with the following words:—

"Oh, maidens," said Pattison, touching his hat,
"Don't blubber, my dears, for a fellow like that;
Observe, I'm a very superior man,
A much better fellow than Angus M'Clan."

They smiled when he winked and addressed them as "dears,"
And they all of them vowed, as they dried up their tears,
A pleasanter gentleman never was seen—
Especially Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen.

William Schwenck Gilbert [1836–1911]

TO THE TERRESTRIAL GLOBE

BY A MISERABLE WRETCH

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through pathless realms of Space
Roll on!
What though I'm in a sorry case?

What though I cannot meet my bills?
What though I suffer toothache's ills?
What though I swallow countless pills?
Never *you* mind!
Roll on!

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through seas of inky air
Roll on!
It's true I've got no shirts to wear;
It's true my butcher's bill is due;
It's true my prospects all look blue—
But don't let that unsettle you!
Never *you* mind!
Roll on. (*It rolls on*)

William Schwenck Gilbert [1836–1911]

HIS HEART WAS TRUE TO POLL

I'll sing you a song, not very long,
But the story somewhat new,
Of William Kidd, who, whatever he did,
To his Poll was always true.
He sailed away in a gallant ship
From the port of old Bris*tol*,
And the last words he uttered,
As his handkercher he fluttered,
Were, "My heart is true to Poll."

His heart was true to Poll,
His heart was true to Poll.
It's no matter what you do,
If your heart be only true:
And his heart *was* true to Poll.

'Twas a wreck. Willi*am*, on shore he swam,
And looked about for an inn;
When a noble savage lady, of a color rather shady,
Came up with a kind of grin:

"Oh, marry *me*, and a king you'll be,
And in a palace loll;
Or we'll eat you willy-nilly."
So he gave his *hand*, did Billy,
But his *heart* was true to Poll.

Away a twelvemonth sped, and a happy life he led
As the King of the Kikeryboos;
His paint was red and yellow, and he used a big umbrella,
And he wore a pair of over-*shoes;*
He'd corals and knives, and twenty-six wives,
Whose beauties I cannot here extol:
One day they all revolted,
So he back to Bristol bolted,
For his *heart* was true to Poll.

Francis Cowley Burnand [1837–1917]

RED RIDING HOOD

Most worthy of praise were the virtuous ways
Of Little Red Riding Hood's ma,
And no one was ever more cautious and clever
Than Little Red Riding Hood's pa.
They never misled, for they meant what they said,
And frequently said what they meant:
They were careful to show her the way she should go,
And the way that they showed her she went.
For obedience she was effusively thanked,
And for anything else she was carefully spanked.

It thus isn't strange that Red Riding Hood's range
Of virtues so steadily grew,
That soon she won prizes of various sizes,
And golden encomiums too.
As a general rule she was head of her school,
And at six was so notably smart
That they gave her a check for reciting The Wreck
Of the Hesperus wholly by heart.
And you all will applaud her the more, I am sure,
When I add that the money she gave to the poor.

At eleven this lass had a Sunday-school class,
  At twelve wrote a volume of verse,
At fourteen was yearning for glory, and learning
  To be a professional nurse.
To a glorious height the young paragon might
  Have climbed, if not nipped in the bud,
But the following year struck her smiling career
  With a dull and a sickening thud!
    (I have shed a great tear at the thought of her pain,
    And must copy my manuscript over again!)

Not dreaming of harm, one day on her arm
  A basket she hung. It was filled
With drinks made of spices, and jellies, and ices,
  And chicken-wings, carefully grilled,
And a savory stew, and a novel or two
  She persuaded a neighbor to loan,
And a Japanese fan, and a hot-water can,
  And a bottle of eau de cologne,
    And the rest of the things that your family fill
    Your room with whenever you chance to be ill.

She expected to find her decrepit but kind
  Old grandmother waiting her call,
Exceedingly ill. Oh, that face on the pillow
  Did not look familiar at all!
With a whitening cheek she started to speak,
  But her peril she instantly saw:
Her grandma had fled and she'd tackled instead
  Four merciless paws and a maw!
    When the neighbors came running the wolf to subdue,
    He was licking his chops—and Red Riding Hood's, too!

At this terrible tale some readers will pale,
  And others with horror grow dumb,
And yet it was better, I fear, he should get her:—
  Just think what she might have become!
For an infant so keen might in future have been
  A woman of awful renown,
Who carried on fights for her feminine rights,
  As the Mayor of an Arkansas town,

Or she might have continued the sins of her 'teens
And come to write verse for the Big Magazines!

THE MORAL: There's nothing much glummer
Than children whose talents appal.
One much prefers those that are dumber.
And as for the paragons small—
If a swallow cannot make a summer,
It can bring on a summary fall!

Guy Wetmore Carryl [1873–1904]

A NAUTICAL BALLAD

A CAPITAL ship for an ocean trip
Was the "Walloping Window-blind,"
No gale that blew dismayed her crew
Or troubled the captain's mind.
The man at the wheel was taught to feel
Contempt for the wildest blow,
And it often appeared, when the weather had cleared,
That he'd been in his bunk below.

The boatswain's mate was very sedate,
Yet fond of amusement, too;
And he played hop-scotch with the starboard watch
While the captain tickled the crew.
And the gunner we had was apparently mad,
For he sat on the after rail,
And fired salutes with the captain's boots,
In the teeth of the booming gale.

The captain sat in a commodore's hat
And dined in a royal way
On toasted pigs and pickles and figs
And gummery bread each day.
But the cook was Dutch and behaved as such;
For the food that he gave the crew
Was a number of tons of hot-cross buns
Chopped up with sugar and glue.

And we all felt ill as mariners will
On a diet that's cheap and rude;
And we shivered and shook as we dipped the cook
In a tub of his gluesome food.
Then nautical pride we laid aside,
And we cast the vessel ashore
On the Gulliby Isles, where the Poohpooh smiles,
And the Anagazanders roar.

Composed of sand was that favored land,
And trimmed with cinnamon straws;
And pink and blue was the pleasing hue
Of the Tickletoeteaser's claws.
And we sat on the edge of a sandy ledge
And shot at the whistling bee;
And the Binnacle-bats wore water-proof hats,
As they danced in the sounding sea.

On rubagub bark, from dawn to dark,
We fed, till we all had grown
Uncommonly shrunk—when a Chinese junk
Came by from the torriby zone.
She was stubby and square, but we didn't much care,
And we cheerily put to sea;
And we left the crew of the junk to chew
The bark of the rubagub tree.

Charles Edward Carryl [1841–

THE PLAINT OF THE CAMEL

"Canary-birds feed on sugar and seed,
Parrots have crackers to crunch;
And as for the poodles, they tell me the noodles
Have chickens and cream for their lunch.
But there's never a question
About MY digestion—
ANYTHING does for me!

"Cats, you're aware, can repose in a chair,
Chickens can roost upon rails;
Puppies are able to sleep in a stable,
And oysters can slumber in pails.

But no one supposes
A poor Camel dozes—
ANY PLACE does for me!

"Lambs are enclosed where it's never exposed,
Coops are constructed for hens;
Kittens are treated to houses well heated,
And pigs are protected by pens.
But a Camel comes handy
Wherever it's sandy—
ANYWHERE does for me!

"People would laugh if you rode a giraffe,
Or mounted the back of an ox;
It's nobody's habit to ride on a rabbit,
Or try to bestraddle a fox.
But as for a Camel, he's
Ridden by families—
ANY LOAD does for me!

"A snake is as round as a hole in the ground,
And weasels are wavy and sleek;
And no alligator could ever be straighter
Than lizards that live in a creek,
But a Camel's all lumpy
And bumpy and humpy—
ANY SHAPE does for me!"

Charles Edward Carryl [1841–

THE FROG

Be kind and tender to the Frog,
And do not call him names,
As "Slimy-skin," or "Polly-wog,"
Or likewise, "Uncle James,"
Or "Gape-a-grin," or "Toad-gone-wrong,"
Or "Billy Bandy-knees:"
The Frog is justly sensitive
To epithets like these.

No animal will more repay
A treatment kind and fair,

At least so lonely people say
Who keep a frog (and, by the way,
They are extremely rare).

Hilaire Belloc [1870–

SAGE COUNSEL

THE lion is the beast to fight:
He leaps along the plain,
And if you run with all your might,
He runs with all his mane.
I'm glad I'm not a Hottentot,
But if I were, with outward cal-lum
I'd either faint upon the spot
Or hie me up a leafy pal-lum.

The chamois is the beast to hunt:
He's fleeter than the wind,
And when the chamois is in front
The hunter is behind.
The Tyrolese make famous cheese
And hunt the chamois o'er the chaz-zums;
I'd choose the former, if you please,
For precipices give me spaz-zums.

The polar bear will make a rug
Almost as white as snow:
But if he gets you in his hug,
He rarely lets you go.
And polar ice looks very nice,
With all the colors of a prissum:
But, if you'll follow my advice,
Stay home and learn your catechissum.

Arthur Quiller-Couch [1863–

CHILD'S NATURAL HISTORY

GEESE

EV–ER–Y child who has the use
Of his sen-ses knows a goose.
Sees them un-der-neath the tree
Gath-er round the goose-girl's knee,

While she reads them by the hour
From the works of Scho-pen-hau-er.
How pa-tient-ly the geese at-tend!
But do they re-al-ly com-pre-hend
What Scho-pen-hau-er's driv-ing at?
Oh, not at all; but what of that?
Nei-ther do I; nei-ther does she;
And, for that mat-ter, nor does he.

A SEAL

See, Chil-dren, the Fur-bear-ing Seal;
Ob-serve his mis-di-rect-ed zeal;
He dines with most ab-ste-mi-ous care
On Fish, Ice Water and Fresh Air
A-void-ing cond-i-ments or spice
For fear his fur should not be nice
And fine and soft and smooth and meet
For Broad-way or for Re-gent Street.
And yet some-how I often feel
(Though for the kind Fur-bear-ing Seal
I harbor a Re-spect Pro-found)
He runs Fur-bear-ance in the ground.

THE YAK

This is the Yak, so neg-li-gee;
His coif-fure's like a stack of hay;
He lives so far from Any-where,
I fear the Yak neg-lects his hair,
And thinks, since there is none to see,
What mat-ter how un-kempt he be:
How would he feel if he but knew
That in this Pic-ture-book I drew
His Phys-i-og-no-my un-shorn,
For chil-dren to de-ride and scorn?

THE MON-GOOS

This, Children, is the famed Mon-goos.
He has an ap-pe-tite ab-struse:
Strange to re-late, this crea-ture takes
A cu-ri-ous joy in eat-ing snakes—

All kinds—though, it must be con-fessed,
He likes the poi-son-ous ones the best.
From him we learn how ve-ry small
A thing can bring a-bout a Fall.
O Mon-goos, where were you that day
When Mistress Eve was led a-stray?
If you'd but seen the ser-pent first,
Our parents would not have been cursed,
And so there would be no ex-cuse
For MILTON, but for you—Mon-goos!

Oliver Herford [1863–

IN FOREIGN PARTS

WHEN I lived in Singapore,
It was something of a bore
To receive the bulky Begums who came trundling to my door;
They kept getting into tangles
With their bingle-bongle-bangles,
And the tiger used to bite them as he sat upon the floor.

When I lived in Timbuctoo,
Almost everyone I knew
Used to play upon the sackbut, singing "toodle-doodle-doo,"
And they made ecstatic ballads,
And consumed seductive salads,
Made of chicory and hickory and other things that grew.

When I lived at Rotterdam,
I possessed a spotted ram,
Who would never feed on anything but hollyhocks and ham;
But one day he butted down
All the magnates of the town,
So they slew him, though I knew him to be gentle as a lamb.

But!
When I got to Kandahar,
It was very, very far,

And the people came and said to me, "How *very* plain you
are!"
So I sailed across the foam,
And I toddle-waddled home,
And no more I'll go a-rovering beyond the harbor bar.

Laura E. Richards [1850–

A MOSQUITO TRIOLET

He presented his bill,
And I could not evade it.
In valley, on hill,
He presented his bill,
With stinging ill-will;
So with blood, sir, I paid it.
He presented his bill,
And I could not evade it.

Aristine Anderson [18

A GRAIN OF SALT

Of all the wimming doubly blest
The sailor's wife's the happiest,
For all she does is stay to home
And knit and darn—and let 'im roam.

Of all the husbands on the earth
The sailor has the finest berth,
For in 'is cabin he can sit
And sail and sail—and let 'er knit.

Wallace Irwin [1875–

THE PURPLE COW

Reflections on a Mythic Beast,
Who's Quite Remarkable, at Least.

I never saw a Purple Cow;
I never Hope to See One;
But I can Tell you, Anyhow,
I'd rather See than Be One.

CINQ ANS APRÈS

(Confession: and a portrait, Too,
Upon a Background that I Rue!)

Ah, yes, I wrote the "Purple Cow"—
I'm sorry, now, I Wrote it!
But I can Tell you, Anyhow,
I'll Kill you if you Quote it!

Gelett Burgess [1866–

NONSENSE VERSES

THE Window has Four little Panes:
But One have I:
The Window-Panes are in its Sash,—
I wonder why!

My Feet they haul me 'round the House:
They hoist me up the Stairs:
I only have to steer them and
They ride me everywheres.

Remarkable truly, is Art!
See—Elliptical wheels on a Cart!
It looks very fair
In the Picture up there:
But imagine the Ride when you start!

I'd rather have Fingers than Toes:
I'd rather have Eyes than a Nose:
And as for my hair,
I'm glad it's all there,
I'll be awfully sad when it goes!

I wish that my Room had a Floor;
I don't so much care for a Door,
But this walking around
Without touching the ground
Is getting to be quite a bore!

Gelett Burgess [1866–

VERS NONSENSIQUES

I AM gai. I am poet. I dvell
Rupert Street, at the fifth. I am svell.
And I sing tralala
And I love my mamma,
And the English, I speaks him quite vell!

"Cassez-vous, cassez-vous, cassez-vous,
O mer, sur vos froids gris cailloux!"
Ainsi tradusit Laure
Au profit d'Isadore
(Bon jeune homme, et son future époux.)

Il existe une espinstere à Tours
Un peu vite, et qui portait toujours
Un ulster peau-de-phoque,
Un chapeau biliqoque,
Et des nicreboquers en velours.

Un marin naufrage (de Doncastre)
Pour prière, au milieu du désastre
Repetait à genoux
Ces mots simples et doux:—
"Scintellez, scintellez, petit astre!"

George du Maurier [1834–1896]

HOME

A MELANCHOLY little man was seated on the ground;
He showed supreme indifference to everything around.
"Why do you not run home," I cried, "and tumble into bed?"
He looked at me expressively, and presently he said:

"One rubber plant can never make a home,
Not even when combined with brush and comb,
And spoon, and fork, and knife,
And graphophone, and wife.
No! Something more is needed for a home."

I said: "What does your dwelling lack? The pretty hearth-
side tone?
The note of domesticity?" He gave a fearful groan.
"Alas!" he cried, while from his seat he slowly upward
bobbed
And seized his hat, "a flat's a flat!" Together then we
sobbed:

"One rubber plant can never make a home;
One day did not suffice for building Rome.
One gas-log and a cat
Can't civilize a flat.
No! Something more is needed for a home."

Unknown

FOUR LIMERICKS

A CANNER, exceedingly canny,
One morning remarked to his granny,
"A canner can can
Anything that he can;
But a canner can't can a can, can he?"

A BRIGHT little maid of St. Thomas
One day found a suit of pajamas;
Said the maiden, "Well, well,
What these are, I can't tell,
But I'm certain the garments ain't mama's."

A TUTOR who tooted a flute
Tried to teach two young tooters to toot.
Said the two to the tutor,
"Is it harder to toot, or
To tutor two tooters to toot?"

THERE was a young fellow named Tait,
Who dined with his girl at 8:08;
As Tait did not state,
I cannot relate
What Tait and his tête-à-tête ate at 8:08.

Carolyn Wells [18 –

MORE LIMERICKS

THERE was an old man of Tarentum,
Who gnashed his false teeth till he bent 'em:
And when asked for the cost
Of what he had lost,
Said, "I really can't tell, for I rent 'em!"

A LADY there was of Antigua,
Who said to her spouse, "What a pig you are!"
He answered, "My queen,
Is it manners you mean,
Or do you refer to my figure?"

THE poor benighted Hindoo,
He does the best he kinddo;
He sticks to caste
From first to last;
For pants he makes his skindoo.

THERE were three young women of Birmingham,
And I know a sad story concerning 'em:
They stuck needles and pins
In the reverend shins
Of the Bishop engaged in confirming 'em.

THERE was a young lady of Niger
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger;
They returned from the ride
With the lady inside,
And the smile on the face of the tiger.

THERE was a young lady of Wilts,
Who walked up to Scotland on stilts;
When they said it was shocking
To show so much stocking,
She answered: "Then what about kilts?"

THERE was a young girl of Lahore,
The same shape behind as before.
As no one knew where
To offer a chair,
She had to sit down on the floor.

Cosmo Monkhouse [1840-1901]

In good looks I am not a star.
There are others more lovely by far.
  But my face—I don't mind it,
  Because I'm behind it—
It's the people in front that I jar.

There was a small boy of Quebec,
Who was buried in snow to his neck;
  When they said, "Are you friz?"
  He replied, "Yes, I is—
But we don't call this cold in Quebec."

Rudyard Kipling [1865-

There was a young man so benighted
He didn't know when he was slighted,
  But went to the party
  And ate just as hearty
As if he'd been duly invited!

There was an old man of Nantucket
Who kept all his cash in a bucket;
  But his daughter, named Nan,
  Ran away with a man—
And as for the bucket, Nantucket.

OLD FAVORITES

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG

From "The Vicar of Wakefield"

Good people all, of every sort,
  Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short,—
  It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man
  Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,—
  Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
  To comfort friends and foes:
The naked every day he clad,—
  When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
  As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
  And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
  But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
  Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighboring streets
  The wondering neighbors ran,
And swore the dog had losts his wits,
  To bite so good a man.

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye:
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That showed the rogues they lied:—
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

Oliver Goldsmith [1728–1774]

AN ELEGY

ON THAT GLORY OF HER SEX, MRS. MARY BLAIZE

Good people all, with one accord,
Lament for Madam Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word—
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom passed her door,
And always found her kind;
She freely lent to all the poor—
Who left a pledge behind.

She strove the neighborhood to please
With manners wondrous winning;
And never followed wicked ways—
Unless when she was sinning.

At church, in silks and satins new
With hoop of monstrous size,
She never slumbered in her pew—
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,
By twenty beaux and more;
The King himself has followed her—
When she has walked before.

But now, her wealth and finery fled,
  Her hangers-on cut short all;
The doctors found, when she was dead—
  Her last disorder mortal.

Let us lament, in sorrow sore,
  For Kent Street well may say,
That had she lived a twelvemonth more—
  She had not died to-day.

Oliver Goldsmith [1728–1774]

THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN

John Gilpin was a citizen
  Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
  Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
  "Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
  No holiday have seen.

"To-morrow is our wedding-day,
  And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton,
  All in a chaise and pair.

"My sister, and my sister's child,
  Myself, and children three,
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride
  On horseback after we."

He soon replied, "I do admire
  Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
  Therefore it shall be done.

"I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horse to go."

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, "That's well said;
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnished with our own,
Which is both bright and clear."

John Gilpin kissed his loving wife;
O'erjoyed was he to find,
That though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allowed
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stayed,
Where they did all get in;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,
But soon came down again;

For saddle-tree scarce reached had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,
Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came downstairs,
"The wine is left behind!"

"Good lack!" quoth he—"yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword,
When I do exercise."

Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipped from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brushed and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which galled him in his seat.

So, "Fair and softly," John he cried,
But John he cried in vain;
That trot become a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasped the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or naught;
Away went hat and wig:
He little dreamt, when he set out,
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,
Up flew the windows all;
And every soul cried out, "Well done!"
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?
His fame soon spread around;
"He carries weight!" "He rides a race!"
"'Tis for a thousand pound!"

And still, as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view,
How in a trice the turnpike-men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shattered at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been.

But still he seemed to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced;
For all might see the bottle-necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay;

And there he threw the Wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wondering much
To see how he did ride.

"Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house!"
They all at once did cry;
"The dinner waits, and we are tired;"—
Said Gilpin—"So am I."

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclined to tarry there!
For why?—his owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware,

So like an arrow swift he flew,
Shot by an archer strong;
So did he fly—which brings me to
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the calender's
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see
His neighbor in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him:

"What news? what news? your tidings tell;
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bareheaded you are come,
Or why you come at all?"

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit
And loved a timely joke;
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke:

"I came because your horse would come,
And, if I well forbode,
My hat and wig will soon be here.—
They are upon the road."

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Returned him not a single word
But to the house went in;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig;
A wig that flowed behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus showed his ready wit,
"My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit.

"But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case."

Said John, "It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware."

So turning to his horse, he said,
"I am in haste to dine;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine."

Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And galloped off with all his might.
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig:
He lost them sooner than at first;
For why?—they were too big.

Now Mistress Gilpin, when she saw
  Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
  She pulled out half-a-crown;

And thus unto the youth she said
  That drove them to the Bell,
"This shall be yours, when you bring back
  My husband safe and well."

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
  John coming back amain:
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
  By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he meant,
  And gladly would have done,
The frighted steed he frighted more,
  And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
  Went postboy at his heels,
The postboy's horse right glad to miss
  The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
  Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With postboy scampering in the rear,
  They raised the hue and cry:

"Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!"
  Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that passed that way
  Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
  Flew open in short space;
The toll-men thinking, as before,
  That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
For he got first to town;
Nor stopped till where he had got up
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, Long live the king!
And Gilpin, long live he!
And when he next doth ride abroad
May I be there to see!

William Cowper [1731–1800]

THE RAZOR-SELLER

A FELLOW in a market-town,
Most musical, cried "Razors!" up and down,
And offered twelve for eighteen pence;
Which certainly seemed wondrous cheap,
And, for the money, quite a heap,
As every man should buy, with cash and sense.

A country bumpkin the great offer heard,—
Poor Hodge, who suffered by a thick black beard,
That seemed a shoe-brush stuck beneath his nose:
With cheerfulness the eighteen pence he paid,
And proudly to himself in whispers said,
"This rascal stole the razors, I suppose!

"No matter if the fellow *be* a knave,
Provided that the razors *shave;*
It *sartinly* will be a monstrous prize."
So home the clown, with his good fortune, went,
Smiling, in heart and soul content,
And quickly soaped himself to ears and eyes.

Being well lathered from a dish or tub,
Hodge now began with grinning pain to grub,
Just like a hedger cutting furze;
'Twas a vile razor!—then the rest he tried,—
All were impostors. "Ah!" Hodge sighed,
"I wish my eighteen pence were in my purse."

In vain, to chase his beard, and bring the graces,
He cut, and dug, and winced, and stamped, and swore;
Brought blood, and danced, blasphemed, and made wry faces,
And cursed each razor's body o'er and o'er:

His muzzle, formed of *opposition* stuff,
Firm as a Foxite, would not lose its ruff;
So kept it,—laughing at the steel and suds.
Hodge, in a passion, stretched his angry jaws,
Vowing the direst vengeance, with clenched claws,
On the vile cheat that sold the goods.
"Razors! a base, confounded dog!
Not fit to scrape a hog!"

Hodge sought the fellow,—found him,—and begun:
"P'rhaps, Master Razor-rogue, to you 'tis fun
That people flay themselves out of their lives.
You rascal! for an hour have I been grubbing,
Giving my whiskers here a scrubbing,
With razors just like oyster-knives.
Sirrah! I tell you you're a knave,
To cry up razors that can't shave!"

"Friend," quoth the razor-man, "I'm not a knave;
As for the razors you have bought,
Upon my soul, I never thought
That they would *shave*."
"Not think they'd *shave!*" quoth Hodge, with wondering eyes,
And voice not much unlike an Indian yell;
"What were they made for, then, you dog?" he cries.
"*Made*," quoth the fellow, with a smile,—"*to sell*."

John Wolcot [1738–1819]

THE THREE WARNINGS

The tree of deepest root is found
Least willing still to quit the ground:
'Twas therefore said by ancient sages,
That love of life increased with years

So much, that in our later stages,
When pains grow sharp, and sickness rages,
  The greatest love of life appears.
This great affection to believe,
Which all confess, but few perceive,—
If old assertions can't prevail,—
Be pleased to hear a modern tale.
  When sports went round, and all were gay,
On neighbor Dodson's wedding-day,
Death called aside the jocund groom
With him into another room,
And looking grave—"You must," says he,
"Quit your sweet bride, and come with me."
"With you! and quit my Susan's side!
With you!" the hapless husband cried;
"Young as I am, 'tis monstrous hard!
Besides, in truth, I'm not prepared:
My thoughts on other matters go;
This is my wedding-day, you know."
  What more he urged, I have not heard,
    His reasons could not well be stronger;
  So Death the poor delinquent spared,
    And left to live a little longer.
Yet calling up a serious look—
His hour-glass trembled while he spoke—
"Neighbor," he said, "farewell! No more
Shall Death disturb your mirthful hour;
And farther, to avoid all blame
Of cruelty upon my name,
To give you time for preparation,
And fit you for your future station,
Three several warnings you shall have,
Before you're summoned to the grave.
Willing for once I'll quit my prey,
  And grant a kind reprieve,
In hopes you'll have no more to say,
But, when I call again this way,
  Well-pleased the world will leave."
To these conditions both consented,
And parted perfectly contented.

What next the hero of our tale befell,
How long he lived, how wise, how well,
How roundly he pursued his course,
And smoked his pipe, and stroked his horse
The willing Muse shall tell.
He chaffered then, he bought, he sold,
Nor once perceived his growing old,
Nor thought of Death as near;
His friends not false, his wife no shrew,
Many his gains, his children few,
He passed his hours in peace.
But while he viewed his wealth increase,
While thus along Life's dusty road
The beaten track content he trod,
Old Time, whose haste no mortal spares,
Uncalled, unheeded, unawares,
Brought on his eightieth year.
And now, one night, in musing mood
As all alone he sat,
The unwelcome messenger of Fate
Once more before him stood.
Half killed with anger and surprise,
"So soon returned!" old Dodson cried.
"So soon, d' ye call it?" Death replies.
"Surely, my friend, you're but in jest!
Since I was here before
'Tis six-and-thirty years at least,
And you are now fourscore."
"So much the worse," the clown rejoined,
"To spare the aged would be kind:
However, see your search be legal;
And your authority—is 't regal?
Else you are come on a fool's errand,
With but a secretary's warrant.
Besides, you promised me Three Warnings,
Which I have looked for nights and mornings;
But for that loss of time and ease,
I can recover damages."
"I know," cries Death, "that at the best
I seldom am a welcome guest;

But don't be captious, friend, at least:
I little thought you'd still be able
To stump about your farm and stable;
Your years have run to a great length;
I wish you joy, though, of your strength!"
"Hold," says the farmer, "not so fast!
I have been lame these four years past."
"And no great wonder," Death replies:
"However, you still keep your eyes;
And sure, to see one's loves and friends,
For legs and arms would make amends."
"Perhaps," says Dodson, "so it might,
But latterly I've lost my sight."
"This is a shocking tale, 'tis true,
But still there's comfort left for you:
Each strives your sadness to amuse;
I warrant you hear all the news."
"There's none," cries he; "and if there were,
I'm grown so deaf I could not hear."
"Nay, then," the spectre stern rejoined,
"These are unwarrantable yearnings;
If you are lame, and deaf, and blind,
You've had your three sufficient warnings.
So, come along, no more we'll part."
He said, and touched him with his dart.
And now old Dodson, turning pale,
Yields to his fate—so ends my tale.

Hester Thrale Piozzi [1741–1821]

THE SAILOR'S CONSOLATION

One night came on a hurricane,
The sea was mountains rolling,
When Barney Buntline turned his quid,
And said to Billy Bowling:
"A strong nor'wester's blowing, Bill;
Hark! don't ye hear it roar, now?
Lord help 'em, how I pities them
Unhappy folks on shore now!

"Foolhardy chaps who live in towns,
What danger they are all in,
And now lie quaking in their beds,
For fear the roof should fall in;
Poor creatures! how they envies us,
And wishes, I've a notion,
For our good luck, in such a storm,
To be upon the ocean!

"And as for them who're out all day
On business from their houses,
And late at night are coming home,
To cheer their babes and spouses,—
While you and I, Bill, on the deck
Are comfortably lying,
My eyes! what tiles and chimney-pots
About their heads are flying!

"And very often have we heard
How men are killed and undone
By overturns of carriages,
By thieves, and fires in London;
We know what risks all landsmen run,
From noblemen to tailors;
Then, Bill, let us thank Providence
That you and I are sailors."

Charles Dibdin [1745–1814]

TAM O' SHANTER

When chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neibors, neibors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
And folk begin to tak the gate;
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
And gettin' fou and unco happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and stiles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky sullen dame,

Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonnie lasses).

O Tam! hadst thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!
She tauld thee weel thou wast a skellum,
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum;
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou wast na sober;
That ilka melder, wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That every naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the Lord's house, even on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.
She prophesied that, late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drowned in Doon;
Or catched wi' warlocks i' the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars me greet,
To think how monie counsels sweet,
How monie lengthened, sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale:—Ae market-night,
Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter Johnny,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;
Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;—
They had been fou for weeks thegither!

The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter;
And aye the ale was growing better:

The landlady and Tam grew gracious,
Wi' favors secret, sweet, and precious:
The Souter tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair and rustle,—
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drowned himself amang the nappy!
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes winged their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blessed, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!

But pleasures are like poppies spread,—
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed:
Or like the snowfall in the river,—
A moment white—then melts forever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form,
Evanishing amid the storm.
Nae man can tether time or tide;
The hour approaches Tam maun ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattling showers rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallowed;
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellowed:
That night, a child might understand,
The Deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his gray mare, Meg,
(A better never lifted leg,)
Tam skelpit on through dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;

Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;
Whiles glowering round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares;—
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoored;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Whare drunken Charlie brak's neckbane;
And through the whins, and by the cairn,
Whare hunters fand the murdered bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare Mungo's mither hanged hersel.
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars through the woods;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll;
When, glimmering through the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seemed in a bleeze;
Through ilka bore the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn,
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquebae, we'll face the Devil!
The swats sae reamed in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he cared na deils a boddle.
But Maggie stood right sair astonished,
Till, by the heel and hand admonished,
She ventured forward on the light;
And, wow! Tam saw an unco sight!
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
Nae cotillion brent new frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.
A winnock-bunker in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast;

A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large,
To gie them music was his charge:
He screwed the pipes and gart them skirl,
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl,
Coffins stood round, like open presses,
That shawed the dead in their last dresses;
And by some devilish cantrip slight,
Each in its cauld hand held a light:
By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes in gibbet airns;
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristened bairns;
A thief, new-cutted frae a rape,
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape;
Five tomahawks, wi' bluid red-rusted;
Five scimitars, wi' murder crusted;
A garter, which a babe had strangled;
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son o' life bereft,—
The gray hairs yet stack to the heft;
Wi' mair o' horrible and awfu',
Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowered, amazed and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
The piper loud and louder blew;
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reeled, they set, they crossed, they cleekit,
Till ilka carline swat and reekit,
And coost her duddies to the wark,
And linket at it in her sark!

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans,
A' plump and strappin' in their teens;
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen-hunder linen!
Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies,
For ae blink o' the bonnie burdies!

But withered beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie hags, wad spean a foal,
Louping and flinging on a crummock,
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

But Tam kenned what was what fu' brawlie;
There was ae winsome wench and walie,
That night enlisted in the core,
(Lang after kenned on Carrick shore;
For monie a beast to dead she shot,
And perished monie a bonnie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
And kept the country-side in fear.)
Her cutty-sark, o' Paisley harn,
That, while a lassie, she had worn,
In longitude though sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.
Ah! little kenned thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft for her wee Nannie,
Wi' two pund Scots, ('twas a' her riches,)
Wad ever graced a dance o' witches!

But here my Muse her wing maun cour;
Sic flights are far beyond her power;
To sing how Nannie lap and flang
(A souple jade she was, and strang),
And how Tam stood, like ane bewitched,
And thought his very e'en enriched;
Even Satan glowered, and fidged fu' fain,
And hotched and blew wi' might and main:
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark;
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.
As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;
As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;

As eager runs the market-crowd,
When, "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' monie an eldritch screech and hollow.

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin'!
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin'!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin'!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane o' the brig;
There at them thou thy tail may toss;
A running stream they dare na cross.
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie pressed,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she Maggie's mettle!
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain gray tail;
The carline caught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, tak heed!
Whene'er to drink you are inclined,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think, ye may buy the joys owre dear:—
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

GLUGGITY GLUG

From "The Myrtle and the Vine"

A JOLLY fat friar loved liquor good store,
And he had drunk stoutly at supper;
He mounted his horse in the night at the door,
And sat with his face to the crupper:

"Some rogue," quoth the friar, "quite dead to remorse,
Some thief, whom a halter will throttle,
Some scoundrel has cut off the head of my horse,
While I was enagged at the bottle,
Which went gluggity, gluggity—glug—glug—glug."

The tail of the steed pointed south on the dale,
'Twas the friar's road home, straight and level;
But, when spurred, a horse follows his nose, not his tail,
So he scampered due north, like a devil:
"This new mode of docking," the friar then said,
"I perceive doesn't make a horse trot ill;
And 'tis cheap,—for he never can eat off his head
While I am engaged at the bottle,
Which goes gluggity, gluggity—glug—glug—glug."

The steed made a stop,—in a pond he had got,
He was rather for drinking than grazing;
Quoth the friar, "'Tis strange headless horses should trot,
But to drink with their tails is amazing!"
Turning round to see whence this phenomenon rose,
In the pond fell this son of a pottle;
Quoth he, "The head's found, for I'm under his nose,—
I wish I were over a bottle,
Which goes gluggity, gluggity—glug—glug—glug!"

George Colman the Younger [1762–1836]

THE LAIRD O' COCKPEN

The Laird o' Cockpen, he's proud and he's great;
His mind is ta'en up wi' things o' the State;
He wanted a wife, his braw house to keep;
But favor wi' wooin' was fashous to seek.

Doun by the dyke-side a lady did dwell,
At his table-head he thought she'd look well,—
M'Clish's ae daughter o' Claverse-ha' Lee,
A penniless lass wi' a lang pedigree.

His wig was well-pouthered, as guid as when new,
His waistcoat was white, his coat it was blue;

He put on a ring, a sword, and cocked hat,—
And wha could refuse the Laird wi' a' that!

He took the gray mare, and rade cannily,
And rapped at the yett o' Claverse-ha' Lee;
"Gae tell Mistress Jean to come speedily ben,—
She's wanted to speak wi' the Laird o' Cockpen."

Mistress Jean she was makin' the elder-flower wine.
"And what brings the Laird at sic a like time?"
She put aff her apron, and on her silk goun,
Her mutch wi' red ribbons, and gaed awa' doun.

And when she cam' ben, he bowed fu' low;
And what was his errand he soon let her know.
Amazed was the Laird when the lady said, "Na,"
And wi' a laigh curtsie she turnèd awa'.

Dumfoundered he was, but nae sigh did he gi'e;
He mounted his mare, and rade cannily;
And aften he thought, as he gaed through the glen,
"She's daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen!"

And now that the Laird his exit had made,
Mistress Jean she reflected on what she had said;
"Oh, for ane I'll get better, it's waur I'll get ten,—
I was daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen."

Neist time that the Laird and the Lady were seen,
They were gaun arm-in-arm to the kirk on the green;
Now she sits in the ha' like a weel-tappit hen,
But as yet there's nae chickens appeared at Cockpen.

The first seven stanzas by Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]
The last two by Susan Ferrier [1782–1854]

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE

A Well there is in the west country,
And a clearer one never was seen;
There is not a wife in the west country
But has heard of the Well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm tree stand beside,
And behind doth an ash-tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
Droops to the water below.

A traveller came to the Well of St. Keyne;
Joyfully he drew nigh;
For from cock-crow he had been travelling,
And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
For thirsty and hot was he,
And he sat down upon the bank,
Under the willow-tree.

There came a man from the house hard by,
At the Well to fill his pail,
On the Well-side he rested it,
And bade the Stranger hail.

"Now, art thou a bachelor, Stranger?" quoth he,
"For, an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drank this day
That ever thou didst in thy life.

"Or has thy good woman, if one thou hast,
Ever here in Cornwall been?
For, an if she have, I'll venture my life
She has drunk of the Well of St. Keyne."

"I have left a good woman who never was here,"
The Stranger he made reply;
"But that my draught should be better for that,
I pray you answer me why."

"St. Keyne," quoth the Cornish-man, "many a time
Drank of this crystal Well;
And, before the angel summoned her,
She laid on the water a spell,—

"If the Husband, of this gifted Well
Shall drink before his Wife,
A happy man henceforth is he,
For he shall be Master for life;—

"But, if the Wife should drink of it first,
Heaven help the Husband then!"—
The Stranger stooped to the Well of St. Keyne,
And drank of the water again.

"You drank of the Well, I warrant, betimes?"
He to the Cornish-man said;
But the Cornish-man smiled as the Stranger spake,
And sheepishly shook his head:—

"I hastened, as soon as the wedding was done,
And left my Wife in the porch;
But i' faith, she had been wiser than me,
For she took a bottle to church."

Robert Southey [1774–1843]

ADDRESS TO A MUMMY

And thou hast walked about (how strange a story!)
In Thebes's streets three thousand years ago,
When the Memnonium was in all its glory,
And time had not begun to overthrow
Those temples, palaces, and piles stupendous
Of which the very ruins are tremendous.

Speak! for thou long enough hast acted dummy.
Thou hast a tongue,—come, let us hear its tune;
Thou'rt standing on thy legs, above ground, mummy!
Revisiting the glimpses of the moon,—
Not like thin ghosts or disembodied creatures,
But with thy bones and flesh, and limbs and features.

Tell us—for doubtless thou canst recollect—
To whom should we assign the Sphinx's fame?
Was Cheops or Cephrenes architect
Of either pyramid that bears his name?

Is Pompey's Pillar really a misnomer?
Had Thebes a hundred gates, as sung by Homer?

Perhaps thou wert a Mason, and forbidden
By oath to tell the secrets of thy trade,—
Then say what secret melody was hidden
In Memnon's statue, which at sunrise played?
Perhaps thou wert a Priest,—if so, my struggles
Are vain, for priestcraft never owns its juggles.

Perhaps that very hand, now pinioned flat,
Has hob-a-nobbed with Pharaoh, glass to glass;
Or dropped a halfpenny in Homer's hat;
Or doffed thine own to let Queen Dido pass;
Or held, by Solomon's own invitation,
A torch at the great temple's dedication.

I need not ask thee if that hand, when armed,
Has any Roman soldier mauled and knuckled;
For thou wert dead and buried and embalmed
Ere Romulus and Remus had been suckled:
Antiquity appears to have begun
Long after thy primeval race was run.

Thou couldst develop—if that withered tongue
Might tell us what those sightless orbs have seen—
How the world looked when it was fresh and young,
And the great deluge still had left it green;
Or was it then so old that history's pages
Contained no record of its early ages?

Still silent! incommunicative elf!
Art sworn to secrecy? then keep thy vows;
But prithee tell us something of thyself,—
Reveal the secrets of thy prison-house;
Since in the world of spirits thou hast slumbered,
What hast thou seen, what strange adventures numbered?

Since first thy form was in this box extended,
We have, above ground, seen some strange mutations:
The Roman empire has begun and ended,
New worlds have risen, we have lost old nations;

And countless kings have into dust been humbled,
While not a fragment of thy flesh has crumbled.

Didst thou hear not the pother o'er thy head,
When the great Persian conqueror, Cambyses,
Marched armies o'er thy tomb with thundering tread,—
O'erthrew Osiris, Orus, Apis, Isis;
And shook the pyramids with fear and wonder,
When the gigantic Memnon fell asunder?

If the tomb's secrets may not be confessed,
The nature of thy private life unfold:
A heart has throbbed beneath that leathern breast,
And tears adown that dusty cheek have rolled;
Have children climbed those knees, and kissed that face?
What was thy name and station, age and race?

Statue of flesh,—Immortal of the dead!
Imperishable type of evanescence!
Posthumous man,—who quit'st thy narrow bed,
And standest undecayed within our presence!
Thou wilt hear nothing till the Judgment morning,
When the great trump shall thrill thee with its warning.

Why should this worthless tegument endure,
If its undying guest be lost for ever?
O, let us keep the soul embalmed and pure
In living virtue, that when both must sever,
Although corruption may our frame consume,
The immortal spirit in the skies may bloom!

Horace Smith [1779–1849]

JOHN GRUMLIE

John Grumlie swore by the light o' the moon
And the green leaves on the tree,
That he could do more work in a day
Than his wife could do in three.

His wife rose up in the morning
  Wi' cares and troubles enow—
John Grumlie bide at hame, John,
  And I'll go haud the plow.

First ye maun dress your children fair,
  And put them a' in their gear;
And ye maun turn the malt, John,
  Or else ye'll spoil the beer;
And ye maun reel the tweel, John,
  That I span yesterday;
And ye maun ca' in the hens, John,
  Else they'll all lay away.

O he did dress his children fair,
  And put them a' in their gear;
But he forgot to turn the malt,
  And so he spoiled the beer:
And he sang loud as he reeled the tweel
  That his wife span yesterday;
But he forgot to put up the hens,
  And the hens all layed away.

The hawket crummie loot down nae milk;
  He kirned, nor butter gat;
And a' gade wrang, and naught gade right;
  He danced wi' rage, and grat;
Then up he ran to the head o' the knowe
  Wi' mony a wave and shout—
She heard him as she heard him not,
  And steered the stots about.

John Grumlie's wife cam hame at e'en,
  A weary wife and sad,
And burst into a laughter loud,
  And laughed as she'd been mad:
While John Grumlie swore by the light o' the moon
  And the green leaves on the tree,
If my wife should na win a penny a day
  She's aye her will for me.

Allan Cunningham [1784–1842]

THE NEEDLE

THE gay belles of fashion may boast of excelling
In waltz or cotillion, at whist or quadrille;
And seek admiration by vauntingly telling
Of drawing, and painting, and musical skill;
But give me the fair one, in country or city,
Whose home and its duties are dear to her heart,
Who cheerfully warbles some rustical ditty,
While plying the needle with exquisite art:
The bright little needle—the swift-flying needle,
The needle directed by beauty and art.

If Love have a potent, a magical token,
A talisman, ever resistless and true—
A charm that is never evaded or broken,
A witchery certain the heart to subdue—
'Tis this—and his armory never has furnished
So keen and unerring, or polished a dart;
Let Beauty direct it, so pointed and burnished,
And, oh! it is certain of touching the heart:
The bright little needle—the swift-flying needle,
The needle directed by beauty and art.

Be wise, then, ye maidens, nor seek admiration
By dressing for conquest, and flirting with all;
You never, whate'er be your fortune or station,
Appear half so lovely at rout or at ball,
As gayly convened at a work-covered table,
Each cheerfully active and playing her part,
Beguiling the task with a song or a fable,
And plying the needle with exquisite art:
The bright little needle—the swift-flying needle,
The needle directed by beauty and art.

Samuel Woodworth [1785–1842]

MISADVENTURES AT MARGATE

MR. SIMPKINSON (*loquitur*)

I WAS in Margate last July, I walked upon the pier,
I saw a little vulgar Boy,—I said, "What make you here?

The gloom upon your youthful cheek speaks anything but joy;"
Again I said, "What make you here, you little vulgar Boy?"

He frowned, that little vulgar Boy,—he deemed I meant to scoff,—
And when the little heart is big, a little "sets it off."
He put his finger in his mouth, his little bosom rose,—
He had no little handkerchief to wipe his little nose!

"Hark! don't you hear, my little man?—it's striking nine," I said,
"An hour when all good little boys and girls should be in bed.
Run home and get your supper, else your Ma will scold,—O fie!
It's very wrong indeed for little boys to stand and cry!"

The tear-drop in his little eye again began to spring,
His bosom throbbed with agony,—he cried like anything!
I stooped, and thus amidst his sobs I heard him murmur,—"Ah!
I have n't got no supper! and I have n't got no Ma!

"My father, he is on the seas,—my mother's dead and gone!
And I am here, on this here pier, to roam the world alone;
I have not had, this livelong day, one drop to cheer my heart,
Nor '*brown*' to buy a bit of bread with,—let alone a tart.

"If there's a soul will give me food, or find me in employ,
By day or night, then blow me tight!" (he was a vulgar Boy;)
"And now I'm here, from this here pier it is my fixed intent
To jump, as Mister Levi did from off the Monument!"

"Cheer up! cheer up! my little man,—cheer up!" I kindly said,
"You are a naughty boy to take such things into your head;
If you should jump from off the pier, you'd surely break your legs,
Perhaps your neck,—then Bogey'd have you, sure as eggs are eggs!

"Come home with me, my little man, come home with me and sup!
My landlady is Mrs. Jones,—we must not keep her up,—
There's roast potatoes at the fire,—enough for me and you,—
Come home, you little vulgar Boy,—I lodge at Number 2."

I took him home to Number 2, the house beside "The Foy."
I bad him wipe his dirty shoes,—that little vulgar Boy,—
And then I said to Mistress Jones, the kindest of her sex,
"Pray be so good as go and fetch a pint of double X!"

But Mrs. Jones was rather cross, she made a little noise,
She said she "did not like to wait on little vulgar Boys."
She with her apron wiped the plates, and, as she rubbed the delf,
Said I might "go to Jericho, and fetch my beer myself!"

I did not go to Jericho,—I went to Mr. Cobb,—
I changed a shilling (which in town the people call a Bob)—
It was not so much for myself as for that vulgar child,—
And I said, "A pint of double X, and please to draw it mild!"

When I came back I gazed about,—I gazed on stool and chair,—
I could not see my little friend,—because he was not there!
I peeped beneath the table-cloth, beneath the sofa, too,—
I said, "You little vulgar Boy! why, what's become of you?"

I could not see my table-spoons.—I looked, but could not see
The little fiddle-patterned ones I use when I'm at tea;
I could not see my sugar-tongs, my silver watch,—oh, dear!
I know 'twas on the mantel-piece when I went out for beer.

I could not see my mackintosh,—it was not to be seen!
Nor yet my best white beaver hat, broad-brimmed and lined with green;
My carpet-bag,—my cruet-stand, that holds my sauce and soy,—
My roast potatoes!—all are gone!—and so's that vulgar Boy!

I rang the bell for Mrs. Jones, for she was down below,
"Oh, Mrs. Jones, what *do* you think?—ain't this a pretty go?
That horrid little vulgar Boy whom I brought here to-night
He's stolen my things and run away!" Says she, "And sarve you right!"

Next morning I was up betimes,— I sent the Crier round,
All with his bell and gold-laced hat, to say I'd give a pound
To find that little vulgar Boy, who'd gone and used me so;
But when the Crier cried, "O Yes!" the people cried, "O No!"

I went to "Jarvis' Landing-place," the glory of the town,
There was a common sailor-man a walking up and down;
I told my tale,—he seemed to think I'd not been treated well,
And called me "Poor old Buffer!"—what that means I cannot tell.

That sailor-man, he said he'd seen that morning on the shore
A son of—something—'twas a name I'd never heard before,—
A little "gallows-looking chap,"—dear me, what could he mean?—
With a "carpet-swab" and "mucking-togs," and a hat turned up with green.

He spoke about his "precious eyes," and said he'd seen him "sheer,"—
It's very odd that sailor-men should talk so very queer;
And then he hitched his trousers up, as is, I'm told, their use,—
It's very odd that sailor-men should wear those things so loose.

I did not understand him well, but think he meant to say
He'd seen that little vulgar Boy, that morning, swim away
In Captain Large's Royal George, about an hour before,
And they were now, as he supposed, "some*wheres*" about the Nore.

A landsman said, "I *twig* the chap,—he's been upon the Mill,—
And 'cause he *gammons* so the *flats*, ve calls him Veeping Bill!"
He said "he'd done me werry brown," and "nicely *stowed* the *swag*,"—
That's French, I fancy, for a hat, or else a carpet-bag.

I went and told the constable my property to track;
He asked me if "I did not wish that I might get it back?"
I answered, "To be sure I do!—it's what I'm come about."
He smiled and said, "Sir, does your mother know that you are out?"

Not knowing what to do, I thought I'd hasten back to town,
And beg our own Lord Mayor to catch the Boy who'd "done me brown."
His Lordship very kindly said he'd try and find him out,
But he "rather thought that there were several vulgar boys about."

He sent for Mr. Whithair then, and I described "the swag,"
My mackintosh, my sugar-tongs, my spoons, and carpet-bag;
He promised that the New Police should all their powers employ,
But never to this hour have I beheld that vulgar Boy!

MORAL

Remember, then, that when a boy I've heard my Grandma tell,
"BE WARNED IN TIME BY OTHERS' HARM, AND YOU SHALL DO FULL WELL!"
Don't link yourself with vulgar folks, who've got no fixed abode,
Tell lies, use naughty words, and say they "wish they may be blowed!"

Don't take too much of double X!—and don't at night go out
To fetch your beer yourself, but make the pot-boy bring your stout!

And when you go to Margate next, just stop and ring the bell,
Give my respects to Mrs. Jones, and say I'm pretty well!

Richard Harris Barham [1788–1845]

"THE CAPTAIN STOOD ON THE CARRONADE"

The Captain stood on the Carronade—"First lieutenant," says he,
"Send all my merry men aft here, for they must list to me:
I haven't the gift of the gab, my sons, because I'm bred to the sea;
That ship there is a Frenchman, who means to fight with we.
Odds blood, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—but I've gained the victory.

"That ship there is a Frenchman, and if we don't take *she*,
'Tis a thousand bullets to one, that she will capture *we;*
I haven't the gift of the gab, my boys; so each man to his gun;
If she's not mine in half an hour, I'll flog each mother's son.
Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've gained the victory."

We fought for twenty minutes, when the Frenchman had enough;
"I little thought," said he, "that your men were of such stuff;"
The Captain took the Frenchman's sword, a low bow made to he;
"I haven't the gift of the gab, monsieur, but polite I wish to be.
Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've gained the victory."

Our Captain sent for all of us; "My merry men," said he,
"I haven't the gift of the gab, my lads, but yet I thankful be;

You've done your duty handsomely, each man stood to his gun;
If you hadn't, you villains, as sure as day, I'd have flogged each mother's son.
Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, as long as I'm at sea,
I'll fight 'gainst every odds—and I'll gain the victory."

Frederick Marryat [1792–1848]

FAITHLESS NELLY GRAY

A PATHETIC BALLAD

Ben Battle was a soldier bold,
And used to war's alarms;
But a cannon-ball took off his legs,
So he laid down his arms!

Now as they bore him off the field,
Said he, "Let others shoot,
For here I leave my second leg,
And the Forty-second Foot!"

The army-surgeons made him limbs:
Said he, "They're only pegs;
But there's as wooden members quite
As represent my legs!"

Now Ben he loved a pretty maid,
Her name was Nelly Gray;
So he went to pay her his devours
When he'd devoured his pay!

But when he called on Nelly Gray,
She made him quite a scoff;
And when she saw his wooden legs,
Began to take them off!

"O Nelly Gray! O Nelly Gray!
Is this your love so warm?
The love that loves a scarlet coat,
Should be more uniform!"

She said, "I loved a soldier once,
For he was blithe and brave;
But I will never have a man
With both feet in the grave!

"Before you had those timber toes,
Your love I did allow,
But then, you know, you stand upon
Another footing now!"

"O Nelly Gray! O Nelly Gray!
For all your jeering speeches,
At duty's call I left my legs
In Badajoz's *breaches!*"

"Why, then," said she, "you've lost the feet
Of legs in war's alarms,
And now you cannot wear your shoes
Upon your feats of arms!"

"Oh, false and fickle Nelly Gray,
I know why you refuse:—
Though I've no feet, some other man
Is standing in my shoes!

"I wish I ne'er had seen your face;
But now a long farewell!
For you will be my death:—alas!
You will not be my *Nell!*"

Now when he went from Nelly Gray,
His heart so heavy got,
And life was such a burthen grown,
It made him take a knot!

So round his melancholy neck
A rope he did entwine,
And, for his second time in life,
Enlisted in the Line!

One end he tied around a beam,
And then removed his pegs,
And, as his legs were off,—of course
He soon was off his legs!

And there he hung till he was dead
As any nail in town,—
For though distress had cut him up,
It could not cut him down!

A dozen men sat on his corpse,
To find out why he died—
And they buried Ben at four cross-roads,
With a *stake* in his inside!

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

FAITHLESS SALLY BROWN

Young Ben he was a nice young man,
A carpenter by trade;
And he fell in love with Sally Brown,
That was a lady's maid.

But as they fetched a walk one day,
They met a press-gang crew;
And Sally she did faint away,
Whilst Ben he was brought to.

The boatswain swore with wicked words
Enough to shock a saint,
That, though she did seem in a fit,
'Twas nothing but a feint.

"Come, girl," said he, "hold up your head,
He'll be as good as me;
For when your swain is in our boat
A boatswain he will be."

So when they'd made their game of her,
And taken off her elf,
She roused, and found she only was
A coming to herself.

"And is he gone, and is he gone?"
She cried, and wept outright;
"Then I will to the water-side,
And see him out of sight."

A waterman came up to her;
"Now, young woman," said he,
"If you weep on so, you will make
Eye-water in the sea."

"Alas! they've taken my beau, Ben,
To sail with old Benbow;"
And her woe began to run afresh,
As if she'd said, Gee woe!

Says he, "They've only taken him
To the tender-ship, you see."
"The tender-ship," cried Sally Brown,
"What a hardship that must be!

"O, would I were a mermaid now,
For then I'd follow him!
But O, I'm not a fish-woman,
And so I cannot swim.

"Alas! I was not born beneath
The Virgin and the Scales,
So I must curse my cruel stars,
And walk about in Wales."

Now Ben had sailed to many a place
That's underneath the world;
But in two years the ship came home,
And all her sails were furled.

But when he called on Sally Brown,
To see how she got on,
He found she'd got another Ben,
Whose Christian name was John.

"O Sally Brown! O Sally Brown!
How could you serve me so?
I've met with many a breeze before,
But never such a blow!"

Then, reading on his 'bacco box,
He heaved a heavy sigh,
And then began to eye his pipe,
And then to pipe his eye.

And then he tried to sing, "All's Well!"
But could not, though he tried;
His head was turned,—and so he chewed
His pigtail till he died.

His death, which happened in his berth,
At forty-odd befell;
They went and told the sexton, and
The sexton tolled the bell.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

"PLEASE TO RING THE BELLE"

I'LL tell you a story that's not in Tom Moore:
Young Love likes to knock at a pretty girl's door:
So he called upon Lucy—'twas just ten o'clock—
Like a spruce single man, with a smart double knock.

Now a hand-maid, whatever her fingers be at,
Will run like a puss when she hears a *rat*-tat:
So Lucy ran up—and in two seconds more
Had questioned the stranger and answered the door.

The meeting was bliss, but the parting was woe;
For the moment will come when such comers must go.
So she kissed him, and whispered—poor innocent thing—
"The next time you come, love, pray come with a ring."

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

OLD GRIMES

Old Grimes is dead; that good old man
We never shall see more:
He used to wear a long black coat,
All buttoned down before.

His heart was open as the day,
His feelings all were true;
His hair was some inclined to gray—
He wore it in a queue.

Whene'er he heard the voice of pain,
His breast with pity burned;
The large, round head upon his cane
From ivory was turned.

Kind words he ever had for all;
He knew no base design:
His eyes were dark and rather small,
His nose was aquiline.

He lived at peace with all mankind,
In friendship he was true;
His coat had pocket-holes behind,
His pantaloons were blue.

Unharmed, the sin which earth pollutes
He passed securely o'er,
And never wore a pair of boots
For thirty years or more.

But good old Grimes is now at rest,
Nor fears misfortune's frown:
He wore a double-breasted vest—
The stripes ran up and down.

He modest merit sought to find,
And pay it its desert:
He had no malice in his mind,
No ruffles on his shirt.

His neighbors he did not abuse—
Was sociable and gay:
He wore large buckles on his shoes,
And changed them every day.

His knowledge, hid from public gaze,
He did not bring to view,
Nor made a noise, town-meeting days,
As many people do.

His worldly goods he never threw
In trust to fortune's chances,
But lived (as all his brothers do)
In easy circumstances.

Thus undisturbed by anxious cares,
His peaceful moments ran;
And everybody said he was
A fine old gentleman.

Albert Gorton Greene [1802–1868]

THE ANNUITY

I GAED to spend a week in Fife—
An unco week it proved to be—
For there I met a waesome wife
Lamentin' her viduity.
Her grief brak out sae fierce and fell,
I thought her heart wad burst the shell,
And,—I was sae left tae mysel,—
I sell't her an annuity.

The bargain lookit fair eneugh—
She just was turned o' saxty-three;
I couldna guessed she'd prove sae teugh,
By human ingenuity.
But years have come, and years have gane,
And there she's yet as stieve 's a stane—
The limmer's growin' young again,
Since she got her annuity.

She's crined awa' to bane and skin,
  But that, it seems, is naught to me;
She's like to live—although she's in
  The last stage o' tenuity.
She munches wi' her wizened gums,
An' stumps about on legs o' thrums;
But comes, as sure as Christmas comes,
  To ca' for her annuity.

She jokes her joke, an' cracks her crack,
  As spunkie as a growin' flea—
An' there she sits upon my back,
  A livin' perpetuity.
She hurkles by her ingle side,
An' toasts an' toasts her wrunkled hide—
Lord kens how lang she yet may bide
  To ca' for her annuity.

I read the tables drawn wi' care
  For an insurance company;
Her chance o' life was stated there,
  Wi' perfect perspicuity.
But tables here or tables there,
She's lived ten years beyond her share,
An's like to live a dizzen mair,
  To ca' for her annuity.

I got the loun that drew the deed—
  We spelled it o'er right carefully;—
In vain he yerked his souple head,
  To find an ambiguity:
It's dated—tested—a' complete—
The proper stamp—nae word delete—
And diligence, as on decreet,
  May pass for her annuity.

Last Yule she had a fearfu' hoast,—
  I thought a kink might set me free;
I led her out, 'mang snaw and frost,
  Wi' constant assiduity.

But deil ma' care—the blast gaed by,
And missed the auld anatomy—
It just cost me a tooth, forbye
Discharging her annuity.

I thought that grief might gar her quit—
Her only son was lost at sea—
But aff her wits behoved to flit,
An' leave her in fatuity!
She threeps, an' threeps, he's livin' yet,
For a' the tellin' she can get;
But catch the doited runt forget
To ca' for her annuity!

If there's a sough o' cholera,
Or typhus,—wha sae gleg as she?
She buys up baths, an' drugs, an' a',
In siccan superfluity!
She doesna need—she's fever proof—
The pest gaed owre her very roof—
She tauld me sae—an' then her loof
Held out for her annuity.

Ae day she fell, her arm she brak—
A compound fracture as could be—
Nae leech the cure wad undertak,
Whate'er was the gratuity.
It's cured! She handles 't like a flail—
It does as weel in bits as hale—
But I'm a broken man mysel
Wi' her and her annuity.

Her broozled flesh and broken banes
Are weel as flesh and banes can be;
She beats the tades that live in stanes,
An' fatten in vacuity!
They die when they're exposed to air,
They canna thole the atmosphere—
But her! expose her onywhere,
She lives for her annuity.

If mortal means could nick her thread,
Sma' crime it wad appear to me;
Ca' t murder—or ca' t homicide—
I'd justify 't—an' do it tae.
But how to fell a withered wife
That's carved out o' the tree of life—
The timmer limmer dares the knife
To settle her annuity.

I'd try a shot—but whar's the mark?
Her vital parts are hid frae me;
Her backbone wanders through her sark
In an unkenned corkscrewity.
She's palsified, an' shakes her head
Sae fast about, ye scarce can see 't;
It's past the power o' steel or lead
To settle her annuity.

She might be drowned; but go she'll not
Within a mile o' loch or sea;
Or hanged—if cord could grip a throat
O' siccan exiguity.
It's fitter far to hang the rope—
It draws out like a telescope;
'Twad tak' a dreadfu' length o' drop
To settle her annuity.

Will poison do 't? It has been tried,
But, be't in hash or fricassee,
That's just the dish she can't abide,
Whatever kind o' *goût* it hae.
It's needless to assail her doubts,—
She gangs by instinct, like the brutes,—
An' only eats an' drinks what suits
Hersel an' her annuity.

The Bible says the age o' man
Threescore and ten, perchance, may be;
She's ninety-four. Let them wha can,
Explain the incongruity.

She should hae lived afore the flood—
She's come o' patriarchal blood,
She's some auld Pagan, mummified
Alive for her annuity.

She's been embalmed inside and oot—
She's sauted to the last degree—
There's pickle in her very snoot
Sae caper-like an' cruety.
Lot's wife was fresh compared to her—
They've kyanized the useless knir,—
She canna decompose—nae mair
Than her accursed annuity.

The water-drap wears out the rock,
As this eternal jaud wears me;
I could withstand the single shock,
But not the continuity.
It's pay me here, an' pay me there,
An' pay me, pay me, evermair—
I'll gang demented wi' despair—
I'm *charged* for her annuity!

George Outram [1805–1856]

THE SMACK IN SCHOOL

A DISTRICT school, not far away,
Mid Berkshire's hills, one winter's day,
Was humming with its wonted noise
Of threescore mingled girls and boys;
Some few upon their tasks intent,
But more on furtive mischief bent.
The while the master's downward look
Was fastened on a copy-book;
When suddenly, behind his back,
Rose sharp and clear a rousing smack,
As 'twere a battery of bliss
Let off in one tremendous kiss!
"What's that?" the startled master cries;
"That, thir," a little imp replies,

"Wath William Willith, if you pleathe,—
I thaw him kith Thuthanna Peathe!"
With frown to make a statue thrill,
The master thundered, "Hither, Will!"
Like wretch o'ertaken in his track,
With stolen chattels on his back,
Will hung his head in fear and shame,
And to the awful presence came,—
A great, green, bashful simpleton,
The butt of all good-natured fun.
With smile suppressed, and birch upraised,
The threatener faltered,—"I'm amazed
That you, my biggest pupil, should
Be guilty of an act so rude!
Before the whole set school to boot—
What evil genius put you to't?"
"'Twas she herself, sir," sobbed the lad,
"I did not mean to be so bad;
But when Susannah shook her curls,
And whispered, I was 'fraid of girls
And dursn't kiss a baby's doll,
I couldn't stand it, sir, at all,
But up and kissed her on the spot!
I know—boo-hoo—I ought to not.
But, somehow, from her looks—boo-hoo—
I thought she kind o' wished me to!"

William Pitt Palmer [1805–1884]

"THE POPE HE LEADS A HAPPY LIFE"

From "Harry Lorrequer"

The Pope he leads a happy life,
He fears not married care nor strife,
He drinks the best of Rhenish wine,—
I would the Pope's gay lot were mine.

But yet all happy's not his life,
He has no maid, nor blooming wife;
Nor child has he to raise his hope—
I would not wish to be the Pope.

The Sultan better pleases me,
His is a life of jollity;
He's wives as many as he will—
I would the Sultan's throne then fill.

But even he's a wretched man,
He must obey the Alcoran;
He dare not drink one drop of wine—
I would not change his lot for mine.

So here I take my lowly stand,
I'll drink my own, my native land;
I'll kiss my maiden fair and fine,
And drink the best of Rhenish wine.

And when my maiden kisses me,
I'll think that I the Sultan be;
And when my cheery glass I tope,
I'll fancy then I am the Pope.

Charles Lever [1806–1872]

THE HEIGHT OF THE RIDICULOUS

I WROTE some lines once on a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

I called my servant, and he came;
How kind it was of him,
To mind a slender man like me,
He of the mighty limb!

"These to the printer," I exclaimed,
And, in my humorous way,
I added (as a trifling jest),
"There'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
Was all upon the grin.

He read the next; the grin grew broad,
And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third; a chuckling noise
I now began to hear.

The fourth; he broke into a roar;
The fifth; his waistband split;
The sixth; he burst five buttons off,
And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye,
I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write
As funny as I can.

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE BALLAD OF THE OYSTERMAN

It was a tall young oysterman lived by the river-side,
His shop was just upon the bank, his boat was on the tide;
The daughter of a fisherman, that was so straight and slim,
Lived over on the other bank, right opposite to him.

It was the pensive oysterman that saw a lovely maid,
Upon a moonlight evening, a-sitting in the shade;
He saw her wave a handkerchief, as much as if to say,
"I'm wide awake, young oysterman, and all the folks away."

Then up arose the oysterman, and to himself said he,
"I guess I'll leave the skiff at home, for fear that folks should see;
I read it in the story-book, that, for to kiss his dear,
Leander swam the Hellespont,—and I will swim this here."

And he has leaped into the waves, and crossed the shining
stream,
And he has clambered up the bank, all in the moonlight
gleam;
Oh, there are kisses sweet as dew, and words as soft as rain—
But they have heard her father's step, and in he leaps again!

Out spoke the ancient fisherman: "Oh, what was that, my
daughter?"
"'Twas nothing but a pebble, sir, I threw into the water."
"And what is that, pray tell me, love, that paddles off so
fast?"
"It's nothing but a porpoise, sir, that's been a swimming
past."

Out spoke the ancient fisherman: "Now bring me my har-
poon!
I'll get into my fishing-boat, and fix the fellow soon."
Down fell that pretty innocent, as falls a snow-white lamb;
Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks, like seaweed on a
clam.

Alas for those two loving ones! she waked not from her
swound,
And he was taken with the cramp, and in the waves was
drowned;
But Fate has metamorphosed them, in pity of their woe,
And now they keep an oyster-shop for mermaids down below

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

LITTLE BILLEE

There were three sailors of Bristol city
Who took a boat and went to sea.
But first with beef and captain's biscuits
And pickled pork they loaded she.

There was gorging Jack and guzzling Jimmy,
And the youngest he was little Billee.
Now when they got as far as the Equator
They'd nothing left but one split pea.

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,
"I am extremely hungaree."
To gorging Jack says guzzling Jimmy,
"We've nothing left, us must eat we."

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,
"With one another we shouldn't agree!
There's little Bill, he's young and tender,
We're old and tough, so let's eat he."

"Oh! Billy, we're going to kill and eat you,
So undo the button of your chemie."
When Bill received this information
He used his pocket handkerchie.

"First let me say my catechism,
Which my poor mammy taught to me."
"Make haste, make haste," says guzzling Jimmy,
While Jack pulled out his snickersnee.

So Billy went up to the main-top gallant mast,
And down he fell on his bended knee.
He scarce had come to the twelfth commandment
When up he jumps. "There's land I see:

"Jerusalem and Madagascar,
And North and South Amerikee:
There's the British flag a-riding at anchor,
With Admiral Napier, K. C. B."

So when they got aboard of the Admiral's,
He hanged fat Jack and flogged Jimmee:
But as for little Bill he made him
The Captain of a Seventy-three.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

The Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair:
Bishop and abbot and prior were there;
Many a monk, and many a friar,
Many a knight, and many a squire,

With a great many more of lesser degree,—
In sooth, a goodly company;
And they served the Lord Primate on bended knee.
Never, I ween,
Was a prouder seen,
Read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams,
Than the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims!

In and out
Through the motley rout,
That little Jackdaw kept hopping about;
Here and there
Like a dog in a fair,
Over comfits and cates,
And dishes and plates,
Cowl and cope, and rochet and pall,
Mitre and crosier, he hopped upon all!
With a saucy air,
He perched on the chair
Where, in state, the great Lord Cardinal sat,
In the great Lord Cardinal's great red hat;
And he peered in the face
Of his Lordship's Grace,
With a satisfied look, as if he would say,
"We two are the greatest folks here to-day!"
And the priests, with awe,
As such freaks they saw,
Said, "The Devil must be in that little Jackdaw!"

The feast was over, the board was cleared,
The flawns and the custards had all disappeared,
And six little Singing-boys,—dear little souls!
In nice clean faces, and nice white stoles,—
Came in order due,
Two by two,
Marching that grand refectory through.
A nice little boy held a golden ewer,
Embossed and filled with water, as pure
As any that flows between Rheims and Namur

Which a nice little boy stood ready to catch
In a fine golden hand-basin made to match.
Two nice little boys, rather more grown,
Carried lavender-water and eau-de-Cologne;
And a nice little boy had a nice cake of soap,
Worthy of washing the hands of the Pope.
One little boy more
A napkin bore,
Of the best white diaper, fringed with pink,
And a Cardinal's hat marked in "permanent ink."

The great Lord Cardinal turns at the sight
Of these nice little boys dressed all in white:
From his finger he draws
His costly turquoise;
And, not thinking at all about little Jackdaws,
Deposits it straight
By the side of his plate,
While the nice little boys on his Eminence wait;
Till, when nobody's dreaming of any such thing,
That little Jackdaw hops off with the ring!

. . . . . .

There's a cry and a shout,
And a deuce of a rout,
And nobody seems to know what they're about,
But the monks have their pockets all turned inside out;
The friars are kneeling,
And hunting, and feeling
The carpet, the floor, and the walls, and the ceiling.
The Cardinal drew
Off each plum-colored shoe,
And left his red stockings exposed to the view;
He peeps, and he feels
In the toes and the heels;
They turn up the dishes,—they turn up the plates,—
They take up the poker and poke out the grates,
—They turn up the rugs,
They examine the mugs:

But no!—no such thing;
They can't find THE RING!
And the Abbot declared that, "when nobody twigged it,
Some rascal or other had popped in and prigged it!"

The Cardinal rose with a dignified look,
He called for his candle, his bell, and his book:
In holy anger, and pious grief,
He solemnly cursed that rascally thief!
He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed,
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head!
He cursed him in sleeping, that every night
He should dream of the devil, and wake in a fright;
He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in drinking,
He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, in winking;
He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in lying;
He cursed him in walking, in riding, in flying;
He cursed him in living, he cursed him in dying!
Never was heard such a terrible curse!
But what gave rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seemed one penny the worse!

The day was gone,
The night came on,
The monks and the friars they searched till dawn;
When the sacristan saw,
On crumpled claw
Come limping a poor little lame Jackdaw.
No longer gay,
As on yesterday;
His feathers all seemed to be turned the wrong way;
His pinions drooped—he could hardly stand,
His head was as bald as the palm of your hand;
His eye so dim,
So wasted each limb,
That, heedless of grammar, they all cried, "THAT'S HIM!
That's the scamp that has done this scandalous thing!
That's the thief that has got my Lord Cardinal's Ring!"

The poor little Jackdaw,
When the monks he saw,
Feebly gave vent to the ghost of a caw;
And turned his bald head, as much as to say,
"Pray, be so good as to walk this way!"
Slower and slower
He limped on before,
Till they came to the back of the belfry-door,
Where the first thing they saw,
Midst the sticks and the straw,
Was the RING, in the nest of that little Jackdaw.

Then the great Lord Cardinal called for his book,
And off that terrible curse he took;
The mute expression
Served in lieu of confession,
And, being thus coupled with full restitution,
The Jackdaw got plenary absolution!
—When those words were heard,
That poor little bird
Was so changed in a moment, 'twas really absurd.
He grew sleek and fat;
In addition to that,
A fresh crop of feathers came thick as a mat.
His tail waggled more
Even than before;
But no longer it wagged with an impudent air,
No longer he perched on the Cardinal's chair.
He hopped now about
With a gait devout;
At matins, at vespers, he never was out;
And, so far from any more pilfering deeds,
He always seemed telling the Confessor's beads.
If any one lied, or if any one swore,
Or slumbered in prayer-time, and happened to snore,
That good Jackdaw
Would give a great "Caw!"
As much as to say, "Don't do so any more!"
While many remarked, as his manners they saw,
That they "never had known such a pious Jackdaw!"

He long lived the pride
Of that countryside,
And at last in the odor of sanctity died;
When, as words were too faint
His merits to paint,
The Conclave determined to make him a Saint;
And on newly-made Saints and Popes, as you know,
It's the custom, at Rome, new names to bestow,
So they canonized him by the name of Jem Crow!

Richard Harris Barham [1788–1845]

THE ALARMED SKIPPER

MANY a long, long year ago,
Nantucket skippers had a plan
Of finding out, though "lying low,"
How near New York their schooners ran.

They greased the lead before it fell,
And then by sounding, through the night,
Knowing the soil that stuck so well,
They always guessed their reckoning right.

A skipper gray, whose eyes were dim,
Could tell, by tasting, just the spot;
And so below he 'd "douse the glim,"—
After, of course, his "something hot."

Snug in his berth, at eight o'clock,
This ancient skipper might be found;
No matter how his craft would rock,
He slept,—for skippers' naps are sound.

The watch on deck would now and then
Run down and wake him, with the lead;
He'd up and taste, and tell the men
How many miles they went ahead.

One night 'twas Jotham Marden's watch,
A curious wag—the peddler's son;
And so he mused (the wanton wretch!)
"To-night I'll have a grain of fun.

"We're all a set of stupid fools,
To think the skipper knows, by tasting,
What ground he's on; Nantucket schools
Don't teach such stuff, with all their basting!"

And so he took the well-greased lead,
And rubbed it o'er a box of earth
That stood on deck—a parsnip-bed,—
And then he sought the skipper's berth.

"Where are we now, sir? Please to taste."
The skipper yawned, put out his tongue,
Opened his eyes in wondrous haste,
And then upon the floor he sprung.

The skipper stormed, and tore his hair,
Hauled on his boots, and roared to Marden,
"Nantucket's sunk, and here we are
Right over old Marm Hackett's garden!"

James Thomas Fields [1816–1881]

THE PUZZLED CENSUS TAKER

"Got any boys?" the Marshal said
To a lady from over the Rhine;
And the lady shook her flaxen head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"Got any girls?" the Marshal said
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again the lady shook her head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"But some are dead?" the Marshal said
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again the lady shook her head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"Husband of course?" the Marshal said
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again she shook her flaxen head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"The devil you have!" the Marshal said
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again she shook her flaxen head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"Now what do you mean by shaking your head,
And always answering 'Nine'?"
"*Ich kann nicht Englisch!*" civilly said
The lady from over the Rhine.

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

PYRAMUS AND THISBE

This tragical tale, which, they say, is a true one,
Is old; but the manner is wholly a new one.
One Ovid, a writer of some reputation,
Has told it before in a tedious narration;
In a style, to be sure, of remarkable fullness,
But which nobody reads on account of its dullness.

Young Peter Pyramus,—*I* call him Peter,
Not for the sake of the rhyme or the meter,
But merely to make the name completer,—
For Peter lived in the olden times,
And in one of the worst of pagan climes
That flourish now in classical fame,
Long before either noble or boor
Had such a thing as a *Christian* name,—
Young Peter, then, was a nice young beau
As any young lady would wish to know;
In years, I ween, he was rather green,
That is to say, he was just eighteen,—
A trifle too short, and a shaving too lean,
But "a nice young man" as ever was seen,
And fit to dance with a May-day queen!

Now Peter loved a beautiful girl
As ever ensnared the heart of an earl
In the magical trap of an auburn curl,—

A little Miss Thisbe, who lived next door
(They slept, in fact, on the very same floor,
With a wall between them, and nothing more,—
Those double dwellings were common of yore),
And they loved each other, the legends say,
In that very beautiful, bountiful way,
That every young maid and every young blade
Are wont to do before they grow staid,
And learn to love by the laws of trade.
But (alack-a-day, for the girl and the boy!)
A little impediment checked their joy,
And gave them, awhile, the deepest annoy.—
For some good reason, which history cloaks,
The match didn't happen to please the old folks!

So Thisbe's father and Peter's mother
Began the young couple to worry and bother,
And tried their innocent passion to smother
By keeping the lovers from seeing each other!
But who ever heard of a marriage deterred
Or even deferred
By any contrivance so very absurd
As scolding the boy, and caging his bird?

Now, Peter, who wasn't discouraged at all
By obstacles such as the timid appal,
Contrived to discover a hole in the wall,
Which wasn't so thick but removing a brick
Made a passage,—though rather provokingly small.
Through this little chink the lover could greet her,
And secrecy made their courting the sweeter,
While Peter kissed Thisbe, and Thisbe kissed Peter,—
For kisses, like folks with diminutive souls,
Will manage to creep through the smallest of holes!

'Twas here that the lovers, intent upon love,
Laid a nice little plot to meet at a spot
Near a mulberry-tree in a neighboring grove;
For the plan was all laid by the youth and the maid,

Whose hearts, it would seem, were uncommonly bold ones,
To run off and get married in spite of the old ones.

In the shadows of evening, as still as a mouse,
The beautiful maiden slipped out of the house,
The mulberry-tree impatient to find;
While Peter, the vigilant matrons to blind,
Strolled leisurely out some minutes behind.

While waiting alone by the trysting-tree,
A terrible lion as e'er you set eye on
Came roaring along quite horrid to see,
And caused the young maiden in terror to flee;
(A lion's a creature whose regular trade is
Blood,—and "a terrible thing among ladies,")
And, losing her veil as she ran from the wood,
The monster bedabbled it over with blood.

Now Peter, arriving, and seeing the veil
All covered o'er and reeking with gore,
Turned, all of a sudden, exceedingly pale,
And sat himself down to weep and to wail;
For, soon as he saw the garment, poor Peter
Made up his mind in very short meter
That Thisbe was dead, and the lion had eat her!
So breathing a prayer, he determined to share
The fate of his darling, "the loved and the lost,"
And fell on his dagger, and gave up the ghost!

Now Thisbe returning, and viewing her beau
Lying dead by her veil (which she happened to know),
She guessed in a moment, the cause of his erring,
And, seizing the knife, that had taken his life,
In less than a jiffy was dead as a herring!

MORAL

Young gentlemen: Pray recollect, if you please,
Not to make assignations near mulberry-trees;
Should your mistress be missing, it shows a weak head
To be stabbing yourself, till you know she is dead.

Young ladies: You shouldn't go strolling about
When your anxious mammas don't know you are out;
And remember that accidents often befall
From kissing young fellows through holes in the wall.

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

MY FAMILIAR

Ecce iterum Crispinus!

Again I hear that creaking step!—
He's rapping at the door!—
Too well I know the boding sound
That ushers in a bore.
I do not tremble when I meet
The stoutest of my foes,
But Heaven defend me from the friend
Who comes—but never goes!

He drops into my easy chair,
And asks about the news,
He peers into my manuscript,
And gives his candid views;
He tells me where he likes the line,
And where he's forced to grieve;
He takes the strangest liberties,—
But never takes his leave!

He reads my daily paper through
Before I've seen a word;
He scans the lyric (that I wrote),
And thinks it quite absurd;
He calmly smokes my last cigar,
And coolly asks for more;
He opens everything he sees—
Except the entry door!

He talks about his fragile health,
And tells me of the pains
He suffers from a score of ills
Of which he ne'er complains;

And how he struggled once with Death
To keep the fiend at bay;
On themes like those away he goes—
But never goes away!

He tells me of the carping words
Some shallow critic wrote;
And every precious paragraph
Familiarly can quote;
He thinks the writer did me wrong;
He'd like to run him through!
He says a thousand pleasant things—
But never says, "Adieu!"

Whene'er he comes—that dreadful man—
Disguise it as I may,
I know that, like an autumn rain,
He'll last throughout the day.
In vain I speak of urgent tasks;
In vain I scowl and pout;
A frown is no extinguisher—
It does not put him out!

I mean to take the knocker off,
Put crape upon the door,
Or hint to John that I am gone
To stay a month or more.
I do not tremble when I meet
The stoutest of my foes,
But Heaven defend me from the friend
Who never, never goes!

John Godfrey Saxe [1816–1887]

HANS BREITMANN'S PARTY.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty,
Dey had biano-blayin;
I feiled in lofe mit a Merican frau,
Her name was Madilda Yane.

She hat haar as prown ash a pretzel,
  Her eyes vas himmel-plue,
Und ven dey looket indo mine,
  Dey shplit mine heart in two.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty,
  I vent dere you'll pe pound.
I valset mit Madilda Yane
  Und vent shpinnen round und round.
De pootiest Frauelein in de House,
  She vayed 'pout dwo hoondred pound,
Und efery dime she give a shoomp
  She make de vindows sound.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty,
  I dells you it cost him dear.
Dey rolled in more ash sefen kecks
  Of foost-rate Lager Beer.
Und venefer dey knocks de shpicket in
  De Deutschers gifes a cheer.
I dinks dat so vine a barty
  Nefer coom to a het dis year.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty;
  Dere all vas Souse und Brouse,
Ven de sooper coomed in, de gompany
  Did make demselfs to house;
Dey ate das Brot und Gensy broost,
  De Bratwurst und Braten fine,
Und vash der Abendessen down
  Mit four parrels of Neckarwein.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty;
  We all cot troonk ash bigs.
I poot mine mout to a parrel of bier,
  Und emptied it oop mit a schwigs.
Und denn I gissed Madilda Yane
  Und she shlog me on de kop,
Und de gompany fited mit daple-lecks
  Dill de coonshtable made oos shtop.

Hans Breitmann gife a barty—
Where ish dat barty now?
Where ish de lofely golden cloud
Dat float on de moundains' prow?
Where ish de himmelstrahlende Stern—
De shtar of de shpirit's light?
All goned afay mit de Lager Beer—
Afay in de Ewigkeit!

Charles Godfrey Leland [1824–1903]

"NOTHING TO WEAR"

AN EPISODE OF CITY LIFE

Miss Flora McFlimsey, of Madison Square,
Has made three separate journeys to Paris,
And her father assures me, each time she was there,
That she and her friend Mrs. Harris
(Not the lady whose name is so famous in history,
But plain Mrs. H., without romance or mystery)
Spent six consecutive weeks without stopping
In one continuous round of shopping,—
Shopping alone, and shopping together,
At all hours of the day, and in all sorts of weather,—
For all manner of things that a woman can put
On the crown of her head or the sole of her foot,
Or wrap round her shoulders, or fit round her waist,
Or that can be sewed on, or pinned on, or laced,
Or tied on with a string, or stitched on with a bow,
In front or behind, above or below;
For bonnets, mantillas, capes, collars, and shawls;
Dresses for breakfasts and dinners and balls;
Dresses to sit in and stand in and walk in;
Dresses to dance in and flirt in and talk in;
Dresses in which to do nothing at all;
Dresses for winter, spring, summer, and fall;
All of them different in color and pattern,
Silk, muslin, and lace, crape, velvet, and satin,
Brocade, and broadcloth, and other material,
Quite as expensive and much more ethereal;

In short, for all things that could ever be thought of,
Or milliner, *modiste*, or tradesman be bought of,
From ten-thousand-francs robes to twenty-sous frills;
In all quarters of Paris, and to every store,
While McFlimsey in vain stormed, scolded, and swore,
They footed the streets, and he footed the bills.

The last trip, their goods shipped by the steamer Arago,
Formed, McFlimsey declares, the bulk of her cargo,
Not to mention a quantity kept from the rest,
Sufficient to fill the largest-sized chest,
Which did not appear on the ship's manifest,
But for which the ladies themselves manifested
Such particular interest, that they invested
Their own proper persons in layers and rows
Of muslins, embroideries, worked under-clothes,
Gloves, handkerchiefs, scarfs, and such trifles as those;
Then, wrapped in great shawls, like Circassian beauties,
Gave *good-by* to the ship, and *go-by* to the duties.
Her relations at home all marvelled, no doubt,
Miss Flora had grown so enormously stout
For an actual belle and a possible bride;
But the miracle ceased when she turned inside out,
And the truth came to light, and the dry-goods beside,
Which, in spite of collector and custom-house sentry,
Had entered the port without any entry.

And yet, though scarce three months have passed since the day
This merchandise went, on twelve carts, up Broadway,
This same Miss McFlimsey, of Madison Square,
The last time we met was in utter despair,
Because she had nothing whatever to wear!

Nothing to wear! Now, as this is a true ditty,
I do not assert—this, you know, is between us—
That she's in a state of absolute nudity,
Like Powers' Greek Slave, or the Medici Venus;
But I do mean to say, I have heard her declare,

When, at the same moment, she had on a dress
Which cost five hundred dollars, and not a cent less
And jewelry worth ten times more, I should guess,
That she had not a thing in the wide world to wear!

I should mention just here, that out of Miss Flora's
Two hundred and fifty or sixty adorers,
I had just been selected as he who should throw all
The rest in the shade, by the gracious bestowal
On myself, after twenty or thirty rejections,
Of those fossil remains which she called her "affections,"
And that rather decayed, but well-known work of art,
Which Miss Flora persisted in styling "her heart."
So we were engaged. Our troth had been plighted,
Not by moonbeam or starbeam, by fountain or grove,
But in a front parlor, most brilliantly lighted,
Beneath the gas-fixtures we whispered our love.
Without any romance or raptures or sighs,
Without any tears in Miss Flora's blue eyes,
Or blushes, or transports, or such silly actions,
It was one of the quietest business transactions,
With a very small sprinkling of sentiment, if any,
And a very large diamond imported by Tiffany.
On her virginal lips while I printed a kiss,
She exclaimed, as a sort of parenthesis,
And by way of putting me quite at my ease,
"You know, I'm to polka as much as I please,
And flirt when I like,—now, stop, don't you speak,—
And you must not come here more than twice in the week,
Or talk to me either at party or ball,
But always be ready to come when I call;
So don't prose to me about duty and stuff,
If we don't break this off, there will be time enough
For that sort of thing; but the bargain must be
That, as long as I choose, I am perfectly free,
For this is a sort of engagement, you see,
Which is binding on you but not binding on me."

Well, having thus wooed Miss McFlimsey and gained her,
With the silks, crinolines, and hoops that contained her,

I had, as I thought, a contingent remainder
At least in the property, and the best right
To appear as its escort by day and by night;
And it being the week of the Stuckups' grand ball,—
Their cards had been out for a fortnight or so,
And set all the Avenue on the tiptoe,—
I considered it only my duty to call,
And see if Miss Flora intended to go.
I found her,—as ladies are apt to be found,
When the time intervening between the first sound
Of the bell and the visitor's entry is shorter
Than usual,—I found—I won't say, I caught her,—
Intent on the pier-glass, undoubtedly meaning
To see if perhaps it didn't need cleaning.
She turned as I entered,—"Why, Harry, you sinner,
I thought that you went to the Flashers' to dinner!"
"So I did," I replied; "but the dinner is swallowed
And digested, I trust, for 'tis now nine and more,
So being relieved from that duty, I followed
Inclination, which led me, you see, to your door;
And now will your ladyship so condescend
As just to inform me if you intend
Your beauty and graces and presence to lend
(All of which, when I own, I hope no one will borrow)
To the Stuckups', whose party, you know, is to-morrow?"

The fair Flora looked up with a pitiful air,
And answered quite promptly, "Why, Harry, *mon cher*,
I should like above all things to go with you there;
But really and truly—I've nothing to wear."

"Nothing to wear! go just as you are;
Wear the dress you have on, and you'll be by far,
I engage, the most bright and particular star
On the Stuckup horizon"—I stopped—for her eye,
Notwithstanding this delicate onset of flattery,
Opened on me at once a most terrible battery
Of scorn and amazement. She made no reply,
But gave a slight turn to the end of her nose
(That pure Grecian feature), as much as to say,

"How absurd that any sane man should suppose
That a lady would go to a ball in the clothes,
No matter how fine, that she wears every day!"

So I ventured again: "Wear your crimson brocade,"
(Second turn-up of nose)—"That's too dark by a shade."
"Your blue silk"—"That's too heavy." "Your pink"—
"That's too light."
"Wear tulle over satin"—"I can't endure white."
"Your rose-colored, then, the best of the batch"—
"I haven't a thread of point lace to match."
"Your brown *moire antique*"—"Yes, and look like a Quaker."
"The pearl-colored"—"I would, but that plaguey dressmaker
Has had it a week." "Then that exquisite lilac
In which you would melt the heart of a Shylock."
(Here the nose took again the same elevation)—
"I wouldn't wear that for the whole of creation."
"Why not? It's my fancy, there's nothing could strike it
As more *comme il faut*"—"Yes, but, dear me! that lean
Sophronia Stuckup has got one just like it,
And I won't appear dressed like a chit of sixteen."
"Then that splendid purple, that sweet Mazarine,
That superb *point d'aiguille*, that imperial green,
That zephyr-like tarlatan, that rich *grenadine*"—
"Not one of all which is fit to be seen,"
Said the lady, becoming excited and flushed.
"Then wear," I exclaimed, in a tone which quite crushed
Opposition, "that gorgeous *toilette* which you sported
In Paris last spring, at the grand presentation,
When you quite turned the head of the head of the nation;
And by all the grand court were so very much courted."
The end of the nose was portentously tipped up,
And both the bright eyes shot forth indignation,
As she burst upon me with the fierce exclamation,
"I have worn it three times at the least calculation,
And that and the most of my dresses are ripped up!"

Here I ripped *out* something, perhaps rather rash,
Quite innocent, though; but, to use an expression
More striking than classic, it "settled my hash,"
And proved very soon the last act of our session.
"Fiddlesticks, it is, sir? I wonder the ceiling
Doesn't fall down and crush you—oh! you men have no feeling;
You selfish, unnatural, illiberal creatures,
Who set yourselves up as patterns and preachers,
Your silly pretense,—why, what a mere guess it is!
Pray, what do you know of a woman's necessities!
I have told you and shown you I've nothing to wear,
And it's perfectly plain you not only don't care,
But you do not believe me" (here the nose went still higher).
"I suppose, if you dared, you would call me a liar.
Our engagement is ended, sir—yes, on the spot;
You're a brute and a monster, and—I don't know what."
I mildly suggested the words—Hottentot,
Pickpocket, and cannibal, Tartar, and thief,
As gentle expletives which might give relief;
But this only proved as spark to the powder,
And the storm I had raised came faster and louder;
It blew and it rained, thundered, lightened, and hailed
Interjections, verbs, pronouns, till language quite failed
To express the abusive, and then its arrears
Were brought up all at once by a torrent of tears,
And my last faint, despairing attempt at an obs-
Ervation was lost in a tempest of sobs.

Well, I felt for the lady, and felt for my hat, too,
Improvised on the crown of the latter a tattoo,
In lieu of expressing the feelings which lay
Quite too deep for words, as Wordsworth would say;
Then, without going through the form of a bow,
Found myself in the entry—I hardly knew how,—
On doorstep and sidewalk, past lamp-post and square,
At home and up stairs, in my own easy-chair;
Poked my feet into slippers, my fire into blaze,
And said to myself, as I lit my cigar,

Supposing a man had the wealth of the Czar
Of the Russias to boot, for the rest of his days,
On the whole, do you think he would have much to spare,
If he married a woman with nothing to wear?

Since that night, taking pains that it should not be bruited
Abroad in society, I've instituted
A course of inquiry, extensive and thorough,
On this vital subject, and find, to my horror,
That the fair Flora's case is by no means surprising,
But that there exists the greatest distress
In our female community, solely arising
From this unsupplied destitution of dress,
Whose unfortunate victims are filling the air
With the pitiful wail of "Nothing to wear."
Researches in some of the "Upper Ten" districts
Reveal the most painful and startling statistics,
Of which let me mention only a few:
In one single house, on Fifth Avenue,
Three young ladies were found, all below twenty-two,
Who have been three whole weeks without anything new
In the way of flounced silks, and, thus left in the lurch,
Are unable to go to ball, concert, or church.
In another large mansion, near the same place,
Was found a deplorable, heartrending case
Of entire destitution of Brussels point lace.
In a neighboring block there was found, in three calls,
Total want, long continued, of camel's-hair shawls;
And a suffering family, whose case exhibits
The most pressing need of real ermine tippets;
One deserving young lady almost unable
To survive for the want of a new Russian sable;
Another confined to the house, when it's windier
Than usual, because her shawl isn't India.
Still another, whose tortures have been most terrific
Ever since the sad loss of the steamer Pacific,
In which were engulfed, not friend or relation
(For whose fate she perhaps might have found consolation
Or borne it, at least, with serene resignation),

But the choicest assortment of French sleeves and collars
Ever sent out from Paris, worth thousands of dollars,
And all as to style most *recherche* and rare,
The want of which leaves her with nothing to wear,
And renders her life so drear and dyspeptic
That she's quite a recluse, and almost a sceptic;
For she touchingly says that this sort of grief
Cannot find in Religion the slightest relief,
And Philosophy has not a maxim to spare
For the victims of such overwhelming despair.
But the saddest by far of all these sad features
Is the cruelty practised upon the poor creatures
By husbands and fathers, real Bluebeards and Timons,
Who resist the most touching appeals made for diamonds
By their wives and their daughters, and leave them for days
Unsupplied with new jewelry, fans, or bouquets,
Even laugh at their miseries whenever they have a chance,
And deride their demands as useless extravagance;
One case of a bride was brought to my view,
Too sad for belief, but, alas! 'twas too true,
Whose husband refused, as savage as Charon,
To permit her to take more than ten trunks to Sharon.
The consequence was, that when she got there,
At the end of three weeks she had nothing to wear,
And when she proposed to finish the season
At Newport, the monster refused out and out,
For his infamous conduct alleging no reason,
Except that the waters were good for his gout.
Such treatment as this was too shocking, of course,
And proceedings are now going on for divorce.

But why harrow the feelings by lifting the curtain
From these scenes of woe? Enough, it is certain,
Has here been disclosed to stir up the pity
Of every benevolent heart in the city,
And spur up Humanity into a canter
To rush and relieve these sad cases instanter.
Won't somebody, moved by this touching description,
Come forward to-morrow and head a subscription?

Won't some kind philanthropist, seeing that aid is
So needed at once by these indigent ladies,
Take charge of the matter? Or won't Peter Cooper
The corner-stone lay of some spendid super-
Structure, like that which to-day links his name
In the Union unending of honor and fame;
And found a new charity just for the care
Of these unhappy women with nothing to wear,
Which, in view of the cash which would daily be claimed,
The *Laying-out* Hospital well might be named?
Won't Stewart, or some of our dry-goods importers,
Take a contract for clothing our wives and our daughters?
Or, to furnish the cash to supply these distresses,
And life's pathway strew with shawls, collars, and dresses,
Ere the want of them makes it much rougher and thornier,
Won't someone discover a new California?

Oh ladies, dear ladies, the next sunny day
Please trundle your hoops just out of Broadway,
From its whirl and its bustle, its fashion and pride,
And the temples of Trade which tower on each side,
To the alleys and lanes, where Misfortune and Guilt
Their children have gathered, their city have built;
Where Hunger and Vice, like twin beasts of prey,
Have hunted their victims to gloom and despair;
Raise the rich, dainty dress, and the fine broidered skirt,
Pick your delicate way through the dampness and dirt,
Grope through the dark dens, climb the rickety stair
To the garret, where wretches, the young and the old,
Half-starved, and half-naked, lie crouched from the cold.
See those skeleton limbs, those frost-bitten feet,
All bleeding and bruised by the stones of the street;
Hear the sharp cry of childhood, the deep groans that swell
From the poor dying creature who writhes on the floor,
Hear the curses that sound like the echoes of Hell,
As you sicken and shudder and fly from the door;
Then home to your wardrobes, and say, if you dare,—
Spoiled children of Fashion,—you've nothing to wear!

And oh, if perchance there should be a sphere
Where all is made right which so puzzles us here,

Where the glare and the glitter and tinsel of Time
Fade and die in the light of that region sublime,
Where the soul, disenchanted of flesh and of sense,
Unscreened by its trappings and shows and pretence,
Must be clothed for the life and the service above,
With purity, truth, faith, meekness, and love;
O daughters of Earth! foolish virgins, beware!
Lest in that upper realm you have nothing to wear!

William Allen Butler [1825–1902]

DARIUS GREEN AND HIS FLYING-MACHINE

If ever there lived a Yankee lad,
Wise or otherwise, good or bad,
Who, seeing the birds fly, didn't jump
With flapping arms from stake or stump,
Or, spreading the tail of his coat for a sail,
Take a soaring leap from post or rail,
And wonder why *he* couldn't fly,
And flap and flutter and wish and try,—
If ever you knew a country dunce
Who didn't try that as often as once,
All I can say is, that's a sign
He never would do for a hero of mine.

An aspiring genius was D. Green:
The son of a farmer,—age fourteen;
His body was long and lank and lean,—
Just right for flying, as will be seen;
He had two eyes as bright as a bean,
And a freckled nose that grew between,
A little awry;—for I must mention
That he had riveted his attention
Upon his wonderful invention,
Twisting his tongue as he twisted the strings,
And working his face as he worked the wings,
And with every turn of gimlet and screw
Turning and screwing his mouth round too,
Till his nose seemed bent to catch the scent,

Around some corner, of new-baked pies,
And his wrinkled cheeks and his squinting eyes
Grew puckered into a queer grimace,
That made him look very droll in the face,
And also very wise.

And wise he must have been, to do more
Than ever a genius did before,
Excepting Daedalus of yore
And his son Icarus, who wore
Upon their backs those wings of wax
He had read of in the old almanacs.
Darius was clearly of the opinion,
That the air was also man's dominion,
And that, with paddle or fin or pinion,
We soon or late should navigate
The azure as now we sail the sea.
The thing looks simple enough to me;
And, if you doubt it,
Hear how Darius reasoned about it:

"The birds can fly, an' why can't I?
Must we give in," says he with a grin,
" 'T the bluebird an' phoebe are smarter'n we be?
Jest fold our hands, an' see the swaller
An' blackbird an' catbird beat us holler?
Does the leetle chatterin', sassy wren,
No bigger'n my thumb, know more than men?
Jest show me that! er prove 't the bat
Hez got more brains than's in my hat,
An' I'll back down, an' not till then!"

He argued further: "Ner I can't see
What's th' use o' wings to a bumble-bee,
Fer to git a livin' with, more'n to me;—
Ain't my business importanter'n his'n is?
That Icarus was a silly cuss,—
Him an' his daddy Daedalus;
They might 'a' knowed wings made o' wax
Wouldn't stan' sun-heat an' hard whacks:
I'll make mine o' luther, er suthin' er other."

And he said to himself, as he tinkered and planned:
"But I ain't goin' to show my hand
To nummies that never can understand
The fust idee that's big an' grand.
They'd 'a' laft an' made fun
O' Creation itself afore 'twas done!"
So he kept his secret from all the rest,
Safely buttoned within his vest;
And in the loft above the shed
Himself he locks, with thimble and thread
And wax and hammer and buckles and screws,
And all such things as geniuses use;—
Two bats for patterns, curious fellows!
A charcoal-pot and a pair of bellows;
An old hoop-skirt or two, as well as
Some wire, and several old umbrellas;
A carriage-cover, for tail and wings;
A piece of harness; and straps and strings;
And a big strong box, in which he locks
These and a hundred other things.

His grinning brothers, Reuben and Burke
And Nathan and Jotham and Solomon, lurk
Around the corner to see him work,—
Sitting cross-legged, like a Turk,
Drawing the waxed-end through with a jerk,
And boring the holes with a comical quirk
Of his wise old head, and a knowing smirk.
But vainly they mounted each other's backs,
And poked through knot-holes and pried through cracks;
With wood from the pile and straw from the stacks
He plugged the knot-holes and calked the cracks;
And a bucket of water, which one would think
He had brought up into the loft to drink
When he chanced to be dry,
Stood always nigh, for Darius was sly!
And, whenever at work he happened to spy
At chink or crevice a blinking eye,
He let a dipper of water fly:

"Take that! an', ef ever ye git a peep,
Guess ye'll ketch a weasel asleep!"
And he sings as he locks his big strong box:
"The weasel's head is small an' trim,
An' he is leetle an' long an' slim,
An' quick of motion an' nimble of limb,
An', ef yeou'll be advised by me,
Keep wide awake when ye're ketchin' him!"

So day after day
He stitched and tinkered and hammered away,
Till at last 'twas done,—
The greatest invention under the sun!
"An' now," says Darius, "hooray fer some fun!"

'Twas the Fourth of July, and the weather was dry,
And not a cloud was on all the sky,
Save a few light fleeces, which here and there,
Half mist, half air,
Like foam on the ocean went floating by,—
Just as lovely a morning as ever was seen
For a nice little trip in a flying-machine.

Thought cunning Darius, "Now I shan't go
Along 'ith the fellers to see the show:
I'll say I've got sich a terrible cough!
An' then, when the folks 'ave all gone off,
I'll hev full swing fer to try the thing,
An' practyse a little on the wing."

"Ain't goin' to see the celebration?"
Says brother Nate. "No; botheration!
I've got sich a cold—a toothache—I—
My gracious!—feel's though I should fly!"
Said Jotham, "'Sho! guess ye better go."
But Darius said, "No!
Shouldn't wonder 'f yeou might see me, though,
'Long 'bout noon, ef I git red
O' this jumpin', thumpin' pain 'n my head."
For all the while to himself he said,—
"I tell ye what!

I'll fly a few times around the lot,
To see how 't seems, then soon's I've got
The hang o' the thing, ez likely's not,
I'll astonish the nation, an' all creation,
By flyin' over the celebration!
Over their heads I'll sail like an eagle;
I'll balance myself on my wings like a sea-gull;
I'll dance on the chimbleys; I'll stan' on the steeple;
I'll flop up to winders an' scare the people!
I'll light on the libbe'ty-pole, an' crow;
An I'll say to the gawpin' fools below,
'What world's this 'ere that I've come near?'
Fer I'll make 'em b'lieve I'm a chap f'm the moon;
An' I'll try a race 'ith their ol' balloon!"

He crept from his bed;
And, seeing the others were gone, he said,
"I'm a-gittin' over the cold 'n my head."
And away he sped,
To open the wonderful box in the shed.

His brothers had walked but a little way,
When Jotham to Nathan chanced to say,
"What on airth is he up to, hey?"
"Don'o',—the' 's suthin' er other to pay,
Er he wouldn't 'a' stayed to hum to-day."
Says Burke, "His toothache's all 'n his eye!
He never'd miss a Fo'th-o'-July,
Ef he hedn't got some machine to try."
Then Sol, the little one, spoke: "By darn!
Le's hurry back, an' hide 'n the barn,
An' pay him fer tellin' us that yarn!"
"Agreed!" Through the orchard they creep back,
Along by the fences, behind the stack,
And one by one, through a hole in the wall,
In under the dusty barn they crawl,
Dressed in their Sunday garments all;
And a very astonishing sight was that,
When each in his cobwebbed coat and hat
Came up through the floor like an ancient rat.

And there they hid; and Reuben slid
The fastenings back, and the door undid.
"Keep dark!" said he,
"While I squint an' see what the' is to see."

As knights of old put on their mail,—
From head to foot an iron suit,
Iron jacket and iron boot,
Iron breeches, and on the head
No hat, but an iron pot instead,
And under the chin the bail,—
(I believe they called the thing a helm,)—
And, thus accoutred, they took the field,
Sallying forth to overwhelm
The dragons and pagans that plagued the realm;
So this modern knight prepared for flight,
Put on his wings and strapped them tight,—
Jointed and jaunty, strong and light,—
Buckled them fast to shoulder and hip,—
Ten feet they measured from tip to tip!
And a helm had he, but that he wore,
Not on his head, like those of yore,
But more like the helm of a ship.

"Hush!" Reuben said, "he's up in the shed!
He's opened the winder,—I see his head!
He stretches it out, an' pokes it about,
Lookin' to see 'f the coast is clear,
An' nobody near;—
Guess he don'o' who's hid in here!
He's riggin' a spring-board over the sill!
Stop laffin', Solomon! Burke, keep still!
He's a climbin' out now—Of all the things!
What's he got on? I van, it's wings!
An' that t'other thing? I vum, it's a tail!
An' there he sets like a hawk on a rail!
Steppin' careful, he travels the length
Of his spring-board, and teeters to try its strength.
Now he stretches his wings, like a monstrous bat;
Peeks over his shoulder, this way an' that,

Fer to see 'f the' 's any one passin' by;
But the' 's on'y a ca'f an' a goslin' nigh.
They turn up at him a wonderin' eye,
To see—The dragon! he's goin' to fly!
Away he goes! Jimminy! what a jump!
Flop—flop—an' plump to the ground with a thump!
Flutt'rin' an' flound'rin', all 'n a lump!"

As a demon is hurled by an angel's spear,
Heels over head, to his proper sphere,—
Heels over head, and head over heels,
Dizzily down the abyss he wheels,—
So fell Darius. Upon his crown,
In the midst of the barn-yard, he came down,
In a wonderful whirl of tangled strings,
Broken braces and broken springs,
Broken tail and broken wings,
Shooting-stars, and various things,—
Barn-yard litter of straw and chaff,
And much that wasn't so sweet by half.
Away with a bellow fled the calf,
And what was that? Did the gosling laugh?
'Tis a merry roar from the old barn-door,
And he hears the voice of Jotham crying;
"Say, D'rius! how de yeou like flyin'?"

Slowly, ruefully, where he lay,
Darius just turned and looked that way,
As he stanched his sorrowful nose with his cuff,
"Wal, I like flyin' well enough,"
He said; "but the' ain't sich a thunderin' sight
O' fun in 't when ye come to light."

I just have room for the MORAL here:
And this is the moral,—Stick to your sphere;
Or, if you insist, as you have the right,
On spreading your wings for a loftier flight,
The moral is,—Take care how you light.

John Townsend Trowbridge [1827–1916]

THE SOCIETY UPON THE STANISLAUS

I RESIDE at Table Mountain, and my name is Truthful James;
I am not up to small deceit, or any sinful games;
And I'll tell in simple language what I know about the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislow.

But first I would remark, that it is not a proper plan
For any scientific gent to whale his fellow-man,
And, if a member don't agree with his peculiar whim,
To lay for that same member for to "put a head" on him.

Now nothing could be finer or more beautiful to see
Than the first six months' proceedings of that same Society,
Till Brown of Calaveras brought a lot of fossil bones
That he found within a tunnel near the tenement of Jones.

Then Brown he read a paper, and he reconstructed there,
From those same bones, an animal that was extremely rare;
And Jones then asked the Chair for a suspension of the rules,
Till he could prove that those same bones was one of his lost mules.

Then Brown he smiled a bitter smile, and said he was at fault,—
It seemed he had been trespassing on Jones's family vault:
He was a most sarcastic man, this quiet Mr. Brown,
And on several occasions he had cleaned out the town.

Now I hold it is not decent for a scientific gent
To say another is an ass,—at least, to all intent;
Nor should the individual who happens to be meant
Reply by heaving rocks at him, to any great extent.

Then Abner Dean of Angel's raised a point of order—when
A chunk of old red sandstone took him in the abdomen,
And he smiled a kind of sickly smile, and curled up on the floor,
And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

For, in less time than I write it, every member did engage
In a warfare with the remnants of a palæozoic age;
And the way they heaved those fossils in their anger was a sin,
Till the skull of an old mammoth caved the head of Thompson in.

And this is all I have to say of these improper games,
For I live at Table Mountain, and my name is Truthful James;
And I've told in simple language what I know about the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislow.

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

DOW'S FLAT

1856

Dow's Flat. That's its name:
And I reckon that you
Are a stranger? The same?
Well, I thought it was true,—
For thar isn't a man on the river as can't spot the place at first view.

It was called after Dow,—
Which the same was an ass;
And as to the how
Thet the thing kem to pass,—
Jest tie up your hoss to that buckeye, and sit ye down here in the grass.

You see this 'yer Dow
Hed the worst kind of luck;
He slipped up somehow
On each thing thet he struck.
Why, ef he'd a-straddled thet fence-rail, the derned thing 'ed get up and buck.

He mined on the bar
Till he couldn't pay rates;
He was smashed by a car
When he tunnelled with Bates;
And right on the top of his trouble kem his wife and five kids from the States.

It was rough,—mighty rough;
But the boys they stood by,
And they brought him the stuff
For a house, on the sly;
And the old woman,—well, she did washing, and took on when no one was nigh.

But this 'yer luck of Dow's
Was so powerful mean
That the spring near his house
Dried right up on the green;
And he sunk forty feet down for water, but nary a drop to be seen.

Then the bar petered out,
And the boys wouldn't stay;
And the chills got about,
And his wife fell away;
But Dow in his well kept a peggin' in his usual ridikilous way.

One day,—it was June,—
And a year ago, jest,—
This Dow kem at noon
To his work like the rest,
With a shovel and pick on his shoulder, and a derringer hid in his breast.

He goes to the well,
And he stands on the brink,
And stops for a spell
Jest to listen and think:
For the sun in his eyes (jest like this, sir!), you see, kinder made the cuss blink.

His two ragged gals
In the gulch were at play,
And a gownd that was Sal's
Kinder flapped on a bay:
Not much for a man to be leavin', but his all,—as I've heer'd the folks say.

And—That's a peart hoss
Thet you've got—ain't it now?
What might be her cost?
Eh? Oh!—Well, then, Dow—
Let's see,—well, that forty-foot grave wasn't his, sir, that day, anyhow.

For a blow of his pick
Sorter caved in the side,
And he looked and turned sick,
Then he trembled and cried.
For you see the dern cuss had struck—"Water?"—beg your parding, young man,—there you lied!

It was *gold*,—in the quartz,
And it ran all alike;
And I reckon five oughts
Was the worth of that strike;
And that house with the coopilow's his'n,—which the same isn't bad for a Pike.

Thet's why it's Dow's Flat;
And the thing of it is
That he kinder got that
Through sheer contrairiness:
For 'twas *water* the derned cuss was seekin', and his luck made him certain to miss.

Thet's so! Thar's your way,
To the left of yon tree;
But—a—look h'yur, say?
Won't you come up to tea?
No? Well, then the next time you're passin'; and ask after Dow,— and thet's *me*.

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

PLAIN LANGUAGE FROM TRUTHFUL JAMES

TABLE MOUNTAIN, 1870

WHICH I wish to remark,
And my language is plain,
That for ways that are dark
And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar:—
Which the same I would rise to explain.

Ah Sin was his name;
And I shall not deny,
In regard to the same,
What that name might imply;
But his smile it was pensive and childlike.
As I frequent remarked to Bill Nye.

It was August the third,
And quite soft was the skies;
Which it might be inferred
That Ah Sin was likewise;
Yet he played it that day upon William
And me in a way I despise.

Which we had a small game,
And Ah Sin took a hand:
It was Euchre. The same
He did not understand;
But he smiled, as he sat by the table,
With the smile that was childlike and bland.

Yet the cards they were stocked
In a way that I grieve,
And my feelings were shocked
At the state of Nye's sleeve,
Which was stuffed full of aces and bowers,
And the same with intent to deceive.

But the hands that were played
By that heathen Chinee,
And the points that he made,
Were quite frightful to see,—

Till at last he put down a right bower,
  Which the same Nye had dealt unto me.

Then I looked up at Nye,
  And he gazed upon me;
And he rose with a sigh,
  And said, "Can this be?
We are ruined by Chinese cheap labor,"—
  And he went for that heathen Chinee.

In the scene that ensued
  I did not take a hand,
But the floor it was strewed,
  Like the leaves on the strand,
With the cards that Ah Sin had been hiding,
  In the game "he did not understand."

In his sleeves, which were long,
  He had twenty-four packs,—
Which was coming it strong,
  Yet I state but the facts;
And we found on his nails, which were taper,
  What is frequent in tapers,—that's wax.

Which is why I remark,
  And my language is plain,
That for ways that are dark,
  And for tricks that are vain,
The heathen Chinee is peculiar,—
  Which the same I am free to maintain.

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

THE RETORT

Old Birch, who taught the village school,
  Wedded a maid of homespun habit;
He was as stubborn as a mule,
  And she as playful as a rabbit.

Poor Kate had scarce become a wife
  Before her husband sought to make her
The pink of country-polished life,
  And prim and formal as a Quaker.

One day the tutor went abroad,
And simple Katie sadly missed him;
When he returned, behind her lord
She shyly stole, and fondly kissed him.

The husband's anger rose, and red
And white his face alternate grew:
"Less freedom, ma'am!" Kate sighed and said,
"O, dear! I *didn't know 'twas you!*"

George Pope Morris [1802–1864]

THE FLITCH OF DUNMOW

Come, Micky and Molly and dainty Dolly,
Come, Betty and blithesome Bill;
Ye gossips and neighbors, away with your labors!
Come to the top of the hill.
For there are Jenny and jovial Joe;
Jolly and jolly, jolly they go,
Jogging over the hill.

By apple and berry, 'tis twelve months merry
Since Jenny and Joe were wed!
And never a bother or quarrelsome pother
To trouble the board or bed.
So Joe and Jenny are off to Dunmow:
Happy and happy, happy they go,
Young and rosy and red.

Oh, Jenny's as pretty as doves in a ditty;
And Jenny, her eyes are black;
And Joey's a fellow as merry and mellow
As ever shouldered a sack.
So quick, good people, and come to the show
Merry and merry, merry they go,
Bumping on Dobbin's back.

They've pranked up old Dobbin with ribbons and bobbin,
And tethered his tail in a string!
The fat flitch of bacon is not to be taken
By many that wear the ring!

Good luck, good luck, to Jenny and Joe!
Jolly and jolly, jolly they go.
Hark! how merry they sing:

"O, merry, merry, merry are we,
Happy as birds that sing in a tree!
All of the neighbors are merry to-day,
Merry are we, and merry are they.
O merry are we! for love, you see,
Fetters a heart and sets it free.

"O happy, happy, happy is life
For Joe (that's me) and Jenny my wife!
All of the neighbors are happy, and say—
'Never were folk so happy as they!'
O happy are we! for love, you see,
Fetters a heart and sets it free.

"O jolly, jolly, jolly we go,
I and my Jenny, and she and her Joe.
All of the neighbors are jolly, and sing—
'She is a queen, and he is a king!'
O jolly are we! for love, you see,
Fetters a heart and sets it free."

James Carnegie [1827–1905]

THE YARN OF THE "NANCY BELL"

'Twas on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone, on a piece of stone,
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he;
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key:

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been drinking,
And so I simply said:

"Oh, elderly man, it's little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
And I'll eat my hand if I understand
However you can be

"At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig."

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn:

"'Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*
That we sailed to the Indian Sea,
And there on a reef we come to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

"And pretty nigh all o' the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul),
And only ten of the *Nancy's* men
Said 'Here!' to the muster-roll.

"There was me, and the cook, and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And the bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

"For a month we'd neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungry we did feel,
So we drawed a lot, and, accordin', shot
The captain for our meal.

"The next lot fell to the *Nancy's* mate,
And a delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

"And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain's gig.

"Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question, 'Which
Of us two goes to the kettle?' arose,
And we argued it out as sich.

"For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshipped me;
But we'd both be blowed if we'd either be stowed
In the other chap's hold, you see.

"'I'll be eat if you dines off me,' says Tom.
'Yes, that,' says I, 'you'll be,—
I'm boiled if I die, my friend,' quoth I;
And 'Exactly so,' quoth he.

"Says he: 'Dear James, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don't you see that you can't cook *me*,
While I can—and will—cook *you!*'

"So he boils the water, and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot,
And some sage and parsley too.

"'Come here,' says he, with a proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell,
'Twill soothing be if I let you see
How extremely nice you'll smell.'

"And he stirred it round and round and round,
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

"And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And—as I eating be
The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a wessel in sight I see.

. . . . . .

"And I never larf, and I never smile,
And I never lark nor play;
But sit and croak, and a single joke
I have—which is to say:

"Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!"

William Schwenck Gilbert [1836–1911]

CAPTAIN REECE

Of all the ships upon the blue,
No ship contained a better crew
Than that of worthy Captain Reece,
Commanding of the *Mantelpiece*.

He was adored by all his men,
For worthy Captain Reece, R. N.,
Did all that lay within him to
Promote the comfort of his crew.

If ever they were dull or sad,
Their captain danced to them like mad,
Or told, to make the time pass by,
Droll legends of his infancy.

A feather-bed had every man,
Warm slippers and hot-water can,
Brown windsor from the captain's store,
A valet, too, to every four.

Did they with thirst in summer burn,
Lo, seltzogenes at every turn,
And on all very sultry days
Cream ices handed round on trays.

Then currant wine and ginger pops
Stood handily on all the "tops":
And, also, with amusement rife,
A "Zoetrope, or Wheel of Life."

New volumes came across the sea
From Mister Mudie's libraree;
The *Times* and *Saturday Review*
Beguiled the leisure of the crew.

Kind-hearted Captain Reece, R. N.,
Was quite devoted to his men;
In point of fact, good Captain Reece
Beatified the *Mantelpiece.*

One summer eve, at half past ten,
He said (addressing all his men),
"Come, tell me, please, what I can do,
To please and gratify my crew.

"By any reasonable plan
I'll make you happy if I can;
My own convenience count as *nil;*
It is my duty, and I will."

Then up and answered William Lee
(The kindly captain's coxswain he,
A nervous, shy, low-spoken man);
He cleared his throat, and thus began:

"You have a daughter, Captain Reece,
Ten female cousins and a niece,
A ma, if what I'm told is true,
Six sisters, and an aunt or two.

"Now, somehow, sir, it seems to me,
More friendly-like we all shall be,
If you united of 'em to
Unmarried members of the crew.

"If you'd ameliorate our life,
Let each select from them a wife;
And as for nervous me, old pal,
Give me your own enchanting gal!"

Good Captain Reece, that worthy man,
Debated on his coxswain's plan:
"I quite agree," he said, "O Bill;
It is my duty, and I will.

"My daughter, that enchanting girl,
Has just been promised to an earl,
And all my other familee
To peers of various degree.

"But what are dukes and viscounts to
The happiness of all my crew?
The word I gave you I'll fulfil;
It is my duty, and I will.

"As you desire it shall befall,
I'll settle thousands on you all,
And I shall be, despite my hoard,
The only bachelor on board."

The boatswain of the *Mantelpiece*,
He blushed and spoke to Captain Reece:
"I beg your honor's leave," he said,
"If you would wish to go and wed,

"I have a widowed mother who
Would be the very thing for you—
She long has loved you from afar,
She washes for you, Captain R."

The captain saw the dame that day—
Addressed her in his playful way—
"And did it want a wedding-ring?
It was a tempting ickle sing!

"Well, well, the chaplain I will seek,
We'll all be married this day week
At yonder church upon the hill;
It is my duty, and I will!"

The sisters, cousins, aunts, and niece,
And widowed ma of Captain Reece,
Attended there as they were bid;
It was their duty, and they did.

William Schwenck Gilbert [1836–1911]

"'SPĂCIALLY JIM"

I wus mighty good-lookin' when I wus young,
Peert an' black-eyed an' slim,
With fellers a-courtin' me Sunday nights,
'Spăcially Jim.

The likeliest one of 'em all wus he,
Clipper an' han'som' an' trim;
But I tossed up my head an' made fun o' the crowd,
'Spăcially Jim.

I said I hadn't no 'pinion o' men,
An' I wouldn't take stock in him!
But they kep' on a-comin' in spite o' my talk,
'Spăcially Jim.

I got so tired o' havin' 'em roun'
('Spăcially Jim!)
I made up my mind I'd settle down
An' take up with him.

So we wus married one Sunday in church,
'Twas crowded full to the brim;
'Twas the only way to git rid of 'em all,
'Spăcially Jim.

Bessie Morgan [18 –

ROBINSON CRUSOE

THE night was thick and hazy,
When the Piccadilly Daisy
Carried down the crew and captain in the sea;
And I think the water drowned 'em,
For they never, never found 'em,
And I know they did n't come ashore with me.

Oh! 'twas very sad and lonely
When I found myself the only
Population on this cultivated shore;
But I've made a little tavern
In a rocky little cavern,
And I sit and watch for people at the door.

I spent no time in looking
For a girl to do my cooking,
As I'm quite a clever hand at making stews;
But I had that fellow Friday
Just to keep the tavern tidy,
And to put a Sunday polish on my shoes.

I have a little garden
That I'm cultivating lard in,
As the things I eat are rather tough and dry;
For I live on toasted lizards,
Prickly pears, and parrot gizzards,
And I'm really very fond of beetle-pie.

The clothes I had were furry,
And it made me fret and worry
When I found the moths were eating off the hair;
And I had to scrape and sand 'em,
And I boiled 'em and I tanned 'em,
Till I got the fine morocco suit I wear.

I sometimes seek diversion
In a family excursion

With the few domestic animals you see;
And we take along a carrot
As refreshments for the parrot,
And a little can of jungleberry tea.

Then we gather as we travel
Bits of moss and dirty gravel,
And we chip off little specimens of stone;
And we carry home as prizes
Funny bugs of handy sizes,
Just to give the day a scientific tone.

If the roads are wet and muddy,
We remain at home and study,—
For the Goat is very clever at a sum,—
And the Dog, instead of fighting,
Studies ornamental writing,
While the Cat is taking lessons on the drum.

We retire at eleven,
And we rise again at seven;
And I wish to call attention, as I close,
To the fact that all the scholars
Are correct about their collars,
And particular in turning out their toes.

Charles Edward Carryl [1841–

CASEY AT THE BAT

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to two, with but one inning more to play;
And so, when Cooney died at first, and Burrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A straggling few got up to go in deep despair. The rest
Clung to the hope which springs eternal in the human breast;
They thought, if only Casey could but get a whack, at that,
They'd put up even money now, with Casey at the bat.

But Flynn preceded Casey, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a pudding and the latter was a fake;
So upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of Casey's getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despisèd, tore the cover off the ball;
And when the dust had lifted, and they saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe on second, and Flynn a-hugging third.

Then from the gladdened multitude went up a joyous yell,
It bounded from the mountain-top, and rattled in the dell;
It struck upon the hillside, and recoiled upon the flat;
For Casey, mighty Casey, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his place,
There was pride in Casey's bearing, and a smile on Casey's face;
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt,
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt;
Then while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip,
Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there;
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped.
"That ain't my style," said Casey. "Strike one," the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore;

"Kill him! kill the umpire!" shouted some one on the stand.
And it's likely they'd have killed him had not Casey raised
his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey's visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signalled to the pitcher, and once more the spheroid flew,
But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, "Strike two."

"Fraud!" cried the maddened thousands, and the echo
answered, "Fraud!"
But a scornful look from Casey, and the audience was awed;
They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his muscles
strain,
And they knew that Casey wouldn't let that ball go by again.

The sneer is gone from Casey's lips, his teeth are clenched in
hate,
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate;
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey's blow.

Oh! somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright,
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are
light;
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children
shout,
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck
out.

Ernest Lawrence Thayer [18 –

AT A COWBOY DANCE

Git yer little sage hens ready,
Trot 'em out upon the floor—
Line up there, you cusses! Steady!
Lively, now! One couple more.
Shorty, shed that old sombrero;
Bronco, douse that cigarette;
Stop that cussin', Casimero,
'Fore the ladies! Now, all set!

S'lute yer ladies, all together!
  Ladies opposite the same—
Hit the lumber with yer leathers!
  Balance all, an' swing yer dame!
Bunch the heifers in the middle;
  Circle stags an' do-se-do!
Pay attention to the fiddle!
  Swing her round an' off you go!

First four forward! Back to places!
  Second follow—shuffle back!
Now you've got it down to cases—
  Swing 'em till their trotters crack!
Gents all right a-heel-and-toein'!
  Swing 'em, kiss 'em if you kin—
On to next an' keep a-goin'
  Till you hit yer pards ag'in!

Gents to center; ladies round 'em,
  Form a basket; balance all!
Whirl yer gals to where you found 'em!
  Promenade around the hall!
Balance to yer pards an' trot 'em
  Round the circle double quick!
Grab an' kiss 'em while you've got 'em—
  Hold 'em to it if they kick!

Ladies, left hand to yer sonnies!
  Alaman! Grand right an' left!
Balance all, an' swing yer honeys—
  Pick 'em up an' feel their heft!
Promenade like skeery cattle—
  Balance all an' swing yer sweets!
Shake yer spurs an' make 'em rattle!
  Keno! Promenade to seats.

James Barton Adams [1843–

BEHOLD THE DEEDS

(Being the Plaint of Adolphe Culpepper Ferguson, Salesman of Fancy Notions, held in durance of his Landlady for a failure to connect on Saturday Night.)

I WOULD that all men my hard case might know,
How grievously I suffer for no sin:
I, Adolphe Culpepper Ferguson, for lo!
I of my landlady am lockèd in
For being short on this sad Saturday,
Nor having shekels of silver wherewith to pay:
She has turned and is departed with my key;
Wherefore, not even as other boarders free,
I sing, (as prisoners to their dungeon-stones
When for ten days they expiate a spree):
Behold the deeds that are done of Mrs. Jones!

One night and one day have I wept my woe;
Nor wot I, when the morrow doth begin,
If I shall have to write to Briggs & Co.,
To pray them to advance the requisite tin
For ransom of their salesman, that he may
Go forth as other boarders go alway—
As those I hear now flocking from their tea,
Led by the daughter of my landlady
Piano-ward. This day, for all my moans,
Dry bread and water have been servèd me.
Behold the deeds that are done of Mrs. Jones!

Miss Amabel Jones is musical, and so
The heart of the young he-boardèr doth win,
Playing "The Maiden's Prayer," *adagio*—
That fetcheth him, as fetcheth the "bunko skin"
The innocent rustic. For my part, I pray
That Badarjewska maid may wait for aye
Ere sits she with a lover, as did we
Once sit together, Amabel! Can it be
That all that arduous wooing not atones
For Saturday's shortness of trade dollars three?
Behold the deeds that are done of Mrs. Jones!

Yea! she forgets the arm that was wont to go
Around her waist. She wears a buckle, whose pin
Galleth the crook of her young man's elbôw.
I forget not, for I that youth have been.
Smith was aforetime the Lothario gay.
Yet once, I mind me, Smith was forced to stay
Close in his room. Not calm, as I, was he;
But his noise brought no pleasaunce, verily.
Small ease he got of playing on the bones
Or hammering on the stove-pipe, that I see.
Behold the deeds that are done of Mrs. Jones!

Thou, for whose fear the figurative crow
I eat, accursed be thou and all thy kin!
Thee will I show up—yea, up will I show
Thy too thick buckwheats, and thy tea too thin.
Ay! here I dare thee, ready for the fray:
Thou dost *not* "keep a first-class house," I say!
It dost not with the advertisements agree.
Thou lodgest a Briton with a puggaree.
And thou hast harbored Jacobses and Cohns,
Also a Mulligan. Thus denounce I thee!
Behold the deeds that are done of Mrs. Jones!

ENVOY

Boarders! the worst I have not told to ye:
She hath stolen my trousers, that I may not flee
Privily by the window. Hence these groans.
There is no fleeing in a *robe de nuit*.
Behold the deeds that are done of Mrs. Jones!

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855–1896]

DE FUST BANJO

From "Christmas Night in the Quarters"

Go 'way, fiddle! folks is tired o' hearin' you a-squawkin'.
Keep silence fur yo' betters!—don't you heah de banjo talkin?
About de 'possum's tail she's gwine to lecter—ladies, listen!
About de ha'r whut is n't dar, an' why de ha'r is missin':

"Dar's gwine to be a' oberflow," said Noah, lookin' solemn—
Fur Noah tuk the "Herald," an' he read de ribber column—
An' so he sot his hands to wuk a-cl'arin' timber-patches,
An' 'lowed he's gwine to build a boat to beat the steamah *Natchez*.

Ol' Noah kep' a-nailin' an' a-chippin' an' a-sawin';
An' all de wicked neighbors kep' a-laughin' an' a-pshawin';
But Noah didn't min' 'em, knowin' whut wuz gwine to happen:
An' forty days an' forty nights de rain it kep' a-drappin'.

Now, Noah had done cotched a lot ob ebry sort o' beas'es—
Ob all de shows a-trabbelin', it beat 'em all to pieces!
He had a Morgan colt an' sebral head o' Jarsey cattle—
An' druv 'em 'board de Ark as soon's he heered de thunder rattle.

Den sech anoder fall ob rain!—it come so awful hebby,
De ribber riz immejitly, an' busted troo de lebbee;
De people all wuz drownded out—'cep' Noah an' de critters,
An' men he'd hired to work de boat—an' one to mix de bitters.

De Ark she kep' a-sailin' an' a-sailin' *an'* a-sailin';
De lion got his dander up, an' like to bruk de palin';
De sarpints hissed; de painters yelled; tel', whut wid all de fussin',
You c'u'dn't hardly heah de mate a-bossin' 'roun' an' cussin'.

Now Ham, de only nigger whut wuz runnin' on de packet,
Got lonesome in de barber-shop, an' c'u'dn't stan' de racket:
An' so, fur to amuse he-se'f, he steamed some wood an' bent it,
An' soon he had a banjo made—de fust dat wuz invented.

He wet de ledder, stretched it on: made bridge an' screws an' aprin:
An' fitted in a proper neck—'twuz berry long an' tap'rin';
He tuk some tin, an' twisted him a thimble fur to ring it:
An' den de mighty question riz: how wuz he gwine to string it?

De 'possum had as fine a tail as dis dat I's a-singin';
De ha'r's so long an' thick an' strong,—des fit fur banjo-stringin';
Dat nigger shaved 'em off as short as washday-dinner graces:
An' sorted ob 'em by de size, f'om little E's to basses.

He strung her, tuned her, struck a jig,—'twuz "Nebber min' de wedder,"—
She soun' like forty-lebben bands a-playin' all togedder:
Some went to pattin'; some to dancin': Noah called de figgers;
An' Ham he sot an' knocked de tune, de happiest ob niggers!

Now, sence dat time—it's mighty strange—dere's not de slightes' showin'
Ob any ha'r at all upon de 'possum's tail a-growin';
An' curi's, too, dat nigger's ways: his people nebber los' 'em—
Fur whar you finds de nigger— dar's de banjo an' de 'possum!

Irwin Russell [1853–1879]

PART V

POEMS OF PATRIOTISM, HISTORY AND LEGEND

"HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE"

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there!

William Collins [1721–1759]

MY COUNTRY

AMERICA

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
    Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain-side
    Let Freedom ring.

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,—
    Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture thrills
    Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
    Sweet Freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break,—
    The sound prolong.

Our fathers' God, to Thee,
Author of liberty,
    To Thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With Freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
    Great God, our King.

Samuel Francis Smith [1808–1895]

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

O SAY, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming!
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there:
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream:
'Tis the star-spangled banner! O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven-rescued land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

Francis Scott Key [1780–1843]

THE AMERICAN FLAG

I

When Freedom, from her mountain height,
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there;
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then, from his mansion in the sun,
She called her eagle bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand,
The symbol of her chosen land.

II

Majestic monarch of the cloud!
Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest-trumpings loud,
And see the lightning-lances driven,
When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven—
Child of the sun! to thee 'tis given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle-stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory!

III

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high,
When speaks the signal-trumpet tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on:
Ere yet the life-blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,

Each soldier eye shall brightly turn
Where thy sky-born glories burn,
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance;
And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle-shroud,
And gory sabres rise and fall,
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall;
Then shall thy meteor-glances glow,
And cowering foes shall sink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

IV

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frighted waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's reeling rack,
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

V

Flag of the free heart's hope and home,
By angel hands to valor given;
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us?

Joseph Rodman Drake [1795–1820]

YANKEE DOODLE

FATHER and I went down to camp,
Along with Captain Gooding,
And there we see the men and boys,
As thick as hasty pudding.

Chorus—Yankee Doodle, keep it up,
Yankee Doodle, dandy,
Mind the music and the step,
And with the girls be handy.

And there we see a thousand men,
As rich as 'Squire David;
And what they wasted every day
I wish it could be savèd.

The 'lasses they eat every day
Would keep our house a winter;
They have so much that, I'll be bound,
They eat whene'er they're a mind to.

And there we see a swamping gun,
As big as a log of maple,
Upon a deucèd little cart,
A load for father's cattle.

And every time they shoot it off,
It takes a horn of powder,
And makes a noise like father's gun,
Only a nation louder.

I went as nigh to one myself
As Siah's underpinning;
And father went as nigh again,
I thought the deuce was in him.

Cousin Simon grew so bold,
I thought he would have cocked it;
It scared me so, I shrinked it off,
And hung by father's pocket.

And Captain Davis had a gun,
He kind of clapped his hand on't,
And stuck a crooked stabbing-iron
Upon the little end on't.

And there I see a pumpkin shell
As big as mother's basin;
And every time they touched it off,
They scampered like the nation.

I see a little barrel, too,
The heads were made of leather,
They knocked upon 't with little clubs
To call the folks together.

And there was Captain Washington,
And gentlefolks about him,
They say he's grown so tarnal proud
He will not ride without 'em.

He had got on his meeting clothes,
And rode a strapping stallion,
And gave his orders to the men,—
I guess there was a million.

The flaming ribbons in his hat,
They looked so tearing fine ah,
I wanted peskily to get,
To give to my Jemima.

And then I see a snarl of men
A digging graves, they told me.
So tarnal long, so tarnal deep,
They 'tended they should hold me.

It scared me so, I hooked it off,
Nor stopped, as I remember,
Nor turned about, till I got home,
Locked up in mother's chamber.

Edward Bangs (?) [fl. 1776]

HAIL! COLUMBIA

Hail! Columbia, happy land!
Hail! ye heroes, heaven-born band,
Who fought and bled in freedom's cause,
And when the storm of war was gone,

Enjoyed the peace your valor won;
Let independence be your boast,
Ever mindful what it cost,
Ever grateful for the prize,
Let its altar reach the skies.

Chorus—Firm, united let us be,
Rallying round our liberty,
As a band of brothers joined,
Peace and safety we shall find.

Immortal patriots, rise once more!
Defend your rights, defend your shore;
Let no rude foe, with impious hand,
Invade the shrine where sacred lies
Of toil and blood the well-earned prize;
While offering peace, sincere and just,
In heaven we place a manly trust,
That truth and justice will prevail,
And every scheme of bondage fail.

Sound, sound the trump of fame!
Let Washington's great name
Ring through the world with loud applause!
Let every clime to freedom dear
Listen with a joyful ear;
With equal skill, with steady power,
He governs in the fearful hour
Of horrid war, or guides with ease
The happier time of honest peace.

Behold the chief, who now commands,
Once more to serve his country stands,
The rock on which the storm will beat!
But, armed in virtue, firm and true,
His hopes are fixed on heaven and you.
When hope was sinking in dismay,
When gloom obscured Columbia's day,
His steady mind, from changes free,
Resolved on death or liberty.

Joseph Hopkinson [1770–1842]

COLUMBIA

COLUMBIA, Columbia, to glory arise,
The queen of the world, and the child of the skies;
Thy genius commands thee; with rapture behold,
While ages on ages thy splendor unfold,
Thy reign is the last and the noblest of time,
Most fruitful thy soil, most inviting thy clime;
Let the crimes of the east ne'er encrimson thy name,
Be freedom, and science, and virtue thy fame.

To conquest and slaughter let Europe aspire;
Whelm nations in blood, and wrap cities in fire;
Thy heroes the rights of mankind shall defend,
And triumph pursue them, and glory attend.
A world is thy realm: for a world be thy laws,
Enlarged as thine empire, and just as thy cause;
On Freedom's broad basis, that empire shall rise,
Extend with the main, and dissolve with the skies.

Fair science her gates to thy sons shall unbar,
And the east see the morn hide the beams of her star.
New bards, and new sages, unrivalled shall soar
To fame unextinguished, when time is no more;
To thee, the last refuge of virtue designed,
Shall fly from all nations the best of mankind;
Here, grateful to heaven, with transport shall bring
Their incense, more fragrant than odors of spring.

Nor less shall thy fair ones to glory ascend,
And genius and beauty in harmony blend;
The graces of form shall awake pure desire,
And the charms of the soul ever cherish the fire;
Their sweetness unmingled, their manners refined,
And virtue's bright image, instamped on the mind,
With peace and soft rapture shall teach life to glow,
And light up a smile in the aspect of woe.

Thy fleets to all regions thy power shall display,
The nations admire and the ocean obey;
Each shore to thy glory its tribute unfold,
And the east and the south yield their spices and gold.

As the day-spring unbounded, thy splendor shall flow,
And earth's little kingdoms before thee shall bow;
While the ensigns of union, in triumph unfurled,
Hush the tumult of war and give peace to the world.

Thus, as down a lone valley, with cedars o'erspread,
From war's dread confusion I pensively strayed,
The gloom from the face of fair heaven retired;
The winds ceased to murmur; the thunders expired;
Perfumes as of Eden flowed sweetly along,
And a voice as of angels, enchantingly sung:
"Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
The queen of the world, and the child of the skies."

Timothy Dwight [1752–1817]

"OH MOTHER OF A MIGHTY RACE"

Oh mother of a mighty race,
Yet lovely in thy youthful grace!
The elder dames, thy haughty peers,
Admire and hate thy blooming years.
With words of shame
And taunts of scorn they join thy name.

For on thy cheeks the glow is spread
That tints thy morning hills with red;
Thy step—the wild deer's rustling feet
Within thy woods are not more fleet;
Thy hopeful eye
Is bright as thine own sunny sky.

Ay, let them rail—those haughty ones,
While safe thou dwellest with thy sons.
They do not know how loved thou art,
How many a fond and fearless heart
Would rise to throw
Its life between thee and the foe.

They know not, in their hate and pride,
What virtues with thy children bide;
How true, how good, thy graceful maids
Make bright, like flowers, the valley-shades;

What generous men
Spring, like thine oaks, by hill and glen;—

What cordial welcomes greet the guest
By thy lone rivers of the West;
How faith is kept, and truth revered,
And man is loved, and God is feared,
In woodland homes,
And where the ocean border foams.

There's freedom at thy gates and rest
For Earth's down-trodden and oppressed,
A shelter for the hunted head,
For the starved laborer toil and bread.
Power, at thy bounds,
Stops and calls back his baffled hounds.

Oh, fair young mother! on thy brow
Shall sit a nobler grace than now.
Deep in the brightness of the skies
The thronging years in glory rise,
And, as they fleet,
Drop strength and riches at thy feet.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

HYMN OF THE WEST

WORLD'S FAIR, ST. LOUIS, MO., 1904

O THOU, whose glorious orbs on high
Engird the earth with splendor round,
From out Thy secret place draw nigh
The courts and temples of this ground;
Eternal Light,
Fill with Thy might
These domes that in Thy purpose grew,
And lift a nation's heart anew!

Illumine Thou each pathway here,
To show the marvels God hath wrought!
Since first Thy people's chief and seer
Looked up with that prophetic thought,

Bade Time unroll
The fateful scroll,
And empire unto Freedom gave
From cloudland height to tropic wave.

Poured through the gateways of the North
Thy mighty rivers join their tide,
And, on the wings of morn sent forth,
Their mists the far-off peaks divide.
By Thee unsealed,
The mountains yield
Ores that the wealth of Ophir shame,
And gems enwrought of seven-hued flame.

Lo, through what years the soil hath lain,
At Thine own time to give increase—
The greater and the lesser grain,
The ripening boll, the myriad fleece!
Thy creatures graze
Appointed ways;
League after league across the land
The ceaseless herds obey Thy hand.

Thou, whose high archways shine most clear
Above the plenteous Western plain,
Thine ancient tribes from round the sphere
To breathe its quickening air are fain:
And smiles the sun
To see made one
Their brood throughout Earth's greenest space,
Land of the new and lordlier race!

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

CONCORD HYMN

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE BATTLE MONUMENT, APRIL 19, 1836

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me:
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

Julia Ward Howe [1819–1910]

THE EAGLE'S SONG

The lioness whelped, and the sturdy cub
Was seized by an eagle and carried up,
And homed for a while in an eagle's nest,
And slept for a while on an eagle's breast;
And the eagle taught it the eagle's song:
"To be staunch, and valiant, and free, and strong!"

The lion-whelp sprang from the eyrie nest,
From the lofty crag where the queen birds rest;
He fought the King on the spreading plain,
And drove him back o'er the foaming main.
He held the land as a thrifty chief,
And reared his cattle, and reaped his sheaf,
Nor sought the help of a foreign hand,
Yet welcomed all to his own free land!

Two were the sons that the country bore
To the Northern lakes and the Southern shore;
And Chivalry dwelt with the Southern son,
And Industry lived with the Northern one.
Tears for the time when they broke and fought!
Tears was the price of the union wrought!
And the land was red in a sea of blood,
Where brother for brother had swelled the flood!

And now that the two are one again,
Behold on their shield the word "Refrain!"

And the lion cubs twain sing the eagle's song:
"To be staunch, and valiant, and free, and strong!"
For the eagle's beak, and the lion's paw,
And the lion's fangs, and the eagle's claw,
And the eagle's swoop, and the lion's might,
And the lion's leap, and the eagle's sight,
Shall guard the flag with the word "Refrain!"
Now that the two are one again!

Richard Mansfield [1857–1907]

THE FLAG GOES BY

Hats off!
Along the street there comes
A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums,
A flash of color beneath the sky:
Hats off!
The flag is passing by!

Blue and crimson and white it shines,
Over the steel-tipped, ordered lines.
Hats off!
The colors before us fly;
But more than the flag is passing by:

Sea-fights and land-fights, grim and great,
Fought to make and to save the State:
Weary marches and sinking ships;
Cheers of victory on dying lips;

Days of plenty and years of peace;
March of a strong land's swift increase;
Equal justice, right and law,
Stately honor and reverend awe;

Sign of a nation, great and strong
To ward her people from foreign wrong:
Pride and glory and honor,—all
Live in the colors to stand or fall.

Hats off!
Along the street there comes
A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums;
And loyal hearts are beating high:
Hats off!
The flag is passing by!

Henry Holcomb Bennett [1863–

UNMANIFEST DESTINY

To what new fates, my country, far
And unforeseen of foe or friend,
Beneath what unexpected star,
Compelled to what unchosen end,

Across the sea that knows no beach
The Admiral of Nations guides
Thy blind obedient keels to reach
The harbor where thy future rides!

The guns that spoke at Lexington
Knew not that God was planning then
The trumpet word of Jefferson
To bugle forth the rights of men.

To them that wept and cursed Bull Run,
What was it but despair and shame?
Who saw behind the cloud the sun?
Who knew that God was in the flame?

Had not defeat upon defeat,
Disaster on disaster come,
The slave's emancipated feet
Had never marched behind the drum.

There is a Hand that bends our deeds
To mightier issues than we planned;
Each son that triumphs, each that bleeds,
My country, serves Its dark command.

I do not know beneath what sky
Nor on what seas shall be thy fate;
I only know it shall be high,
I only know it shall be great.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

ON A SOLDIER FALLEN IN THE PHILIPPINES

Streets of the roaring town,
Hush for him, hush, be still!
He comes, who was stricken down
Doing the word of our will.
Hush! Let him have his state.
Give him his soldier's crown,
The grists of trade can wait
Their grinding at the mill,
But he cannot wait for his honor, now the trumpet has been blown.
Wreathe pride now for his granite brow, lay love on his breast of stone.

Toll! Let the great bells toll
Till the clashing air is dim,
Did we wrong this parted soul?
We will make it up to him.
Toll! Let him never guess
What work we set him to.
Laurel, laurel, yes;
He did what we bade him do.
Praise, and never a whispered hint but the fight he fought was good;
Never a word that the blood on his sword was his country's own heart's-blood.

A flag for the soldier's bier
Who dies that his land may live;
O, banners, banners here,
That he doubt not nor misgive!

That he heed not from the tomb
The evil days draw near
When the nation, robed in gloom,
With its faithless past shall strive.
Let him never dream that his bullet's scream went wide of its island mark,
Home to the heart of his darling land where she stumbled and sinned in the dark.

William Vaughn Moody [1869–1910]

AN ODE IN TIME OF HESITATION

WRITTEN AFTER SEEING AT BOSTON THE STATUE OF ROBERT GOULD SHAW, KILLED WHILE STORMING FORT WAGNER, JULY 18, 1863, AT THE HEAD OF THE FIRST ENLISTED NEGRO REGIMENT, THE 54th MASSACHUSETTS

I

Before the solemn bronze Saint Gaudens made
To thrill the heedless passer's heart with awe,
And set here in the city's talk and trade
To the good memory of Robert Shaw,
This bright March morn I stand,
And hear the distant spring come up the land;
Knowing that what I hear is not unheard
Of this boy soldier and his negro band,
For all their gaze is fixed so stern ahead,
For all the fatal rhythm of their tread.
The land they died to save from death and shame
Trembles and waits, hearing the spring's great name,
And by her pangs these resolute ghosts are stirred.

II

Through street and mall the tides of people go
Heedless; the trees upon the Common show
No hint of green; but to my listening heart
The still earth doth impart
Assurance of her jubilant emprise,
And it is clear to my long-searching eyes

That love at last has might upon the skies.
The ice is runneled on the little pond;
A telltale patter drips from off the trees;
The air is touched with southland spiceries,
As if but yesterday it tossed the frond
Of pendant mosses where the live-oaks grow
Beyond Virginia and the Carolines,
Or had its will among the fruits and vines
Of aromatic isles asleep beyond
Florida and the Gulf of Mexico.

III

Soon shall the Cape Ann children shout in glee,
Spying the arbutus, spring's dear recluse;
Hill lads at dawn shall hearken the wild goose
Go honking northward over Tennessee;
West from Oswego to Sault Sainte-Marie,
And on to where the Pictured Rocks are hung,
And yonder where, gigantic, willful, young,
Chicago sitteth at the northwest gates,
With restless violent hands and casual tongue
Moulding her mighty fates,
The Lakes shall robe them in ethereal sheen;
And like a larger sea, the vital green
Of springing wheat shall vastly be outflung
Over Dakota and the prairie states.
By desert people immemorial
On Arizonan mesas shall be done
Dim rites unto the thunder and the sun;
Nor shall the primal gods lack sacrifice
More splendid, when the white Sierras call
Unto the Rockies straightway to arise
And dance before the unveiled ark of the year,
Sounding their windy cedars as for shawms,
Unrolling rivers clear
For flutter of broad phylacteries;
While Shasta signals to Alaskan seas
That watch old sluggish glaciers downward creep
To fling their icebergs thundering from the steep,

And Mariposa through the purple calms
Gazes at far Hawaii crowned with palms
Where East and West are met,—
A rich seal on the ocean's bosom set
To say that East and West are twain,
With different loss and gain:
The Lord hath sundered them; let them be sundered yet.

IV

Alas! what sounds are these that come
Sullenly over the Pacific seas,—
Sounds of ignoble battle, striking dumb
The season's half-awakened ecstasies?
Must I be humble, then,
Now when my heart hath need of pride?
Wild love falls on me from these sculptured men;
By loving much the land for which they died
I would be justified.
My spirit was away on pinions wide
To soothe in praise of her its passionate mood
And ease it of its ache of gratitude.
Too sorely heavy is the debt they lay
On me and the companions of my day.
I would remember now
My country's goodliness, make sweet her name.
Alas! what shade art thou
Of sorrow or of blame
Liftest the lyric leafage from her brow,
And pointest a slow finger at her shame?

V

Lies! lies! It cannot be! The wars we wage
Are noble, and our battles still are won
By justice for us, ere we lift the gage.
We have not sold our loftiest heritage.
The proud republic hath not stooped to cheat
And scramble in the market-place of war;
Her forehead weareth yet its solemn star.

Here is her witness: this, her perfect son,
This delicate and proud New England soul
Who leads despisèd men, with just-unshackled feet,
Up the large ways where death and glory meet,
To show all peoples that our shame is done,
That once more we are clean and spirit-whole.

VI

Crouched in the sea fog on the moaning sand
All night he lay, speaking some simple word
From hour to hour to the slow minds that heard,
Holding each poor life gently in his hand
And breathing on the base rejected clay
Till each dark face shone mystical and grand
Against the breaking day;
And lo, the shard the potter cast away
Was grown a fiery chalice, crystal-fine,
Fulfilled of the divine
Great wine of battle wrath by God's ring-finger stirred.
Then upward, where the shadowy bastion loomed
Huge on the mountain in the wet sea light,
Whence now, and now, infernal flowerage bloomed,
Bloomed, burst, and scattered down its deadly seed,—
They swept, and died like freemen on the height,
Like freemen, and like men of noble breed;
And when the battle fell away at night
By hasty and contemptuous hands were thrust
Obscurely in a common grave with him
The fair-haired keeper of their love and trust.
Now limb doth mingle with dissolvèd limb
In nature's busy old democracy
To flush the mountain laurel when she blows
Sweet by the southern sea,
And heart with crumpled heart climbs in the rose:—
The untaught hearts with the high heart that knew
This mountain fortress for no earthly hold
Of temporal quarrel, but the bastion old
Of spiritual wrong,
Built by an unjust nation sheer and strong,

Expugnable but by a nation's rue
And bowing down before that equal shrine
By all men held divine,
Whereof his band and he were the most holy sign.

VII

O bitter, bitter shade!
Wilt thou not put the scorn
And instant tragic question from thine eyes?
Do thy dark brows yet crave
That swift and angry stave—
Unmeet for this desirous morn—
That I have striven, striven to evade?
Gazing on him, must I not deem they err
Whose careless lips in street and shop aver
As common tidings, deeds to make his cheek
Flush from the bronze, and his dead throat to speak?
Surely some elder singer would arise,
Whose harp hath leave to threaten and to mourn
Above this people when they go astray.
Is Whitman, the strong spirit, overworn?
Has Whittier put his yearning wrath away?
I will not and I dare not yet believe!
Though furtively the sunlight seems to grieve,
And the spring-laden breeze
Out of the gladdening west is sinister
With sounds of nameless battle overseas;
Though when we turn and question in suspense
If these things be indeed after these ways,
And what things are to follow after these,
Our fluent men of place and consequence
Fumble and fill their mouths with hollow phrase,
Or for the end-all of deep arguments
Intone their dull commercial liturgies—
I dare not yet believe! My ears are shut!
I will not hear the thin satiric praise
And muffled laughter of our enemies,
Bidding us never sheathe our valiant sword
Till we have changed our birthright for a gourd
Of wild pulse stolen from a barbarian's hut;

Showing how wise it is to cast away
The symbols of our spiritual sway,
That so our hands with better ease
May wield the driver's whip and grasp the jailer's keys.

VIII

Was it for this our fathers kept the law?
This crown shall crown their struggle and their ruth?
Are we the eagle nation Milton saw
Mewing its mighty youth,
Soon to possess the mountain winds of truth,
And be a swift familiar of the sun
Where aye before God's face His trumpets run?
Or have we but the talons and the maw,
And for the abject likeness of our heart
Shall some less lordly bird be set apart?—
Some gross-billed wader where the swamps are fat?
Some gorger in the sun? Some prowler with the bat?

IX

Ah no!
We have not fallen so.
We are our fathers' sons: let those who lead us know!
'Twas only yesterday sick Cuba's cry
Came up the tropic wind, "Now help us, for we die!"
Then Alabama heard,
And rising, pale, to Maine and Idaho
Shouted a burning word.
Proud state with proud impassioned state conferred,
And at the lifting of a hand sprang forth,
East, west, and south, and north,
Beautiful armies. Oh, by the sweet blood and young
Shed on the awful hill slope of San Juan,
By the unforgotten names of eager boys
Who might have tasted girls' love and been stung
With the old mystic joys
And starry griefs, now the spring nights come on,
But that the heart of youth is generous,—
We charge you, ye who lead us,
Breathe on their chivalry no hint of stain!
Turn not their new-world victories to gain!

One least leaf plucked for chaffer from the bays
Of their dear praise,
One jot of their pure conquest put to hire,
The implacable republic will require;
With clamor, in the glare and gaze of noon,
Or subtly, coming as a thief at night,
But surely, very surely, slow or soon
That insult deep we deeply will requite.
Tempt not our weakness, our cupidity!
For save we let the island men go free,
Those baffled and dislaureled ghosts
Will curse us from the lamentable coasts
Where walk the frustrate dead.
The cup of trembling shall be drainèd quite,
Eaten the sour bread of astonishment,
With ashes of the hearth shall be made white
Our hair, and wailing shall be in the tent;
Then on your guiltier head
Shall our intolerable self-disdain
Wreak suddenly its anger and its pain;
For manifest in the disastrous light
We shall discern the right
And do it, tardily.—O ye who lead,
Take heed!
Blindness we may forgive, but baseness we will smite.

William Vaughn Moody [1869–1910]

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

Untrammelled Giant of the West,
With all of Nature's gifts endowed,
With all of Heaven's mercies blessed,
Nor of thy power unduly proud—
Peerless in courage, force, and skill,
And godlike in thy strength of will,—

Before thy feet the ways divide:
One path leads up to heights sublime;
Downward the other slopes, where bide
The refuse and the wrecks of Time.

Choose then, nor falter at the start,
O choose the nobler path and part!

Be thou the guardian of the weak,
Of the unfriended, thou the friend;
No guerdon for thy valor seek,
No end beyond the avowèd end.
Wouldst thou thy godlike power preserve,
Be godlike in the will to serve!

Joseph B. Gilder [1858–

DIXIE

[THE ORIGINAL VERSION]

I WISH I was in de land ob cotton,
Old times dar am not forgotten;
Look away, look away, look away, Dixie land!
In Dixie land whar I was born in,
Early on one frosty mornin',
Look away, look away, look away, Dixie land!

Chorus—Den I wish I was in Dixie! Hooray! Hooray!
In Dixie's land we'll took our stand, to lib
an' die in Dixie,
Away, away, away down south in Dixie!
Away, away, away down south in Dixie!

Old missus marry Will de weaber,
William was a gay deceaber,
When he put his arm around 'er,
He looked as fierce as a forty-pounder.

His face was sharp as a butcher cleaber,
But dat did not seem to greab 'er;
Will run away, missus took a decline, O,
Her face was the color of bacon rhine, O.

While missus libbed, she libbed in clover,
When she died, she died all over;
How could she act de foolish part,
An' marry a man to break her heart?

Buckwheat cakes an' stony batter
Makes you fat or a little fatter;
Here's a health to de next old missus,
An' all de gals dat want to kiss us.

Now if you want to drive 'way sorrow,
Come an' hear dis song to-morrow;
Den hoe it down an' scratch your grabble,
To Dixie's land I'm bound to trabble.

Daniel Decatur Emmett [1815–1904]

DIXIE

SOUTHRONS, hear your country call you!
Up, lest worse than death befall you!
To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!
Lo! all the beacon-fires are lighted,—
Let all hearts be now united!
To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!
Advance the flag of Dixie!
Hurrah! hurrah!
For Dixie's land we take our stand,
And live or die for Dixie!
To arms! To arms!
And conquer peace for Dixie!
To arms! To arms!
And conquer peace for Dixie!

Hear the Northern thunders mutter!
Northern flags in South winds flutter!
Send them back your fierce defiance!
Stamp upon the accursed alliance!

Fear no danger! Shun no labor!
Lift up rifle, pike, and saber!
Shoulder pressing close to shoulder,
Let the odds make each heart bolder!

How the South's great heart rejoices
At your cannons' ringing voices!

For faith betrayed, and pledges broken,
Wrongs inflicted, insults spoken.

Strong as lions, swift as eagles,
Back to their kennels hunt these beagles!
Cut the unequal bonds asunder!
Let them hence each other plunder!

Swear upon your country's altar
Never to submit or falter,
Till the spoilers are defeated,
Till the Lord's work is completed!

Halt not till our Federation
Secures among earth's powers its station!
Then at peace, and crowned with glory,
Hear your children tell the story!

If the loved ones weep in sadness,
Victory soon shall bring them gladness,—
To arms!
Exultant pride soon vanquish sorrow;
Smiles chase tears away to-morrow.
To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!
Advance the flag of Dixie!
Hurrah! hurrah!
For Dixie's land we take our stand,
And live or die for Dixie!
To arms! To arms!
And conquer peace for Dixie!
To arms! To arms!
And conquer peace for Dixie!

Albert Pike [1809–1891]

MY MARYLAND

THE despot's heel is on thy shore,
Maryland!
His torch is at thy temple door,
Maryland!

Avenge the patriotic gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore,
And be the battle-queen of yore,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Hark to an exiled son's appeal,
Maryland!
My Mother State, to thee I kneel,
Maryland!
For life or death, for woe or weal,
Thy peerless chivalry reveal,
And gird thy beauteous limbs with steel,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not cower in the dust,
Maryland!
Thy beaming sword shall never rust,
Maryland!
Remember Carroll's sacred trust,
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,
And all thy slumberers with the just,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Come! 'tis the red dawn of the day,
Maryland!
Come with thy panoplied array,
Maryland!
With Ringgold's spirit for the fray,
With Watson's blood at Monterey,
With fearless Lowe and dashing May,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Dear Mother, burst the tyrant's chain,
Maryland!
Virginia should not call in vain,
Maryland!
She meets her sisters on the plain,—
"*Sic semper!*" 'tis the proud refrain

That baffles minions back amain,
Maryland!
Arise in majesty again,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,
Maryland!
Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,
Maryland!
Come to thine own heroic throng
Stalking with Liberty along,
And chant thy dauntless slogan-song,
Maryland, my Maryland!

I see the blush upon thy cheek,
Maryland!
For thou wast ever bravely meek,
Maryland!
But lo! there surges forth a shriek,
From hill to hill, from creek to creek,
Potomac calls to Chesapeake,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not yield the Vandal toll,
Maryland!
Thou wilt not crook to his control,
Maryland!
Better the fire upon thee roll,
Better the shot, the blade, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the soul,
Maryland, my Maryland!

I hear the distant thunder hum,
Maryland!
The Old Line's bugle, fife, and drum,
Maryland!
She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb;
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum!
She breathes! She burns! She'll come! She'll come!
Maryland, my Maryland!

James Ryder Randall [1839–1908]

THE VIRGINIANS OF THE VALLEY

THE knightliest of the knightly race
That, since the days of old,
Have kept the lamp of chivalry
Alight in hearts of gold;
The kindliest of the kindly band
That, rarely hating ease,
Yet rode with Spotswood round the land,
And Raleigh round the seas;

Who climbed the blue Virginian hills
Against embattled foes,
And planted there, in valleys fair,
The lily and the rose;
Whose fragrance lives in many lands,
Whose beauty stars the earth,
And lights the hearths of happy homes
With loveliness and worth.

We thought they slept!—the sons who kept
The names of noble sires,—
And slumbered while the darkness crept
Around their vigil-fires;
But aye the "Golden Horseshoe" knights
Their old Dominion keep,
Whose foes have found enchanted ground,
But not a knight asleep!

Francis Orray Ticknor [1822–1874]

AMERICA TO GREAT BRITAIN

ALL hail! thou noble land,
Our Fathers' native soil!
Oh, stretch thy mighty hand,
Gigantic grown by toil,
O'er the vast Atlantic wave to our shore!
For thou, with magic might,
Canst reach to where the light
Of Phœbus travels bright
The world o'er!

The Genius of our clime,
From his pine-embattled steep,
Shall hail the guest sublime;
While the Tritons of the deep
With their conchs the kindred league shall proclaim
Then let the world combine,—
O'er the main our naval line,
Like the milky-way shall shine,
Bright in fame!

Though ages long have passed
Since our Fathers left their home,
Their pilot in the blast,
O'er untravelled seas to roam,
Yet lives the blood of England in our veins!
And shall we not proclaim
That blood of honest fame
Which no tyranny can tame
By its chains?

While the language free and bold
Which the bard of Avon sung,
In which our Milton told
How the vault of heaven rung
When Satan, blasted, fell with his host;—
While this, with reverence meet,
Ten thousand echoes greet,
From rock to rock repeat
Round our coast;—

While the manners, while the arts,
That mould a nation's soul,
Still cling around our hearts,—
Between let Ocean roll,
Our joint communion breaking with the Sun:
Yet, still, from either beach
The voice of blood shall reach,
More audible than speech,
"We are One!"

Washington Allston [1779–1843]

TO ENGLAND

I

Lear and Cordelia! 'twas an ancient tale
Before thy Shakespeare gave it deathless fame;
The times have changed, the moral is the same.
So like an outcast, dowerless and pale,
Thy daughter went; and in a foreign gale
Spread her young banner, till its sway became
A wonder to the nations. Days of shame
Are close upon thee; prophets raise their wail.
When the rude Cossack with an outstretched hand
Points his long spear across the narrow sea,—
"Lo! there is England!" when thy destiny
Storms on thy straw-crowned head, and thou dost stand
Weak, helpless, mad, a by-word in the land,—
God grant thy daughter a Cordelia be!

II

Stand, thou great bulwark of man's liberty!
Thou rock of shelter, rising from the wave,
Sole refuge to the overwearied brave
Who planned, arose, and battled to be free,
Fell, undeterred, then sadly turned to thee,—
Saved the free spirit from their country's grave,
To rise again, and animate the slave,
When God shall ripen all things. Britons, ye
Who guard the sacred outpost, not in vain
Hold your proud peril! Freemen undefiled,
Keep watch and ward! Let battlements be piled
Around your cliffs; fleets marshalled, till the main
Sink under them; and if your courage wane,
Through force or fraud, look westward to your child!

George Henry Boker [1823–1890]

AMERICA

Nor force nor fraud shall sunder us! Oh ye
Who north or south, on east or western land,
Native to noble sounds, say truth for truth,
Freedom for freedom, love for love, and God

For God; Oh ye who in eternal youth
Speak with a living and creative flood
This universal English, and do stand
Its breathing book; live worthy of that grand
Heroic utterance—parted, yet a whole,
Far, yet unsevered,—children brave and free
Of the great Mother-tongue, and ye shall be
Lords of an Empire wide as Shakespeare's soul,
Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's dream.

Sydney Dobell [1824–1874]

TO AMERICA

ON A PROPOSED ALLIANCE BETWEEN TWO GREAT NATIONS

WHAT is the voice I hear
On the winds of the western sea?
Sentinel, listen from out Cape Clear
And say what the voice may be.
'Tis a proud free people calling loud to a people proud and free.

And it says to them: "Kinsmen, hail;
We severed have been too long.
Now let us have done with a worn-out tale—
The tale of ancient wrong—
And our friendship last long as our love doth last, and be stronger than death is strong."

Answer them, sons of the self-same race,
And blood of the self-same clan;
Let us speak with each other face to face
And answer as man to man,
And loyally love and trust each other as none but free men can.

Now fling them out to the breeze,
Shamrock, Thistle, and Rose,
And the Star-spangled Banner unfurl with these—
A message to friends and foes
Wherever the sails of peace are seen and wherever the war wind blows—

A message to bond and thrall to wake,
For whenever we come, we twain,
The throne of the tyrant shall rock and quake,
And his menace be void and vain,
For you are lords of a strong land and we are lords of the main.

Yes, this is the voice of the bluff March gale;
We severed have been too long,
But now we have done with a worn-out tale—
The tale of an ancient wrong—
And our friendship shall last as love doth last and be stronger than death is strong.

Alfred Austin [1835–1913]

SAXON GRIT

Worn with the battle of Stamford town,
Fighting the Norman by Hastings bay,
Harold the Saxon's sun went down,
While the acorns were falling one autumn day.
Then the Norman said, "I am lord of the land:
By tenor of conquest here I sit;
I will rule you now with the iron hand;"
But he had not thought of the Saxon grit.

He took the land, and he took the men,
And burnt the homesteads from Trent to Tyne,
Made the freemen serfs by a stroke of the pen,
Eat up the corn and drank the wine,
And said to the maiden, pure and fair,
"You shall be my leman, as is most fit,
Your Saxon churl may rot in his lair;"
But he had not measured the Saxon grit.

To the merry greenwood went bold Robin Hood,
With his strong-hearted yeomanry ripe for the fray,
Driving the arrow into the marrow
Of all the proud Normans who came in his way;

Scorning the fetter, fearless and free,
Winning by valor, or foiling by wit,
Dear to our Saxon folk ever is he,
This merry old rogue with the Saxon grit.

And Kett the tanner whipped out his knife,
And Watt the smith his hammer brought down,
For ruth of the maid he loved better than life,
And by breaking a head, made a hole in the Crown.
From the Saxon heart rose a mighty roar,
"Our life shall not be by the King's permit;
We will fight for the right, we want no more;"
Then the Norman found out the Saxon grit.

For slow and sure as the oaks had grown
From acorns falling that autumn day,
So the Saxon manhood in thorpe and town
To a nobler stature grew alway;
Winning by inches, holding by clinches,
Standing by law and the human right,
Many times failing, never once quailing,
So the new day came out of the night.

. . . . . .

Then rising afar in the Western sea,
A new world stood in the morn of the day,
Ready to welcome the brave and free,
Who would wrench out the heart and march away
From the narrow, contracted, dear old land,
Where the poor are held by a cruel bit,
To ampler spaces for heart and hand—
And here was a chance for the Saxon grit.

Steadily steering, eagerly peering,
Trusting in God your fathers came,
Pilgrims and strangers, fronting all dangers,
Cool-headed Saxons, with hearts aflame.
Bound by the letter, but free from the fetter,
And hiding their freedom in Holy Writ,
They gave Deuteronomy hints in economy,
And made a new Moses of Saxon grit.

They whittled and waded through forest and fen,
  Fearless as ever of what might befall;
Pouring out life for the nurture of men,
  In faith that by manhood the world wins all.
Inventing baked beans and no end of machines;
  Great with the rifle and great with the axe—
Sending their notions over the oceans,
  To fill empty stomachs and straighten bent backs.

Swift to take chances that end in the dollar,
  Yet open of hand when the dollar is made,
Maintaining the meetin', exalting the scholar,
  But a little too anxious about a good trade;
This is young Jonathan, son of old John,
  Positive, peaceable, firm in the right,
Saxon men all of us, may we be one,
  Steady for freedom, and strong in her might.

Then, slow and sure, as the oaks have grown
  From the acorns that fell on that autumn day,
So this new manhood in city and town,
  To a nobler stature will grow alway;
Winning by inches, holding by clinches,
  Slow to contention, and slower to quit,
Now and then failing, never once quailing,
  Let us thank God for the Saxon grit.

Robert Collyer [1823–1912]

AT GIBRALTAR

I

England, I stand on thy imperial ground,
  Not all a stranger; as thy bugles blow,
  I feel within my blood old battles flow,—
The blood whose ancient founts in thee are found.
Still surging dark against the Christian bound
  While Islam presses; well its peoples know
  Thy heights that watch them wandering below;
I think how Lucknow heard their gathering sound.

I turn, and meet the cruel, turbaned face.
England! 'tis sweet to be so much thy son!
I feel the conqueror in my blood and race;
Last night Trafalgar awed me, and to-day
Gibraltar wakened; hark, thy evening gun
Startles the desert over Africa!

George Edward Woodberry [1855–

GIBRALTAR

Seven weeks of sea, and twice seven days of storm
Upon the huge Atlantic, and once more
We ride into still water and the calm
Of a sweet evening screened by either shore
Of Spain and Barbary. Our toils are o'er,
Our exile is accomplished. Once again
We look on Europe, mistress as of yore
Of the fair earth and of the hearts of men.
Ay, this is the famed rock, which Hercules
And Goth and Moor bequeathed us. At this door
England stands sentry. God! to hear the shrill
Sweet treble of her fifes upon the breeze
And at the summons of the rock gun's roar
To see her red coats marching from the hill.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt [1840–

MOTHER ENGLAND

I

There was a rover from a western shore,
England! whose eyes the sudden tears did drown,
Beholding the white cliff and sunny down
Of thy good realm, beyond the sea's uproar.
I, for a moment, dreamed that, long before,
I had beheld them thus, when, with the frown
Of sovereignty, the victor's palm and crown
Thou from the tilting-field of nations bore.
Thy prowess and thy glory dazzled first;
But when in fields I saw the tender flame
Of primroses, and full-fleeced lambs at play,
Meseemed I at thy breast, like these, was nursed;

Then mother—Mother England!—home I came
Like one who hath been all too long away!

II

As nestling at thy feet in peace I lay,
A thought awoke and restless stirred in me:
"My land and congeners are beyond the sea,
Theirs is the morning and the evening day.
Wilt thou give ear while this of them I say:—
'Haughty art thou, and they are bold and free,
As well befits who have descent from thee,
And who have trodden brave the forlorn way.
Children of thine, but grown to strong estate;
Nor scorn from thee would they be slow to pay,
Nor check from thee submissly would they bear;
Yet, Mother England! yet their hearts are great,
And if for thee should dawn some darkest day,
At cry of thine, how proudly would they dare!'"

Edith M. Thomas [1854–

"GOD SAVE THE KING"

God save our gracious King,
Long live our noble King,
  God save the King!
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
  God save the King!

O Lord our God, arise,
Scatter his enemies,
  And make them fall.
Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks;
On Thee our hearts we fix,
  God save us all!

Thy choicest gifts in store,
On him be pleased to pour,
Long may he reign.
May he defend our laws,
And ever give us cause,
To sing with heart and voice,
God save the King!

Henry Carey (?) [? –1743]

RULE, BRITANNIA

From "Alfred"

When Britain first, at Heaven's command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian angels sung the strain:
Rule, Britannia, rule the waves,
Britons never will be slaves.

The nations not so blest as thee
Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall,
Whilst thou shalt flourish, great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
But work their woe, and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles, thine.

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair:
Blest Isle! with matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair.
Rule, Britannia, rule the waves,
Britons never will be slaves.

James Thomson [1700–1748]

"YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND"

Ye Mariners of England
That guard our native seas!
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe;
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow!
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave!—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave:
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow!
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below,

As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow!
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow!
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

"READY, AY, READY"

Old England's sons are English yet,
Old England's hearts are strong;
And still she wears her coronet
Aflame with sword and song.
As in their pride our fathers died,
If need be, so die we;
So wield we still, gainsay who will,
The sceptre of the sea.
England, stand fast; let heart and hand be steady;
Be thy first word thy last,—Ready, ay, ready!

We've Raleighs still for Raleigh's part,
We've Nelsons yet unknown;
The pulses of the Lion Heart
Beat on through Wellington.
Hold, Britain, hold thy creed of old,
Strong foe and steadfast friend,
And, still unto thy motto true,
Defy not, but defend.
England, stand fast; let heart and hand be steady;
Be thy first word thy last,—Ready, ay, ready!

Men whispered that our arm was weak,
  Men said our blood was cold,
And that our hearts no longer speak
  The clarion-note of old;
But let the spear and sword draw near
  The sleeping lion's den,
His island shore shall start once more
  To life with armèd men.
England, stand fast; let heart and hand be steady;
Be thy first word thy last,—Ready, ay, ready!

Herman Charles Merivale [1806–1874]

"OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS"

From "On a Mourner"

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
  The thunders breaking at her feet;
Above her shook the starry lights,
  She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
  Self-gathered in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
  Came rolling on the wind.

Then stepped she down through town and field
  To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men revealed
  The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
  From her isle-altar gazing down,
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
  And, king-like, wears the crown.

Her open eyes desire the truth.
  The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
  Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and shine,
Make bright our days and light our dreams,
Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes!

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

AN ODE

IN IMITATION OF ALCÆUS

What constitutes a State?
Not high-raised battlement or labored mound,
Thick wall or moated gate;
Not cities proud with spires and turrets crowned;
Not bays and broad-armed ports,
Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride;
Not starred and spangled courts,
Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride.
No:—men, high-minded men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued
In forest, brake, or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude,—
Men who their duties know,
But know their rights, and, knowing, dare maintain;
Prevent the long-aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain:—
These constitute a State;
And sovereign Law, that State's collected will,
O'er thrones and globes elate
Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill.
Smit by her sacred frown,
The fiend, Dissension, like a vapor sinks;
And e'en the all-dazzling Crown
Hides his faint rays, and at her bidding shrinks.

Such was this heaven-loved isle,
Than Lesbos fairer and the Cretan shore!
No more shall Freedom smile?
Shall Britons languish, and be men no more?

Since all must life resign,
Those sweet rewards which decorate the brave
'Tis folly to decline,
And steal inglorious to the silent grave.

William Jones [1746–1794]

ENGLAND, 1802

I

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, oppressed,
To think that now our life is only dressed
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

II

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again,
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

III

Great men have been among us; hands that penned
And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none:
The later Sidney, Marvell, Harrington,
Young Vane, and others who called Milton friend.
These moralists could act and comprehend:
They knew how genuine glory was put on;
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
In splendor: what strength was, that would not bend
But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis strange,
Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.
Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!
No single volume paramount, no code,
No master spirit, no determined road;
But equally a want of books and men!

IV

It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"—
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,—
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
Should perish; and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armory of the invincible Knights of old:
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held.—In everything we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

V

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my Country—am I to be blamed?

Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

"ENGLAND, MY ENGLAND"

What have I done for you,
England, my England?
What is there I would not do,
England, my own?
With your glorious eyes austere,
As the Lord were walking near,
Whispering terrible things and dear
As the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Round the world on your bugles blown!

Where shall the watchful Sun,
England, my England,
Match the master-work you've done,
England, my own?
When shall he rejoice agen
Such a breed of mighty men
As come forward, one to ten,
To the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Down the years on your bugles blown?

Ever the faith endures,
England, my England:—
"Take and break us: we are yours,
England, my own!

Life is good, and joy runs high
Between English earth and sky:
Death is death; but we shall die
To the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
To the stars on your bugles blown!"

They call you proud and hard,
England, my England:
You with worlds to watch and ward,
England, my own!
You whose mailed hand keeps the keys
Of such teeming destinies,
You could know nor dread nor ease
Were the Song on your bugles blown,
England,
Round the Pit on your bugles blown!

Mother of Ships whose might
England, my England,
Is the fierce old Sea's delight,
England, my own,
Chosen daughter of the Lord,
Spouse-in-Chief of the ancient Sword,
There's the menace of the Word
In the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Out of heaven on your bugles blown!

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

ENGLAND

THERE she sits in her Island-home,
Peerless among her Peers!
And Liberty oft to her arms doth come,
To ease its poor heart of tears.
Old England still throbs with the muffled fire
Of a past she can never forget:
And again shall she herald the world up higher;
For there's life in the Old Land yet.

They would mock at her now, who of old looked forth
In their fear, as they heard her afar;
But loud will your wail be, O Kings of the Earth!
When the Old Land goes down to the war.
The Avalanche trembles, half-launched, and half-riven,
Her voice will in motion set:
O ring out the tidings, wide-reaching as Heaven!
There's life in the Old Land yet.

The old nursing Mother's not hoary yet,
There is sap in her ancient tree:
She lifteth a bosom of glory yet,
Through her mists, to the Sun and the Sea—
Fair as the Queen of Love, fresh from the foam,
Or a star in a dark cloud set;
Ye may blazon her shame,—ye may leap at her name,—
But there's life in the Old Land yet.

Let the storm burst, you will find the Old Land
Ready-ripe for a rough, red fray!
She will fight as she fought when she took her stand
For the Right in the olden day.
Rouse the old royal soul; Europe's best hope
Is her sword-edge for Victory set!
She shall dash Freedom's foes down Death's bloody slope;
For there's life in the Old Land yet.

Gerald Massey [1828–1907]

THE SONG OF THE BOW

From "The White Company"

What of the bow?
The bow was made in England:
Of true wood, of yew-wood,
The wood of English bows;
So men who are free
Love the old yew-tree
And the land where the yew-tree grows.

What of the cord?
The cord was made in England:
A rough cord, a tough cord,
A cord that bowmen love;

And so we will sing
Of the hempen string
And the land where the cord was wove.

What of the shaft?
The shaft was cut in England:
A long shaft, a strong shaft,
Barbed and trim and true;
So we'll drink all together
To the gray goose-feather
And the land where the gray goose flew.

What of the mark?
Ah, seek it not in England:
A bold mark, our old mark,
Is waiting over-sea.
When the strings harp in chorus,
And the lion flag is o'er us,
It is there that our mark will be.

What of the men?
The men were bred in England:
The bowmen—the yeomen,
The lads of dale and fell.
Here's to you—and to you!
To the hearts that are true
And the land where the true hearts dwell.

Arthur Conan Doyle [1859–

AN ENGLISH MOTHER

Every week of every season out of English ports go forth,
White of sail or white of trail, East, or West, or South, or North,
Scattering like a flight of pigeons, half a hundred home-sick ships,
Bearing half a thousand striplings—each with kisses on his lips
Of some silent mother, fearful lest she show herself too fond,
Giving him to bush or desert as one pays a sacred bond,

—Tell us, you who hide your heartbreak, which is sadder,
when all's done,
To repine, an English mother, or to roam, an English son?

You who shared your babe's first sorrow when his cheek no
longer pressed
On the perfect, snow-and-roseleaf beauty of your mother-
breast,
In the rigor of his nurture was your woman's mercy mute,
Knowing he was doomed to exile with the savage and the
brute?
Did you school yourself to absence all his adolescent years,
That, though you be torn with parting, he should never see
the tears?
Now his ship has left the offing for the many-mouthèd
sea,
This your guerdon, empty heart, by empty bed to bend the
knee!

And if he be but the latest thus to leave your dwindling
board,
Is a sorrow less for being added to a sorrow's hoard?
Is the mother-pain the duller that to-day his brothers
stand,
Facing ambuscades of Congo or alarms of Zululand?
Toil, where blizzards drift the snow like smoke across the
plains of death?
Faint, where tropic fens at morning steam with fever-laden
breath?
Die, that in some distant river's veins the English blood may
run—
Mississippi, Yangtze, Ganges, Nile, Mackenzie, Amazon?

Ah! you still must wait and suffer in a solitude untold
While your sisters of the nations call you passive, call you
cold—
Still must scan the news of sailings, breathless search the
slow gazette,
Find the dreadful name . . . and, later, get his blithe fare-
well! And yet——

Shall the lonely at the hearthstone shame the legions who have died
Grudging not the price their country pays for progress and for pride?
—Nay; but, England, do not ask us thus to emulate your scars
Until women's tears are reckoned in the budgets of your wars.

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853–

AVE IMPERATRIX!

SET in this stormy Northern sea,
Queen of these restless fields of tide,
England! what shall men say of thee,
Before whose feet the worlds divide?

The earth, a brittle globe of glass,
Lies in the hollow of thy hand,
And through its heart of crystal pass,
Like shadows through a twilight land,

The spears of crimson-suited war,
The long white-crested waves of fight,
And all the deadly fires which are
The torches of the lords of Night.

The yellow leopards, strained and lean,
The treacherous Russian knows so well,
With gaping blackened jaws are seen
To leap through hail of screaming shell.

The strong sea-lion of England's wars
Hath left his sapphire cave of sea,
To battle with the storm that mars
The star of England's chivalry.

The brazen-throated clarion blows
Across the Pathan's reedy fen,
And the high steeps of Indian snows
Shake to the tread of armèd men.

And many an Afghan chief, who lies
  Beneath his cool pomegranate-trees,
Clutches his sword in fierce surmise
  When on the mountain-side he sees

The fleet-foot Marri scout, who comes
  To tell how he hath heard afar
The measured roll of English drums
  Beat at the gates of Kandahar.

For southern wind and east wind meet
  Where, girt and crowned by sword and fire,
England with bare and bloody feet
  Climbs the steep road of wide empire.

O lonely Himalayan height,
  Gray pillar of the Indian sky,
Where saw'st thou last in clanging fight
  Our wingèd dogs of Victory?

The almond groves of Samarcand,
  Bokhara, where red lilies blow,
And Oxus, by whose yellow sand
  The grave white-turbaned merchants go;

And on from thence to Ispahan,
  The gilded garden of the sun,
Whence the long dusty caravan
  Brings cedar and vermilion;

And that dread city of Cabul
  Set at the mountain's scarpèd feet,
Whose marble tanks are ever full
  With water for the noonday heat;

Where through the narrow straight Bazaar
  A little maid Circassian
Is led, a present from the Czar
  Unto some old and bearded Khan,—

Here have our wild war-eagles flown,
And flapped wide wings in fiery fight;
But the sad dove, that sits alone
In England—she hath no delight.

In vain the laughing girl will lean
To greet her love with love-lit eyes:
Down in some treacherous black ravine,
Clutching his flag, the dead boy lies.

And many a moon and sun will see
The lingering wistful children wait
To climb upon their father's knee;
And in each house made desolate,

Pale women who have lost their lord
Will kiss the relics of the slain—
Some tarnished epaulette,—some sword—
Poor toys to soothe such anguished pain.

For not in quiet English fields
Are these, our brothers, lain to rest,
Where we might deck their broken shields
With all the flowers the dead love best.

For some are by the Delhi walls,
And many in the Afghan land,
And many where the Ganges falls
Through seven mouths of shifting sand.

And some in Russian waters lie,
And others in the seas which are
The portals to the East, or by
The wind-swept heights of Trafalgar.

O wandering graves! O restless sleep!
O silence of the sunless day!
O still ravine! O stormy deep!
Give up your prey! Give up your prey!

And thou whose wounds are never healed,
Whose weary race is never won,
O Cromwell's England! must thou yield
For every inch of ground a son?

Go! crown with thorns thy gold-crowned head,
Change thy glad song to song of pain;
Wind and wild wave have got thy dead,
And will not yield them back again.

Wave and wild wind and foreign shore
Possess the flower of English land!—
Lips that thy lips shall kiss no more,
Hands that shall never clasp thy hand.

What profit now that we have bound
The whole round world with nets of gold,
If hidden in our heart is found
The care that groweth never old?

What profit that our galleys ride,
Pine-forest-like, on every main?
Ruin and wreck are at our side,
Grim warders of the House of Pain.

Where are the brave, the strong, the fleet?
Where is our English chivalry?
Wild grasses are their burial-sheet,
And sobbing waves their threnody.

O loved ones lying far away,
What word of love can dead lips send!
O wasted dust! O senseless clay!
Is this the end? Is this the end?

Peace, peace! we wrong the noble dead
To vex their solemn slumber so;
Though childless, and with thorn-crowned head,
Up the steep road must England go,

Yet when this fiery web is spun,
Her watchmen shall descry from far
The young Republic like a sun
Rise from these crimson seas of war.

Oscar Wilde [1856–1900]

RECESSIONAL

God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The Captains and the Kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard,—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord! Amen.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

THE WEARIN' O' THE GREEN

O, PADDY dear, an' did ye hear the news that's goin' round?
The shamrock is by law forbid to grow on Irish ground!
No more St. Patrick's Day we'll keep, his color can't be seen,
For there's a cruel law agin the wearin' o' the Green!
I met wid Napper Tandy, and he took me by the hand,
And he said, "How's poor Ould Ireland, and how does she stand?"
She's the most disthressful country that iver yet was seen,
For they're hangin' men and women there for wearin' o' the Green.

An' if the color we must wear is England's cruel Red,
Let it remind us of the blood that Ireland has shed;
Then pull the shamrock from your hat, and throw it on the sod,—
And never fear, 'twill take root there, though under foot 'tis trod!
When law can stop the blades of grass from growin' as they grow,
And when the leaves in summer-time their color dare not show,
Then I will change the color, too, I wear in my caubeen,
But till that day, plaze God, I'll stick to wearin' o' the Green.

Unknown

DARK ROSALEEN

O MY dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep!
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the deep.
There's wine from the royal Pope
Upon the ocean green,
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!

Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
My dark Rosaleen!

Over hills and through dales
Have I roamed for your sake;
All yesterday I sailed the sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne, at its highest flood,
I dashed across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Oh! there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lightened through my blood,
My dark Rosaleen!

All day long, in unrest,
To and fro do I move.
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love!
The heart in my bosom faints
To think of you, my Queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen;
'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!

'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen!

Over dews, over sands,
Will I fly for your weal:
Your holy, delicate white hands
Shall girdle me with steel.
At home in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till e'en,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
You'll think of me through daylight's hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen!

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
Oh, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills!
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My dark Rosaleen!

Oh! the Erne shall run red
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal and slogan-cry
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!

The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you shall fade, ere you can die,
My dark Rosaleen!

James Clarence Mangan [1803–1849]

EXILE OF ERIN

THERE came to the beach a poor exile of Erin,
The dew on his thin robe was heavy and chill;
For his country he sighed, when at twilight repairing
To wander alone by the wind-beaten hill.
But the day-star attracted his eye's sad devotion,
For it rose o'er his own native isle of the ocean,
Where once, in the fire of his youthful emotion,
He sang the bold anthem of Erin go bragh.

Sad is my fate! said the heart-broken stranger;
The wild deer and wolf to a covert can flee,
But I have no refuge from famine and danger,
A home and a country remain not to me.
Never again, in the green sunny bowers
Where my forefathers lived, shall I spend the sweet hours,
Or cover my harp with the wild-woven flowers,
And strike to the numbers of Erin go bragh!

Erin, my country! though sad and forsaken,
In dreams I revisit thy sea-beaten shore;
But, alas! in a far foreign land I awaken,
And sigh for the friends who can meet me no more!
O cruel fate! wilt thou never replace me
In a mansion of peace, where no perils can chase me?
Never again shall my brothers embrace me?
They died to defend me, or live to deplore!

Where is my cabin-door, fast by the wildwood?
Sisters and sire, did ye weep for its fall?
Where is the mother that looked on my childhood?
And where is the bosom-friend, dearer than all?

O my sad heart! long abandoned by pleasure,
Why did it dote on a fast-fading treasure?
Tears, like the rain-drop, may fall without measure,
But rapture and beauty they cannot recall.

Yet, all its sad recollections suppressing,
One dying wish my lone bosom can draw,—
Erin, an exile bequeaths thee his blessing!
Land of my forefathers, Erin go bragh!
Buried and cold, when my heart stills her motion,
Green be thy fields, sweetest isle of the ocean!
And thy harp-striking bards sing aloud with devotion,—
Erin mavournin, Erin go bragh!

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

ANDROMEDA

They chained her fair young body to the cold and cruel stone;
The beast begot of sea and slime had marked her for his own;
The callous world beheld the wrong, and left her there alone.
Base caitiffs who belied her, false kinsmen who denied her,
Ye left her there alone!

My Beautiful, they left thee in thy peril and thy pain;
The night that hath no morrow was brooding on the main:
But, lo! a light is breaking of hope for thee again;
'Tis Perseus' sword a-flaming, thy dawn of day proclaiming
Across the western main.
O Ireland! O my country! he comes to break thy chain!

James Jeffrey Roche [1847–1908]

IRELAND

Si oblitus fuero tui Ierusalem: oblivioni detur dextera mea.

Thy sorrow, and the sorrow of the sea,
Are sisters; the sad winds are of thy race:
The heart of melancholy beats in thee,
And the lamenting spirit haunts thy face,

Mournful and mighty Mother! who art kin
To the ancient earth's first woe,
When holy Angels wept, beholding sin.
For not in penance do thy true tears flow,
Not thine the long transgression: at thy name,
We sorrow not with shame,
But proudly: for thy soul is as the snow.

Old as the sorrow for lost Paradise
Seems thine old sorrow: thou in the mild West,
Who wouldst thy children upon earth suffice
For Paradise, and pure Hesperian rest;
Had not the violent and bitter fates
Burned up with fiery feet
The greenness of thy pastures; had not hates,
Envies, and desolations, with fierce heat
Wasted thee, and consumed the land of grace,
Beauty's abiding place;
And vexed with agony bright joy's retreat.

Swift at the word of the Eternal Will,
Upon thee the malign armed Angels came.
Flame was their winging, flame that laps thee still;
And in the anger of their eyes was flame.
One was the Angel of the field of blood,
And one of lonelier death:
One saddened exiles on the ocean flood,
And famine followed on another's breath.
Angels of evil, with incessant sword,
Smote thee, O land adored!
And yet smite: for the Will of God so saith.

A severing and sundering they wrought,
A rending of the soul. They turned to tears
The laughter of thy waters: and they brought,
To sow upon thy fields, quick seed of fears;
That brother should hate brother, and one roof
Shelter unkindly hearts;
Friend from his ancient friendship hold aloof,
And comrades learn to play sad alien parts,

Province from noble province dwell estranged,
And all old trusts be changed;
And treason teach true men her impious arts.

But yet in their reluctant hands they bore
Laurel, and palm, and crown, and bay: an host,
Heartened by wrath and sorrow more and more,
Strove ever, giving up the mighty ghost;
The field well fought, the song well sung, for sake,
Mother! of thee alone:
Sorrow and wrath bade deathless courage wake,
And struck from burning harps a deathless tone.
With palm and laurel won, with crown and bay,
Went proudly down death's way
Children of Ireland, to their deathless throne.

Proud and sweet habitation of thy dead!
Throne upon throne, its thrones of sorrow filled:
Prince on prince coming with triumphant tread,
All passion, save the love of Ireland, stilled.
By the forgetful waters they forget
Not thee, O Inisfail!
Upon thy fields their dreaming eyes are set,
They hear thy winds call ever through each vale.
Visions of victory exalt and thrill
Their hearts' whole hunger still:
High beats their longing for the living Gael.

Sarsfield is sad there with his last desire;
FitzGerald mourns with Emmet; ancient chiefs
Dream on their saffron-mantled hosts, afire
Against the givers of their Mother's griefs.
Was it for naught, captain asks captain old,
Was it in vain, we fell?
Shall we have fallen like the leaves of gold,
And no green spring wake from the long dark spell?
Shall never a crown of summer fruitage come
From blood of martyrdom?
Yet to our faith will we not say farewell!

There the white soul of Davis, there the worn,
Waste soul of Mangan, there the surging soul
Of Grattan, hunger for thy promised morn:
There the great legion of thy martyr roll,
Filled with the fames of seven hundred years,
  Hunger to hear the voice,
Sweeter than marriage music in their ears,
That shall bid thee and all thy sons rejoice.
There bide the spirits who for thee yet burn:
  Ah! might we but return,
And make once more for thee the martyr choice!

No swordsmen are the Christians! Oisin cried:
O Patrick! thine is but a little race.
Nay, ancient Oisin! they have greatly died
In battle glory and with warrior grace.
Signed with the Cross, they conquered and they fell;
  Sons of the Cross, they stand:
The Prince of Peace loves righteous warfare well,
And loves thine armies, O our Holy Land!
The Lord of Hosts is with thee, and thine eyes
  Shall see upon thee rise
His glory, and the blessing of His Hand.

Thou hast no fear: with immemorial pride,
Bright as when Oscar ran the morning glades;
The knightly Fenian hunters at his side,
The sunlight through green leaves glad on their blades;
The heart in thee is full of joyous faith.
  Not in the bitter dust
Thou crouchest, heeding what the coward saith:
But, radiant with an everlasting trust,
Hearest thine ancient rivers in their glee
  Sing themselves on to sea,
Thy winds make melody: O joy most just!

Nay! we insult thee not with tears, although
With thee we sorrow: not as for one dead
We mourn, for one in the cold earth laid low.
Still is the crown upon thy sovereign head,

Still is the scepter within thy strong hand,
  Still is the kingdom thine:
The armies of thy sons on thy command
Wait, and thy starry eyes through darkness shine.
Tears for the dear and dead! For thee, *All hail!*
  Unconquered Inisfail!
Tears for the lost: thou livest, O divine!

Thou passest not away: the sternest powers
Spoil not all beauty of thy face, nor mar
All peace of thy great heart, O pulse of ours!
The darkest cloud dims thee not all, O star!
Ancient and proud thy sorrows, and their might
  That of the murmuring waves:
They hearten us to fight the unceasing fight,
Filled with the grace, that flows from holy graves.
Sons pass away, and thou hast sons as true
  To fight the fight anew:
Thy welfare, all the gain their warfare craves.

Sweet Mother! in what marvellous dear ways
Close to thine heart thou keepest all thine own!
Far off, they yet can consecrate their days
To thee, and on the swift winds westward blown,
Send thee the homage of their hearts, their vow
  Of one most sacred care:
To thee devote all passionate power, since thou
Vouchsafest them, O land of love! to bear
Sorrow and joy with thee. Each far son thrills
  Toward thy blue dreaming hills,
And longs to kiss thy feet upon them, Fair!

If death come swift upon me, it will be
Because of the great love I bear the Gael!
So sang upon the separating sea
Columba, while his boat sped out of hail,
And all grew lonely. But some sons thou hast,
  Whose is an heavier lot,
Close at thy side: they see thy torment last,
And all their will to help thee helps thee not.

Mother! their grief, to look on thy dear face,
  Worn with each weary trace
Of fresh woes, and of old woes unforgot!

And yet great spirits ride thy winds: thy ways
Are haunted and enchanted evermore.
Thy children hear the voices of old days
In music of the sea upon thy shore,
In falling of the waters from thine hills,
  In whispers of thy trees:
A glory from the things eternal fills
Their eyes, and at high noon thy people sees
Visions, and wonderful is all the air.
  So upon earth they share
Eternity: they learn it at thy knees.

Eternal is our faith in thee: the sun
Shall sooner fall from Heaven, than from our lives
That faith; and the great stars fade one by one,
Ere fade that light in which thy people strives.
Strong in the everlasting righteousness
  Triumphs our faith: the fight
Hath holiest hosts to inspire it and to bless;
Thy children lift true faces to the light.
Theirs are the visitations from on high,
  Voices that call and cry:
Celestial comfort in the deeps of night.

Charmed upon waters three, forlorn and cold,
The swans, Children of Lir, endured their doom:
From off their white wings flashed the morning gold,
And round their white wings closed the twilight gloom.
Yet on their stormy weird the Christian bell
  Broke, and they stirred with dread:
The Coming of the Saints upon them fell;
They woke to joy, and found their white wings fled.
And thou, in these last days, shalt thou not hear
  A sound of sacred fear?
God's bells shall ring, and all sad days be dead.

But desolate be the houses of thy foes:
Sorrow encompass them, and vehement wrath
Besiege them: be their hearts cold as the snows:
Let lamentation keen about their path,
The fires of God burn round them, and His night
  Lie on their blinded eyes:
And when they call to the Eternal Light,
None shall make answer to their stricken cries.
Mercy and pity shall not know them more:
  God shall shut to the door,
And close on them His everlasting skies.

How long? Justice of Very God! How long?
The Isle of Sorrows from of old hath trod
The stony road of unremitting wrong,
The purple winepress of the wrath of God:
Is then the Isle of Destiny indeed
  To grief predestinate;
Ever foredoomed to agonize and bleed,
Beneath the scourging of eternal fate?
Yet against hope shall we still hope, and still
  Beseech the Eternal Will:
Our lives to this one service dedicate.

Ah, tremble into passion, Harp! and sing
War song, O Sword! Fill the fair land, great Twain!
Wake all her heavy heart to triumphing:
To vengeance, and armed trampling of the plain!
And you, white spirits on the mountain wind,
  Cry between eve and morn!
Cry, mighty Dead! until the people find
Their souls a furnace of desire and scorn.
Call to the hosting upon Tara, call
  The tribes of Eire all:
Trump of the Champions! immemorial Horn!

Shall not the Three Waves thunder for their King,
The Captain of thy people? Shall not streams
Leap from thy mountains' heart, and many a spring
Gladden thy valleys, for the joy of dreams

Fulfilled, for glory of the battle won?
Hast thou no prophet left?
Is all thy Druid wizardry undone,
And thou of thy foreknowledge quite bereft?
Nay! but the power of faith is prophecy,
Vision, and certainty:
Faith, that hath walked the waves, and mountains cleft.

As haunting Tirnanoge within the sea,
So hid within the Eyes of God thy fate
Lies dreaming: and when God shall bid it be,
Ah, then the fair perfection of thy state!
Bravely the gold and silver bells shall chime,
When thou art wed with peace:
Far to the desert of their own sad clime
Shall fly the ill Angels, when God bids them cease.
Thine shall be only a majestic joy,
No evil can destroy:
The sorrows of thy soul shall have release.

Thy blood of martyrs to the martyrs' Home
Cries from the earth: the altar of high Heaven
Is by their cries besieged and overcome:
The Rainbow Throne and flaming Spirits Seven
Know well the music of that agony,
That surge of a long sigh,
That voice of an unresting misery,
That ardor of anguish unto the Most High.
Thou from thy wronged earth pleadest with the Just,
Whose loving mercy must
Hear, and command thy death in life to die.

Golden allies are thine, bright souls of Saints,
Glad choirs of intercession for the Gael:
Their flame of prayer ascends, their stream of plaints
Flows to the wounded feet, for Inisfail.
Victor, the Angel of thy Patrick, pleads;
Mailed Michael with his sword
Kneels there, the champion of thy bitter needs,
Prince of the shining armies of the Lord:

And there, Star of the Morning and the Sea,
Mary pours prayer for thee:
And unto Mary be thy prayers outpoured.

O Rose! O Lily! O Lady full of grace!
O Mary Mother! O Mary Maid! hear thou.
Glory of Angels! Pity, and turn thy face,
Praying thy Son, even as we pray thee now,
For thy dear sake to set thine Ireland free:
Pray thou thy little Child!
Ah! who can help her, but in mercy He?
Pray then, pray thou for Ireland, Mother mild!
O Heart of Mary! pray the Sacred Heart:
His, at Whose word depart
Sorrows and hates, home to Hell's waste and wild.

Lionel Johnson [1867–1902]

TO THE DEAD OF '98

God rest you, rest you, rest you, Ireland's dead!
Peace be upon you shed,
Peace from the Mercy of the Crucified,
You, who for Ireland died!
Soft fall on you the dews and gentle airs
Of interceding prayers,
From lowly cabins of our ancient land,
Yours yet, O Sacred Band!
God rest you, rest you: for the fight you fought
Was His; the end you sought,
His; from His altar fires you took your flame,
Hailing His Holy Name.
Triumphantly you gave yourselves to death:
And your last breath
Was one last sigh for Ireland, sigh to Him,
As the loved land grew dim.

And still, blessèd and martyr souls! you pray
In the same faith this day:
From forth your dwelling beyond sun and star,
Where only spirits are,

Your prayers in a perpetual flight arise,
To fold before God's Eyes
Their tireless wings, and wait the Holy Word
That one day shall be heard.
Not unto us, they plead, *Thy goodness gave*
Our mother to enslave;
To us Thou gavest death for love of her:
Ah, what death lovelier?
But to our children's children give to see
The perfect victory!
Thy dead beseech thee: to Thy living give
In liberty to live!

Lionel Johnson [1867–1902]

THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD

Who fears to speak of Ninety-Eight?
Who blushes at the name?
When cowards mock the patriot's fate,
Who hangs his head for shame?
He's all a knave, or half a slave,
Who slights his country thus;
But a true man, like you, man,
Will fill your glass with us.

We drink the memory of the brave,
The faithful and the few—
Some lie far off beyond the wave,
Some sleep in Ireland, too;
All, all are gone—but still lives on
The fame of those who died;
All true men, like you, men,
Remember them with pride.

Some on the shores of distant lands
Their weary hearts have laid,
And by the stranger's heedless hands
Their lonely graves were made;

But, though their clay be far away
Beyond the Atlantic foam,
In true men, like you, men,
Their spirit's still at home.

The dust of some is Irish earth;
Among their own they rest;
And the same land that gave them birth
Has caught them to her breast;
And we will pray that from their clay
Full many a race may start
Of true men, like you, men,
To act as brave a part.

They rose in dark and evil days
To right their native land;
They kindled here a living blaze
That nothing shall withstand.
Alas! that Might can vanquish Right—
They fell and passed away;
But true men, like you, men,
Are plenty here to-day.

Then here's their memory—may it be
For us a guiding light,
To cheer our strife for liberty,
And teach us to unite.
Through good and ill, be Ireland's still,
Though sad as theirs your fate;
And true men be you, men,
Like those of Ninety-Eight!

John Kells Ingram [1823–1907]

CUSHLA MA CHREE

Dear Erin, how sweetly thy green bosom rises!
An emerald set in the ring of the sea!
Each blade of thy meadows my faithful heart prizes,
Thou queen of the west! the world's cushla ma chree!

Thy gates open wide to the poor and the stranger—
There smiles hospitality hearty and free;
Thy friendship is seen in the moment of danger,
And the wanderer is welcomed with cushla ma chree.

Thy sons they are brave; but, the battle once over,
In brotherly peace with their foes they agree;
And the roseate cheeks of thy daughters discover
The soul-speaking blush that says cushla ma chree.

Then flourish forever, my dear native Erin!
While sadly I wander an exile from thee;
And, firm as thy mountains, no injury fearing,
May heaven defend its own cushla ma chree!

John Philpot Curran [1750–1817]

THE GREEN LITTLE SHAMROCK OF IRELAND

THERE'S a dear little plant that grows in our isle,
'Twas Saint Patrick himself sure that set it;
And the sun on his labor with pleasure did smile,
And with dew from his eye often wet it.
It thrives through the bog, through the brake, and the mireland;
And he called it the dear little shamrock of Ireland—
The sweet little shamrock, the dear little shamrock,
The sweet little, green little, shamrock of Ireland!

This dear little plant still grows in our land,
Fresh and fair as the daughters of Erin,
Whose smiles can bewitch, whose eyes can command,
In each climate that they may appear in;
And shine through the bog, through the brake, and the mireland,
Just like their own dear little shamrock of Ireland.
The sweet little shamrock, the dear little shamrock,
The sweet little, green little, shamrock of Ireland!

This dear little plant that springs from our soil,
When its three little leaves are extended,
Denotes on one stalk we together should toil,
And ourselves by ourselves be befriended;

And still through the bog, through the brake, and the mireland,
From one root should branch, like the shamrock of Ireland,
The sweet little shamrock, the dear little shamrock,
The sweet little, green little, shamrock of Ireland!

Andrew Cherry [1762–1812]

MY LAND

She is a rich and rare land;
Oh! she's a fresh and fair land,
She is a dear and rare land—
This native land of mine.

No men than hers are braver—
Her women's hearts ne'er waver;
I'd freely die to save her,
And think my lot divine.

She's not a dull or cold land;
No! she's a warm and bold land;
Oh! she's a true and old land—
This native land of mine.

Could beauty ever guard her,
And virtue still reward her,
No foe would cross her border—
No friend within it pine.

Oh! she's a fresh and fair land,
Oh! she's a true and rare land!
Yes, she's a rare and fair land—
This native land of mine.

Thomas Osborne Davis [1814–1845]

FAINNE GAEL AN LAE

"Until the day break and the shadows flee away"

Ere the long roll of the ages end
And the days of time are done,
The Lord shall unto Erin send
His own appointed One,

Whose soul must wait the hour of Fate,
His name be known to none;
But his feet shall stand on the Irish land
In the rising of the sun.

In darkness of our captive night,
Whilst storms the watch-tower shake,
Some shall not sleep, but vigil keep
Until the morning break;
Until through clouds of threatening hate,
The seas of sorrow o'er,
The first red beam of the sun-burst gleam
Illumines Erin's shore.

Oh! perfect, pure, exalted One,
For whom in prayer we wait,
Of Irish-born thou happiest son
And noblest of the great;
As night to noon goes swift and soon,
May years now roll away
And bring the hour of thy conquering power
And the dawning of the day!

Alice Milligan [18 –

IRELAND

IRELAND, oh Ireland! center of my longings,
Country of my fathers, home of my heart!
Overseas you call me: *Why an exile from me?*
Wherefore sea-severed, long leagues apart?

As the shining salmon, homeless in the sea-depths,
Hears the river call him, scents out the land,
Leaps and rejoices in the meeting of the waters,
Breasts weir and torrent, nests in the sand;

Lives there and loves; yet with the year's returning,
Rusting in the river, pines for the sea,
Sweeps back again to the ripple of the tideway,
Roamer of the waters, vagabond and free;—

Wanderer am I like the salmon of the rivers;
London is my ocean, murmurous and deep,
Tossing and vast; yet through the roar of London
Comes to me thy summons, calls me in sleep.

Pearly are the skies in the country of my fathers,
Purple are thy mountains, home of my heart.
Mother of my yearning, love of all my longings,
Keep me in remembrance, long leagues apart.

Stephen Lucius Gwynn [1865–

"HILLS O' MY HEART"

Hills o' my heart!
I have come to you at calling of my one love and only,
I have left behind the cruel scarlet wind of the east,
The hearth of my fathers wanting me is lonely,
And empty is the place I filled at gathering of the feast.

Hills o' my heart!
You have cradled him I love in your green quiet hollows,
Your wavering winds have hushed him to soft forgetful sleep,
Below dusk boughs where bird-voice after bird-voice follows
In shafts of silver melody that split the hearkening deep.

Hills o' my heart!
Let the herdsman who walks in your high haunted places
Give him strength and courage, and weave his dreams alway:
Let your cairn-heaped hero-dead reveal their grand exultant faces,
And the Gentle Folk be good to him betwixt the dark and day.

Hills o' my heart!
And I would the Green Harper might wake his soul to singing
With music of the golden wires heard when the world was new,
That from his lips an echo of its sweetness may come ringing,
A song of pure and noble hopes—a song of all things true.

Hills o' my heart!
For sake of the yellow head that drew me wandering over
Your misty crests from my own home where sorrow bided then,
I set my seven blessings on your kindly heather cover,
On every starry moorland loch, and every shadowy glen,
Hills o' my heart!

Ethna Carbery [? –1902]

SCOTLAND YET

Gae bring my guid auld harp ance mair,
Gae bring it free and fast,
For I maun sing anither sang,
Ere a' my glee be past;
And trow ye as I sing, my lads,
The burden o't shall be,
Auld Scotland's howes and Scotland's knowes,
And Scotland's hills for me;
We'll drink a cup to Scotland yet,
Wi' a' the honors three.

The heath waves wild upon her hills,
And, foaming frae the fells,
Her fountains sing o' freedom still,
As they dance doun the dells;
And weel I lo'e the land, my lads,
That's girded by the sea;
Then Scotland's vales and Scotland's dales,
And Scotland's hills for me;
We'll drink a cup to Scotland yet,
Wi' a' the honors three.

The thistle wags upon the fields,
Where Wallace bore his blade,
That gave her foemen's dearest bluid
To dye her auld gray plaid;
And looking to the lift, my lads,
He sang this doughty glee,

Auld Scotland's right and Scotland's might,
And Scotland's hills for me;
We'll drink a cup for Scotland yet,
Wi' a' the honors three.

They tell o' lands wi' brighter skies,
Where freedom's voice ne'er rang;
Gie me the hills where Ossian lies,
And Coila's minstrel sang;
For I've nae skill o' lands, my lads,
That kenna to be free;
Then Scotland's right and Scotland's might,
And Scotland's hills for me;
We'll drink a cup to Scotland yet,
Wi' a' the honors three.

Henry Scott Riddell [1798–1870]

THE WATCH ON THE RHINE*

A VOICE resounds like thunder-peal,
'Mid clashing waves and clang of steel:—
"The Rhine, the Rhine, the German Rhine!
Who guards to-day my stream divine?"

Chorus—Dear Fatherland, no danger thine:
Firm stand thy sons to watch the Rhine!

They stand a hundred thousand strong,
Quick to avenge their country's wrong;
With filial love their bosoms swell,
They'll guard the sacred landmark well!

The dead of a heroic race
From heaven look down and meet their gaze;
They swear with dauntless heart, "O Rhine,
Be German as this breast of mine!

"While flows one drop of German blood,
Or sword remains to guard thy flood,
While rifle rests in patriot hand,—
No foe shall tread thy sacred strand!

*For the original of this poem see page 3833.

"Our oath resounds, the river flows,
In golden light our banner glows;
Our hearts will guard thy stream divine:
The Rhine, the Rhine, the German Rhine!"
After the German of Max Schneckenburger [1819–1849]

THE GERMAN FATHERLAND *

Which is the German's fatherland?
Is't Prussia's or Swabia's land?
Is't where the Rhine's rich vintage streams?
Or where the Northern sea-gull screams?—
Ah, no, no, no!
His fatherland's not bounded so!

Which is the German's fatherland?
Bavaria's or Styria's land?
Is't where the Marsian ox unbends?
Or where the Marksman iron rends?—
Ah, no, no, no!
His fatherland's not bounded so!

Which is the German's fatherland?
Pomerania's or Westphalia's land?
Is it where sweep the Dunian waves?
Or where the thundering Danube raves?—
Ah, no, no, no!
His fatherland's not bounded so!

Which is the German's fatherland?
O, tell me now the famous land!
Is't Tyrol, or the land of Tell?
Such lands and people please me well.—
Ah, no, no, no!
His fatherland's not bounded so!

Which is the German's fatherland?
Come, tell me now the famous land.
Doubtless, it is the Austrian state,
In honors and in triumphs great.—

* For the original of this poem see page 3834

Ah, no, no!
His fatherland's not bounded so!

Which is the German's fatherland?
So tell me now at last the land!—
As far's the German accent rings
And hymns to God in heaven sings,—
That is the land,—
There, brother, is thy fatherland!

There is the German's fatherland,
Where oaths attest the graspèd hand,—
Where truth beams from the sparkling eyes,
And in the heart love warmly lies;—
That is the land,—
There, brother, is thy fatherland!

That is the German's fatherland,
Where wrath pursues the foreign band,—
Where every Frank is held a foe,
And Germans all as brothers glow;—
That is the land,—
All Germany's thy fatherland!

All Germany, then, the land shall be;
Watch o'er it, God, and grant that we
With German hearts, in deed and thought,
May love it truly as we ought.
Be this the land,
All Germany shall be the land!

From the German of Ernst Moritz Arndt [1769–1860]

THE MARSEILLAISE *

Ye sons of freedom, wake to glory!
Hark! hark! what myriads bid you rise!
Your children, wives, and grandsires hoary,
Behold their tears and hear their cries!
Shall hateful tyrants, mischief breeding,

* For the original of this poem see page 3836.

With hireling hosts, a ruffian band,
Affright and desolate the land,
While peace and liberty lie bleeding?
To arms! to arms, ye brave!
The avenging sword unsheathe;
March on! march on! all hearts resolved
On victory or death.

Now, now the dangerous storm is rolling,
Which treacherous kings, confederate, raise;
The dogs of war, let loose, are howling,
And lo! our fields and cities blaze;
And shall we basely view the ruin,
While lawless force, with guilty stride,
Spreads desolation far and wide,
With crimes and blood his hands imbruing?

With luxury and pride surrounded,
The vile, insatiate despots dare,
Their thirst of power and gold unbounded,
To meet and vend the light and air;
Like beasts of burden would they load us,
Like gods would bid their slaves adore:
But man is man, and who is more?
Then, shall they longer lash and goad us?

O Liberty! can man resign thee,
Once having felt thy generous flame?
Can dungeons, bolts, or bars confine thee?
Or whips thy noble spirit tame?
Too long the world has wept, bewailing
That falsehood's dagger tyrants wield,
But freedom is our sword and shield,
And all their arts are unavailing.
To arms! to arms, ye brave!
The avenging sword unsheathe;
March on! march on! all hearts resolved
On victory or death.

Adapted from the French of Rouget de Lisle [1760–1836]

SOLDIER SONGS

"CHARLIE IS MY DARLING"

'Twas on a Monday morning
Richt early in the year,
That Charlie cam' to our toun,
The young Chevalier.

And Charlie he's my darling,
My darling, my darling;
Charlie he's my darling,
The young Chevalier!

As he was walking up the street,
The city for to view,
Oh, there he spied a bonny lass
The window looking through.

Say licht's he jumped up the stair,
And tirled at the pin;
And wha sae ready as hersel'
To let the laddie in?

He set his Jenny on his knee,
All in his Highland dress;
For brawly weel he kenned the way
To please a bonny lass.

It's up yon heathery mountain,
And down yon scroggy glen,
We daurna gang a-milking,
For Charlie and his men.

And Charlie he's my darling,
My darling, my darling;
Charlie he's my darling,
The young Chevalier!

Unknown

THE FAREWELL

It was a' for our rightfu' King
We left fair Scotland's strand;
It was a' for our rightfu' King
We e'er saw Irish land,
My dear—
We e'er saw Irish land.

Now a' is done that men can do,
And a' is done in vain;
My love and native land, farewell,
For I maun cross the main,
My dear—
For I maun cross the main.

He turned him right and round about
Upon the Irish shore,
And gae his bridle-reins a shake,
With, Adieu for evermore,
My dear—
With, Adieu for evermore!

The sodger frae the wars returns,
The sailor frae the main;
But I hae parted frae my love,
Never to meet again,
My dear—
Never to meet again.

When day is gane, and night is come,
And a' folk bound to sleep,
I think on him that's far awa',
The lee-lang night, and weep,
My dear—
The lee-lang night, and weep.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"HERE'S A HEALTH TO THEM THAT'S AWA'"

HERE'S a health to them that's awa',
Here's a health to them that's awa';
And wha winna wish guid-luck to our cause,
May never guid-luck be their fa'!
It's guid to be merry and wise,
It's guid to be honest and true,
It's guid to support Caledonia's cause,
And bide by the buff and the blue.

Here's a health to them that's awa',
Here's a health to them that's awa';
Here's a health to Charlie, the chief o' the clan,
Although that his band be sma'.
May Liberty meet wi' success!
May Prudence protect her frae evil!
May tyrants and Tyranny tine in the mist,
And wander their way to the devil!

Here's a health to them that's awa',
Here's a health to them that's awa';
Here's a health to Tammie, the Norland laddie,
That lives at the lug o' the law!
Here's freedom to him that wad read!
Here's freedom to him that wad write!
There's nane ever feared that the truth should be heard,
But they wham the truth wad indite.

Here's a health to them that's awa',
Here's a health to them that's awa';
Here's Maitland and Wycombe, and who does na like 'em
We'll build in a hole o' the wa'.
Here's timmer that's red at the heart,
Here's fruit that's sound at the core!
May he that would turn the buff and blue coat
Be turned to the back o' the door.

Here's a health to them that's awa',
Here's a health to them that's awa';
Here's Chieftain McLeod, a chieftain worth gowd,
Though bred amang mountains o' snaw!
Here's friends on baith sides o' the Forth,
And friends on baith sides o' the Tweed;
And wha wad betray Old Albion's rights,
May they never eat of her bread!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

THE BLUE BELLS OF SCOTLAND

Oh where! and oh where! is your Highland laddie gone?
He's gone to fight the French for King George upon the throne;
And it's oh! in my heart how I wish him safe at home.

Oh where! and oh where! does your Highland laddie dwell!
He dwells in merry Scotland at the sign of the Blue Bell;
And it's oh! in my heart that I love my laddie well.

What clothes, in what clothes is your Highland laddie clad?
His bonnet's of the Saxon green, his waistcoat's of the plaid;
And it's oh! in my heart that I love my Highland lad.

Suppose, oh suppose, that your Highland lad should die?
The bagpipes shall play over him, I'll lay me down and cry;
And it's oh! in my heart that I wish he may not die!

Unknown

THE BONNY EARL OF MURRAY

Ye Highlands and ye Lawlands,
O where hae ye been?
They hae slain the Earl of Murray,
And hae laid him on the green.

Now wae be to thee, Huntly!
And wherefore did ye sae?
I bade you bring him wi' you,
But forbade you him to slay.

He was a braw gallant,
And he rid at the ring;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
O he might hae been a king!

He was a braw gallant,
And he played at the ba';
And the bonny Earl of Murray
Was the flower amang them a'!

He was a braw gallant,
And he played at the gluve;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
O he was the Queen's luve!

O lang will his Lady
Look owre the Castle Doune,
Ere she see the Earl of Murray
Come sounding through the toun!

Unknown

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan-Conuil!
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky;
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid, and
True heart that wears one;
Come every steel blade, and
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended:
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded!
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster—
Chief, vassal, page, and groom,
Tenant and master!

Fast they come, fast they come—
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Kneel for the onset!

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

BORDER BALLAD

From "The Monastery"

MARCH, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale;
Why the de'il dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale!
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border!
Many a banner spread
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story.
Mount and make ready, then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the Queen and our old Scottish glory.

Come from the hills where the hirsels are grazing;
Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing;
Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
Trumpets are sounding;
War-steeds are bounding;
Stand to your arms, then, and march in good order.
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border.

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

"WHEN BANNERS ARE WAVING"

When banners are waving, and lances are pushing;
When captains are shouting, and war-horses rushing;
When cannon are roaring, and hot bullets flying,
He that would honor win, must not fear dying.

Though shafts fly so quick that it seems to be snowing;
Though streamlets with blood more than water are flowing;
Though with sabre and bullet our bravest are dying,
We speak of revenge, but we ne'er speak of flying.

Come, stand to it, heroes! The heathen are coming;
Horsemen are round the walls, riding and running;
Maidens and matrons all Arm! arm! are crying,
From petards the wildfire's flashing and flying.

The trumpets from turrets high loudly are braying;
The steeds for the onset are snorting and neighing;
As waves in the ocean, the dark plumes are dancing;
As stars in the blue sky, the helmets are glancing.

Their ladders are planting, their sabres are sweeping;
Now swords from our sheaths by the thousand are leaping;
Like the flash of the levin, ere men hearken thunder,
Swords gleam, and the steel caps are cloven asunder.

The shouting has ceased, and the flashing of cannon!
I looked from the turret for crescent and pennon:
As flax touched by fire, as hail in the river,
They were smote, they were fallen, and had melted for ever.

Unknown

THE BRITISH GRENADIERS

Some talk of Alexander, and some of Hercules;
Of Hector and Lysander, and such great names as these;
But of all the world's brave heroes, there's none that can compare,
With a tow, row, row, row, row, row, to the British Grenadier.

Those heroes of antiquity ne'er saw a cannon ball,
Or knew the force of powder to slay their foes withal;
But our brave boys do know it, and banish all their fears,
Sing tow, row, row, row, row, row, for the British Grenadiers.

Whene'er we are commanded to storm the palisades,
Our leaders march with fusees, and we with hand grenades;
We throw them from the glacis, about the enemies' ears;
Sing tow, row, row, row, row, row, for the British Grenadiers.

And when the seige is over, we to the town repair,
The townsmen cry "Hurra, boys, here comes a grenadier,
Here comes the grenadiers, my boys, who know no doubts or fears,
Then sing tow, row, row, row, row, row, for the British Grenadiers."

Then let us fill a bumper, and drink a health to those
Who carry cups and pouches, and wear the loupèd clothes;
May they and their commanders live happy all their years,
With a tow, row, row, row, row, row, for the British Grenadiers.

Unknown

HEART OF OAK

Come, cheer up, my lads! 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something more to this wonderful year:
To honor we call you, not press you like slaves;
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?

Heart of oak are our ships,
Heart of oak are our men,
We always are ready:
Steady, boys, steady!
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

We ne'er see our foes but we wish them to stay,
They never see us but they wish us away;
If they run, why, we follow, or run them ashore;
For if they won't fight us we cannot do more.

They swear they'll invade us, these terrible foes!
They frighten our women, our children and beaux;
But should their flat bottoms in darkness get o'er,
Still Britons they'll find to receive them on shore.

Britannia triumphant, her ships sweep the sea;
Her standard is Justice—her watchward, "Be free."
Then cheer up, my lads! with one heart let us sing,
"Our soldiers, our sailors, our statesmen, our King,"

David Garrick [1717–1779]

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

Our bugles sang truce, for the night-cloud had lowered
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpowered,
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain,
At the dead of the night a sweet Vision I saw;
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array,
Far, far I had roamed on a desolate track:
'Twas Autumn,—and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me back

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore
From my home and my weeping friends never to part;
My little ones kissed me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobbed aloud in her fulness of heart.

"Stay, stay with us!—rest!—thou art weary and worn!"
And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;—
But sorrow returned with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

THE CAVALIER'S SONG

A STEED, a steed of matchless speed!
A sword of metal keen!
All else to noble hearts is dross,
All else on earth is mean.
The neighing of the war-horse proud,
The rolling of the drum,
The clangor of the trumpet loud,
Be sounds from heaven that come;
And oh! the thundering press of knights,
Whenas their war-cries swell,
May tole from heaven an angel bright,
And rouse a fiend from hell.

Then mount! then mount, brave gallants all,
And don your helms amain;
Death's couriers, Fame and Honor, call
Us to the field again.
No shrewish fears shall fill our eye
When the sword-hilt's in our hand—
Heart-whole we'll part, and no whit sigh
For the fairest of the land!

Let piping swain, and craven wight,
Thus weep and puling cry;
Our business is like men to fight,
And hero-like to die!

William Motherwell [1797–1835]

CAVALIER TUNES

I—MARCHING ALONG

Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing:
And, pressing a troop unable to stoop,
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk droop,
Marched them along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

God for King Charles! Pym and such carles,
To the Devil that prompts 'em their treasonous parles!
Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,
Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor sup
Till you're—

Chorus.—Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

Hampton to hell, and his obsequies' knell.
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry as well!
England, good cheer! Rupert is near!
Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

Chorus.—Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his snarls
To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent carles!
Hold by the right, you double your might;
So, onward to Nottingham, fresh from the fight,

Chorus.—March we along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song!

II—GIVE A ROUSE

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

Who gave me the goods that went since?
Who raised me the house that sank once?
Who helped me to gold I spent since?
Who found me in wine you drank once?

Cho.—King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,
By the old fool's side that begot him?
For whom did he cheer and laugh else,
While Noll's damned troopers shot him?

Cho.—King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

III—BOOT AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!
Rescue my castle before the hot day
Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.

Cho.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd say;
Many's the friend there, will listen and pray
"God's luck to gallants that strike up the lay—

Cho.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads' array:
Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my fay,

Cho.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude, that, honest and gay,
Laughs when you talk of surrendering, "Nay!
I've better counsellors; what counsel they?

Cho.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE SONG OF THE CAMP

"GIVE us a song!" the soldiers cried,
The outer trenches guarding,
When the heated guns of the camps allied
Grew weary of bombarding.

The dark Redan, in silent scoff,
Lay, grim and threatening, under;
And the tawny mound of the Malakoff
No longer belched its thunder.

There was a pause. A guardsman said,
"We storm the forts to-morrow;
Sing while we may, another day
Will bring enough of sorrow."

They lay along the battery's side,
Below the smoking cannon:
Brave hearts, from Severn and from Clyde,
And from the banks of Shannon.

They sang of love, and not of fame;
Forgot was Britain's glory:
Each heart recalled a different name,
But all sang "Annie Laurie."

Voice after voice caught up the song,
Until its tender passion
Rose like an anthem, rich and strong,—
Their battle-eve confession.

Dear girl, her name he dared not speak,
But, as the song grew louder,
Something upon the soldier's cheek
Washed off the stains of powder.

Beyond the darkening ocean burned
The bloody sunset's embers,
While the Crimean valleys learned
How English love remembers.

And once again a fire of hell
Rained on the Russian quarters,
With scream of shot, and burst of shell,
And bellowing of the mortars!

And Irish Nora's eyes are dim
For a singer, dumb and gory;
And English Mary mourns for him
Who sang of "Annie Laurie."

Sleep, soldiers! still in honored rest
Your truth and valor wearing:
The bravest are the tenderest,—
The loving are the daring.

Bayard Taylor [1825–1878]

REVEILLE

THE morning is cheery, my boys, arouse!
The dew shines bright on the chestnut boughs,
And the sleepy mist on the river lies,
Though the east is flushing with crimson dyes.
Awake! awake! awake!
O'er field and wood and brake,
With glories newly born,
Comes on the blushing morn.
Awake! awake!

You have dreamed of your homes and friends all night;
You have basked in your sweethearts' smiles so bright;
Come, part with them all for a while again,—
Be lovers in dreams; when awake, be men.
Turn out! turn out! turn out!
You have dreamed full long, I know.
Turn out! turn out! turn out!
The east is all aglow.
Turn out! turn out!

From every valley and hill there come
The clamoring voices of fife and drum;
And out in the fresh, cool morning air
The soldiers are swarming everywhere.
Fall in! fall in! fall in!
Every man in his place,
Fall in! fall in! fall in!
Each with a cheerful face,
Fall in! fall in!

Michael O'Connor [1837–1862]

"I GIVE MY SOLDIER BOY A BLADE"

I GIVE my soldier boy a blade,
In fair Damascus fashioned well:
Who first the glittering falchion swayed,
Who first beneath its fury fell,
I know not; but I hope to know,
That, for no mean or hireling trade,
To guard no feeling base or low—
I give my soldier boy the blade!

Cool, calm, and clear—the lucid flood
In which its tempering work was done;—
As calm, as clear, in wind and wood,
Be thou where'er it sees the sun!
For country's claim at honor's call,
For outraged friend, insulted maid,
At mercy's voice to bid it fall—
I give my soldier boy the blade!

The eye which marked its peerless edge,
The hand that weighed its balanced poise,
Anvil and pincers, forge and wedge,
Are gone with all their flame and noise;
Yet still the gleaming sword remains!
So, when in dust I low am laid,
Remember by these heartfelt strains,
I give my soldier boy the blade!

William Maginn [1793–1842]

STONEWALL JACKSON'S WAY

Come, stack arms, men! Pile on the rails,
Stir up the camp-fire bright;
No growling if the canteen fails,
We'll make a roaring night.
Here Shenandoah brawls along,
There burly Blue Ridge echoes strong,
To swell the Brigade's rousing song
Of "Stonewall Jackson's way."

We see him now—the queer slouched hat
Cocked o'er his eye askew;
The shrewd, dry smile; the speech so pat,
So calm, so blunt, so true.
The "Blue-Light Elder" knows 'em well;
Says he, "That's Banks—he's fond of shell;
Lord save his soul! we'll give him—" well!
That's "Stonewall Jackson's way."

Silence! ground arms! kneel all! caps off!
Old Massa's goin' to pray.
Strangle the fool that dares to scoff!
Attention! it's his way.
Appealing from his native sod,
In forma pauperis to God:
"Lay bare Thine arm: stretch forth Thy rod!
Amen!" That's "Stonewall's way."

He's in the saddle now. Fall in!
Steady! the whole brigade!
Hill's at the ford, cut off; we'll win
His way out, ball and blade!
What matter if our shoes are worn?
What matter if our feet are torn?
"Quick step! we're with him before morn!"
That's "Stonewall Jackson's way."

The sun's bright lances rout the mists
  Of morning, and, by George!
Here's Longstreet, struggling in the lists,
  Hemmed in an ugly gorge.
Pope and his Dutchmen, whipped before;
"Bay'nets and grape!" hear Stonewall roar;
"Charge, Stuart! Pay off Ashby's score!"
  In "Stonewall Jackson's way."

Ah! Maiden, wait and watch and yearn
  For news of Stonewall's band!
Ah! Widow, read, with eyes that burn,
  That ring upon thy hand.
Ah! Wife, sew on, pray on, hope on;
Thy life shall not be all forlorn;
The foe had better ne'er been born
  That gets in "Stonewall's way."

John Williamson Palmer [1825–1906]

MUSIC IN CAMP

Two armies covered hill and plain,
  Where Rappahannock's waters
Ran deeply crimsoned with the stain
  Of battle's recent slaughters.

The summer clouds lay pitched like tents
  In meads of heavenly azure;
And each dread gun of the elements
  Slept in its high embrasure.

The breeze so softly blew, it made
  No forest leaf to quiver;
And the smoke of the random cannonade
  Rolled slowly from the river.

And now, where circling hills looked down
  With cannon grimly planted,
O'er listless camp and silent town
  The golden sunset slanted.

When on the fervid air there came
A strain,—now rich, now tender;
The music seemed itself aflame
With day's departing splendor.

A Federal band, which, eve and morn,
Played measures brave and nimble,
Had just struck up with flute and horn
And lively clash of cymbal.

Down flocked the soldiers to the banks;
Till, margined by its pebbles,
One wooded shore was blue with "Yanks,"
And one was gray with "Rebels."

Then all was still; and then the band,
With movement light and tricksy,
Made stream and forest, hill and strand,
Reverberate with "Dixie."

The conscious stream, with burnished glow,
Went proudly o'er its pebbles,
But thrilled throughout its deepest flow
With yelling of the Rebels.

Again a pause; and then again
The trumpets pealed sonorous,
And "Yankee Doodle" was the strain
To which the shore gave chorus.

The laughing ripple shoreward flew
To kiss the shining pebbles;
Loud shrieked the swarming Boys in Blue
Defiance to the Rebels.

And yet once more the bugles rang
Above the stormy riot;
No shout upon the evening rang—
There reigned a holy quiet.

The sad, slow stream, its noiseless flood
Poured o'er the glistening pebbles;
All silent now the Yankees stood,
All silent stood the Rebels.

No unresponsive soul had heard
That plaintive note's appealing,
So deeply "Home, Sweet Home" had stirred
The hidden founts of feeling.

Or Blue or Gray, the soldier sees,
As by the wand of fairy,
The cottage 'neath the live-oak trees,
The cabin by the prairie.

Or cold or warm, his native skies
Bend in their beauty o'er him;
Seen through the tear-mist in his eyes,
His loved ones stand before him.

As fades the iris after rain
In April's tearful weather,
The vision vanished, as the strain
And daylight died together.

But Memory, waked by Music's art,
Expressed in simplest numbers,
Subdued the sternest Yankee's heart—
Made light the Rebel's slumbers.

And fair the form of Music shines—
That bright, celestial creature,
Who still, 'mid War's embattled lines,
Gave this one touch of Nature.

John Reuben Thompson [1823–1873]

THE "GREY HORSE TROOP"

All alone on the hillside—
Larry an' Barry an' me;
Nothin' to see but the sky an' the plain,
Nothin' to see but the drivin' rain,

Nothin' to see but the painted Sioux,
Galloping, galloping: "Whoop—whuroo!
The divil in yellow is down in the mud!"
Sez Larry to Barry, "I'm losin' blood."

"Cheers for the Greys!" yells Barry;
"Second Dragoons!" groans Larry;
Hurrah! hurrah! for Egan's Grey Troop!
Whoop! ye divils—ye've got to whoop;
Cheer for the troopers who die: sez I—
"Cheer for the troop that never shall die!"

All alone on the hillside—
Larry an' Barry an' me;
Flat on our bellies, an' pourin' in lead—
Seven rounds left, an' the horses dead—
Barry a-cursin' at every breath;
Larry beside him, as white as death;
Indians galloping, galloping by,
Wheelin' and squealin' like hawks in the sky!

"Cheers for the Greys!" yells Barry;
"Second Dragoons!" groans Larry;
Hurrah! hurrah! for Egan's Grey Troop!
Whoop! ye divils—ye've got to whoop;
Cheer for the troopers who die: sez I—
"Cheer for the troop that never shall die!"

All alone on the hillside—
Larry an' Barry an' me;
Two of us livin' and one of us dead—
Shot in the head, and God!—how he bled!
"Larry's done up," sez Barry to me;
"Divvy his cartridges! Quick! gimme three!"
While nearer an' nearer an' plainer in view,
Galloped an' galloped the murderin' Sioux.

"Cheers for the Greys!" yells Barry;
"Cheer—" an' he falls on Larry.
Alas! alas! for Egan's Grey Troop!
The Red Sioux, hovering stoop to swoop;

Two out of three lay dead, while I
Cheered for the troop that never shall die.

All alone on the hillside—
Larry an' Barry an' me;
An' I fired an' yelled till I lost my head,
Cheerin' the livin, cheerin' the dead,
Swingin' my cap, I cheered until
I stumbled and fell. Then over the hill
There floated a trumpeter's silvery call,
An' Egan's Grey Troop galloped up, that's all.

Drink to the Greys,—an' Barry!
Second Dragoons,—an' Larry!
Here's a bumper to Egan's Grey Troop!
Let the crape on the guidons droop;
Drink to the troopers who die, while I
Drink to the troop that never shall die!

Robert William Chambers [1865–

DANNY DEEVER

"WHAT are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade.
"To turn you out, to turn you out," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What makes you look so white, so white?" said Files-on-Parade.
"I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch," the Color-Sergeant said.
For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can 'ear the Dead March play,
The regiment's in 'ollow square—they're hangin' him to-day;
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What makes that front-rank man fall down?" says Files-on-Parade.
"A touch o' sun, a touch o' sun," the Color-Sergeant said.

They're hangin' Danny Deever, they are marchin' of 'im round,
They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the ground;
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin' shootin' hound—
O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'!

"'Is cot was right-'and cot to mine," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's sleepin' out an' far to-night," the Color-Sergeant said.
"I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's drinkin' bitter beer alone," the Color-Sergeant said.
They are hangin' Danny Deever, you must mark 'im to 'is place,
For 'e shot a comrade sleepin'—you must look 'im in the face;
Nine 'undred of 'is county an' the regiment's disgrace,
While they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What's that so black agin the sun?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny fightin' 'ard fur life," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What's that that whimpers over'ead?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny's soul that's passin' now," the Color-Sergeant said.
For they're done with Danny Deever, you can 'ear the quickstep play,
The regiment's in column, an' they're marchin' us away;
Ho! the young recruits are shakin', an' they'll want their beer to-day,
After hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

GUNGA DIN

You may talk o' gin an' beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it;
But when it comes to slaughter

You will do your work on water,
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it.
Now in Injia's sunny clime,
Where I used to spend my time
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
Of all them black-faced crew
The finest man I knew
Was our regimental *bhisti*, Gunga Din.
He was "Din! Din! Din!
You limpin' lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
Hi! *slippey hitherao!*
Water! get it! *Panee lao!*
You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din!"

The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before,
An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind,
For a twisty piece o' rag
An' a goatskin water-bag
Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.
When the sweatin' troop-train lay
In a sidin' through the day,
Where the 'eat would make your bloomin' eye-brows crawl,
We shouted "*Harry By!*"
Till our throats were bricky-dry,
Then we wopped 'im cause 'e couldn't serve us all.
It was "Din! Din! Din!
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you been?
You put some *juldee* in it
Or I'll *marrow* you this minute,
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"

'E was dot an' carry one
Till the longest day was done;
An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
If we charged or broke or cut,
You could bet your bloomin' nut,
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.
With 'is *mussick* on 'is back,
'E would skip with our attack,

An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire,"
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide
'E was white, clear white, inside
When 'e went to tend the wounded under fire!
It was "Din! Din! Din!"
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the green.
When the cartridges ran out,
You could 'ear the front-files shout,
"Hi! ammunition-mules an' Gunga Din!"

I sha'n't forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight
With a bullet where my belt-plate should 'a' been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst,
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.
'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' 'e plugged me where I bled,
An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water—green:
It was crawlin' an' it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.
It was "Din! Din! Din!
'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is spleen;
'E's chawin' up the ground,
An' 'e's kickin' all around:
For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din!"

'E carried me away
To where a *dooli* lay,
An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
'E put me safe inside,
An' just before 'e died:
"I 'ope you liked your drink," sez Gunga Din.
So I'll meet 'im later on
In the place where 'e is gone—
Where it's always double drill an' no canteen;
'E'll be squattin' on the coals,
Givin' drink to pore damned souls,
An' I'll git a swig in hell from Gunga Din!

Yes, Din! Din! Din!
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!
Though I've belted you an' flayed you,
By the livin' Gawd that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din!

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

THE MEN BEHIND THE GUNS

A CHEER and salute for the Admiral, and here's to the Captain bold,
And never forget the Commodore's debt when the deeds of might are told!
They stand to the deck through the battle's wreck when the great shells roar and screech—
And never they fear when the foe is near to practice what they preach:
But off with your hat and three times three for Columbia's true-blue sons,
The men below who batter the foe—the men behind the guns!

Oh, light and merry of heart are they when they swing into port once more,
When, with more than enough of the "green-backed stuff," they start for their leave-o'-shore;
And you'd think, perhaps, that the blue-bloused chaps who loll along the street
Are a tender bit, with salt on it, for some fierce "mustache" to eat—
Some warrior bold, with straps of gold, who dazzles and fairly stuns
The modest worth of the sailor boys—the lads who serve the guns.

But say not a word till the shot is heard that tells that the fight is on,
Till the long, deep roar grows more and more from the ships of "Yank" and "Don,"

Till over the deep the tempests sweep of fire and bursting shell,
And the very air is a mad Despair in the throes of a living hell;
Then down, deep down, in the mighty ship, unseen by the midday suns,
You'll find the chaps who are giving the raps—the men behind the guns!

Oh, well they know how the cyclones blow that they loose from their cloud of death,
And they know is heard the thunder-word their fierce ten-incher saith!
The steel decks rock with the lightning shock, and shake with the great recoil,
And the sea grows red with the blood of the dead and reaches for his spoil—
But not till the foe has gone below or turns his prow and runs,
Shall the voice of peace bring sweet release to the men behind the guns!

John Jerome Rooney [1866–

THE FIGHTING RACE

"READ out the names!" and Burke sat back,
And Kelly drooped his head,
While Shea—they call him Scholar Jack—
Went down the list of the dead.
Officers, seamen, gunners, marines,
The crews of the gig and yawl,
The bearded man and the lad in his teens,
Carpenters, coal-passers—all.
Then, knocking the ashes from out his pipe,
Said Burke in an offhand way:
"We're all in that dead man's list, by Cripe!
Kelly and Burke and Shea."
"Well, here's to the Maine, and I'm sorry for Spain,"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

"Wherever there's Kellys there's trouble," said Burke.
"Wherever fighting's the game,
Or a spice of danger in grown man's work,"
Said Kelly, "you'll find my name."
"And do we fall short," said Burke, getting mad,
"When it's touch-and-go for life?"
Said Shea, "It's thirty-odd years, bedad,
Since I charged to drum and fife
Up Marye's Heights, and my old canteen
Stopped a rebel ball on its way;
There were blossoms of blood on our sprigs of green—
Kelly and Burke and Shea—
And the dead didn't brag." "Well, here's to the flag!"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

"I wish 'twas in Ireland, for there's the place,"
Said Burke, "that we'd die by right,
In the cradle of our soldier race,
After one good stand-up fight.
My grandfather fell on Vinegar Hill,
And fighting was not his trade;
But his rusty pike's in the cabin still,
With Hessian blood on the blade."
"Aye, aye," said Kelly, "the pikes were great
When the word was 'clear the way!'
We were thick on the roll in ninety-eight—
Kelly and Burke and Shea."
"Well, here's to the pike and the sword and the like!"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

And Shea, the scholar, with rising joy,
Said, "We were at Ramillies;
We left our bones at Fontenoy
And up in the Pyrenees;
Before Dunkirk, on Landen's plain,
Cremona, Lille, and Ghent;
We're all over Austria, France, and Spain,
Wherever they pitched a tent.
We've died for England from Waterloo
To Egypt and Dargai;

And still there's enough for a corps or crew,
Kelly and Burke and Shea."
"Well, here's to good honest fighting-blood!"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

"Oh, the fighting races don't die out,
If they seldom die in bed,
For love is first in their hearts, no doubt,"
Said Burke; then Kelly said:
"When Michael, the Irish Archangel, stands,
The Angel with the sword,
And the battle-dead from a hundred lands
Are ranged in one big horde,
Our line, that for Gabriel's trumpet waits,
Will stretch three deep that day,
From Jehoshaphat to the Golden Gates—
Kelly and Burke and Shea."
"Well, here's thank God for the race and the sod!"
Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

Joseph I. C. Clarke [1846–

"HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE"

"SOLDIER, REST! THY WARFARE O'ER"

From "The Lady of the Lake"

SOLDIER, rest! thy warfare o'er,
  Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
Dream of battled fields no more,
  Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
  Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
  Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more:
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
  Armor's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
  Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
  At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
  Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans, or squadrons stamping.

Huntsman, rest! the chase is done;
  While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
  Bugles here shall sound reveille.

Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen,
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye
Here no bugles sound reveille.

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

"PEACE TO THE SLUMBERERS"

Peace to the slumberers!
They lie on the battle-plain,
With no shroud to cover them;
The dew and the summer rain
And all that sweep over them.
Peace to the slumberers!

Vain was their bravery!—
The fallen oak lies where it lay
Across the wintry river;
But brave hearts, once swept away,
Are gone, alas! forever.
Vain was their bravery!

Woe to the conqueror!
Our limbs shall lie as cold as theirs
Of whom his sword bereft us,
Ere we forget the deep arrears
Of vengeance they have left us!
Woe to the conqueror!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

THE MINSTREL-BOY

The Minstrel-Boy to the war is gone,
In the ranks of death you'll find him;
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him.

"Land of song!" said the warrior-bard,
"Though all the world betrays thee,
One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard,
One faithful harp shall praise thee!"

The Minstrel fell!—but the foeman's chain
Could not bring his proud soul under;
The harp he loved ne'er spoke again,
For he tore its chords asunder,
And said, "No chains shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery!
Thy songs were made for the pure and free,
They shall never sound in slavery!"

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"IT IS GREAT FOR OUR COUNTRY TO DIE"

O, IT is great for our country to die, where ranks are contending!
Bright is the wreath of our fame; Glory awaits us for aye,—
Glory, that never is dim, shining on with light never ending,—
Glory that never shall fade, never, O never, away!

O, it is sweet for our country to die! How softly reposes
Warrior-youth on his bier, wet by the tears of his love,
Wet by a mother's warm tears. They crown him with garlands of roses,
Weep, and then joyously turn, bright where he triumphs above.

Not to the shades shall the youth descend, who for country hath perished;
Hebe awaits him in heaven, welcomes him there with her smile;
There, at the banquet divine, the patriot spirit is cherished;
Gods love the young who ascend pure from the funeral pile.

Not to Elysian fields, by the still, oblivious river;
Not to the isles of the blest, over the blue, rolling sea;
But on Olympian heights shall dwell the devoted forever;
There shall assemble the good, there the wise, valiant, and free.

O, then, how great for our country to die, in the front rank to perish,
Firm with our breast to the foe, Victory's shout in our ear!
Long they our statues shall crown, in songs our memory cherish;
We shall look forth from our heaven, pleased the sweet music to hear.

James Gates Percival [1795–1856]

A BALLAD OF HEROES

Now all your victories are in vain—A. Mary F. Robinson

Because you passed, and now are not,—
Because, in some remoter day,
Your sacred dust from doubtful spot
Was blown of ancient airs away,—
Because you perished,—must men say
Your deeds were naught, and so profane
Your lives with that cold burden? Nay,
The deeds you wrought are not in vain!

Though, it may be, above the plot
That hid your once imperial clay,
No greener than o'er men forgot
The unregarding grasses sway;—
Though there no sweeter is the lay
From careless bird,—though you remain
Without distinction of decay,—
The deeds you wrought are not in vain!

No. For while yet in tower or cot
Your story stirs the pulses' play;
And men forget the sordid lot—
The sordid care, of cities gray;

While yet, beset in homelier fray,
They learn from you the lesson plain
That Life may go, so Honor stay,—
The deeds you wrought are not in vain!

ENVOY

Heroes of old! I humbly lay
The laurel on your graves again;
Whatever men have done, men may,—
The deeds you wrought are not in vain!

Austin Dobson [1840-

THE CAPTAIN'S FEATHER

The dew is on the heather,
The moon is in the sky,
And the captain's waving feather
Proclaims the hour is nigh
When some upon their horses
Shall through the battle ride,
And some with bleeding corses
Must on the heather bide.

The dust is on the heather,
The moon is in the sky,
And about the captain's feather
The bolts of battle fly;
But hark, what sudden wonder
Breaks forth upon the gloom?
It is the cannon's thunder—
It is the voice of doom!

The blood is on the heather,
The night is in the sky,
And the gallant captain's feather
Shall wave no more on high;
The grave and holy brother
To God is saying Mass,
But who shall tell his mother,
And who shall tell his lass?

Samuel Minturn Peck [1854-

ENGLAND'S DEAD

Son of the ocean isle!
Where sleep your mighty dead?
Show me what high and stately pile
Is reared o'er Glory's bed.

Go, stranger! track the deep,
Free, free, the white sail spread!
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

On Egypt's burning plains,
By the pyramid o'erswayed,
With fearful power the noonday reigns,
And the palm-trees yield no shade.

But let the angry sun
From heaven look fiercely red,
Unfelt by those whose task is done,—
There slumber England's dead.

The hurricane hath might
Along the Indian shore,
And far, by Ganges' banks at night
Is heard the tiger's roar.

But let the sound roll on!
It hath no tone of dread
For those that from their toils are gone;—
There slumber England's dead!

Loud rush the torrent-floods
The western wilds among,
And free, in green Columbia's woods
The hunter's bow is strung.

But let the floods rush on!
Let the arrow's flight be sped!
Why should *they* reck whose task is done?—
There slumber England's dead!

The mountain-storms rise high
In the snowy Pyrenees,
And toss the pine-boughs through the sky,
Like rose-leaves on the breeze.

But let the storm rage on!
Let the forest-wreaths be shed:
For the Roncesvalles' field is won,—
There slumber England's dead.

On the frozen deep's repose,
'Tis a dark and dreadful hour,
When round the ship the ice-fields close,
To chain her with their power.

But let the ice drift on!
Let the cold-blue desert spread!
Their course with mast and flag is done,—
Even *there* sleep England's dead.

The warlike of the isles,
The men of field and wave!
Are not the rocks their funeral piles,
The seas and shores their grave?

Go, stranger! track the deep,
Free, free the white sail spread!
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

Felicia Dorothea Hemans [1793–1835]

THE PIPES O' GORDON'S MEN

Home comes a lad with the bonnie hair,
And the kilted plaid that the hill-clans wear;
And you hear the mother say,
"Whear ha' ye ben, wee Laddie; whear ha' ye ben th' day?"
"O! I ha' ben wi' Gordon's men;
Dinna ye hear th' bagpipes play?
And I followed th' soldiers across the green,
And doon th' road ta Aberdeen.

And when I'm a man, my Mother,
And th' Hielanders parade,
I'll be marchin' there, wi' my Father's pipes,
And I'll wear th' red cockade."

Beneath the Soudan's sky ye ken the smoke,
As the clans reply when the tribesmen spoke.
Then the charge roars by!
The death-sweat clings to the kilted form that the stretcher brings,
And the iron-nerved surgeons say,
"Whear ha' ye ben, my Laddie; whear ha' ye ben th' day?"
"O, I ha' ben wi' Gordon's men;
Dinna ye hear th' bagpipes play?
And I piped th' clans from the river barge
Across the sands, and through the charge.
And I—skirled—th' pibroch—keen—an' high,
But th' pipes—ben broke—an' —my—lips—ben—dry."

CORONACH

Upon the hill-side, high and steep,
Where rank on rank the soldiers sleep,—
Where the silent cannons beside the path,
Point the last forced-march that the soldier hath,—
Where the falling grave-grass has partly hid
The round-shot, heaped in a pyramid—
A white stone rises. Across its face
You can read the words that the chisels trace:
"Whear ha' ye ben, wee Laddie; whear ha' ye ben th' day?"
"O, I ha' ben wi' Gordon's men;
Dinna ye hear th' bagpipes play?"

J. Scott Glasgow [18 –

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY

By the flow of the inland river,
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver,
Asleep are the ranks of the dead:—

Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the one, the Blue;
Under the other, the Gray.

These in the robings of glory,
Those in the gloom of defeat,
All with the battle-blood gory,
In the dusk of eternity meet:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the laurel, the Blue;
Under the willow, the Gray.

From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers,
Alike for the friend and the foe:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the roses, the Blue;
Under the lilies, the Gray.

So, with an equal splendor
The morning sun-rays fall,
With a touch impartially tender,
On the blossoms blooming for all:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Broidered with gold, the Blue;
Mellowed with gold, the Gray.

So, when the summer calleth,
On forest and field of grain,
With an equal murmur falleth
The cooling drip of the rain:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Wet with the rain, the Blue;
Wet with the rain, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,
The generous deed was done.
In the storms of the years that are fading
No braver battle was won:—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Under the blossoms, the Blue;
Under the garlands, the Gray.

No more shall the war-cry sever,
Or the winding rivers be red:
They banish our anger forever
When they laurel the graves of our dead!
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day:—
Love and tears for the Blue;
Tears and love for the Gray.

Francis Miles Finch [1827–1907]

THE BIVOUAC OF THE DEAD

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
The soldier's last tattoo;
No more on Life's parade shall meet
That brave and fallen few.
On Fame's eternal camping-ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead.

No rumor of the foe's advance
Now swells upon the wind;
No troubled thought at midnight haunts
Of loved ones left behind;
No vision of the morrow's strife
The warrior's dream alarms;
No braying horn nor screaming fife
At dawn shall call to arms.

Their shivered swords are red with rust;
Their plumèd heads are bowed;
Their haughty banner, trailed in dust,
Is now their martial shroud.
And plenteous funeral tears have washed
The red stains from each brow,
And the proud forms, by battle gashed,
Are free from anguish now.

The neighing troop, the flashing blade,
The bugle's stirring blast,
The charge, the dreadful cannonade,
The din and shout, are past;
Nor war's wild note, nor glory's peal,
Shall thrill with fierce delight
Those breasts that nevermore may feel
The rapture of the fight.

Like the fierce northern hurricane
That sweeps his great plateau,
Flushed with the triumph yet to gain,
Came down the serried foe.
Who heard the thunder of the fray
Break o'er the field beneath,
Knew well the watchword of that day
Was "Victory or Death."

Long had the doubtful conflict raged
O'er all that stricken plain,
For never fiercer fight had waged
The vengeful blood of Spain;
And still the storm of battle blew,
Still swelled the gory tide;
Not long, our stout old chieftain knew,
Such odds his strength could bide.

'Twas in that hour his stern command
Called to a martyr's grave
The flower of his belovèd land,
The nation's flag to save.

By rivers of their fathers' gore
His first-born laurels grew,
And well he deemed the sons would pour
Their lives for glory too.

Full many a norther's breath has swept
O'er Angostura's plain,
And long the pitying sky has wept
Above its mouldered slain.
The raven's scream, or eagle's flight,
Or shepherd's pensive lay,
Alone awakes each sullen height
That frowned o'er that dread fray.

Sons of the Dark and Bloody Ground,
Ye must not slumber there,
Where stranger steps and tongues resound
Along the heedless air.
Your own proud land's heroic soil
Shall be your fitter grave;
She claims from war his richest spoil—
The ashes of her brave.

Thus 'neath their parent turf they rest,
Far from the gory field,
Borne to a Spartan mother's breast
On many a bloody shield;
The sunshine of their native sky
Smiles sadly on them here,
And kindred eyes and hearts watch by
The heroes' sepulchre.

Rest on, embalmed and sainted dead!
Dear as the blood ye gave;
No impious footstep here shall tread
The herbage of your grave;
Nor shall your story be forgot,
While Fame her record keeps,
Or Honor points the hallowed spot
Where Valor proudly sleeps.

Yon marble minstrel's voiceless stone
In deathless song shall tell,
When many a vanished age hath flown,
The story how ye fell;
Nor wreck, nor change, nor winter's blight,
Nor Time's remorseless doom,
Shall dim one ray of glory's light
That gilds your deathless tomb.

Theodore O'Hara [1820–1867]

ROLL-CALL

"Corporal Green!" the Orderly cried;
"Here!" was the answer loud and clear,
From the lips of a soldier standing near,—
And "Here!" was the word the next replied.

"Cyrus Drew!"—then a silence fell;
This time no answer followed the call;
Only his rear-man had seen him fall:
Killed or wounded—he could not tell.

There they stood in the failing light,
These men of battle, with grave, dark looks,
As plain to be read as open books,
While slowly gathered the shades of night.

The fern on the hill-sides was splashed with blood,
And down in the corn, where the poppies grew,
Were redder stains than the poppies knew,
And crimson-dyed was the river's flood.

For the foe had crossed from the other side,
That day, in the face of a murderous fire
That swept them down in its terrible ire;
And their life-blood went to color the tide.

"Herbert Cline!"—At the call there came
Two stalwart soldiers into the line,
Bearing between them this Herbert Cline,
Wounded and bleeding, to answer his name.

"Ezra Kerr!"—and a voice answered "Here!"
"Hiram Kerr!"—but no man replied.
They were brothers, these two; the sad wind sighed,
And a shudder crept through the cornfield near.

"Ephraim Deane!"—then a soldier spoke:
"Deane carried our regiment's colors," he said,
"When our ensign was shot; I left him dead
Just after the enemy wavered and broke.

"Close to the roadside his body lies;
I paused a moment and gave him to drink;
He murmured his mother's name, I think,
And Death came with it and closed his eyes."

'Twas a victory,—yes; but it cost us dear:
For that company's roll, when called at night,
Of a hundred men who went into the fight,
Numbered but twenty that answered "*Here!*"

Nathaniel Graham Shepherd [1835–1869]

DIRGE

FOR ONE WHO FELL IN BATTLE

ROOM for a Soldier! lay him in the clover;
He loved the fields, and they shall be his cover;
Make his mound with hers who called him once her lover:
Where the rain may rain upon it,
Where the sun may shine upon it,
Where the lamb hath lain upon it,
And the bee will dine upon it.

Bear him to no dismal tomb under city churches;
Take him to the fragrant fields, by the silver birches,
Where the whippoorwill shall mourn, where the oriole perches:
Make his mound with sunshine on it,
Where the bee will dine upon it,
Where the lamb hath lain upon it,
And the rain will rain upon it.

Busy as the busy bee, his rest should be the clover;
Gentle as the lamb was he, and the fern should be his cover;
Fern and rosemary shall grow my soldier's pillow over:
Where the rain may rain upon it,
Where the sun may shine upon it,
Where the lamb hath lain upon it,
And the bee will dine upon it.

Sunshine in his heart, the rain would come full often
Out of those tender eyes which evermore did soften;
He never could look cold, till we saw him in his coffin:
Make a mound with sunshine on it,
Where the wind may sigh upon it,
Where the moon may stream upon it,
And Memory shall dream upon it.

"Captain or Colonel,"—whatever invocation
Suit our hymn the best, no matter for thy station,—
On thy grave the rain shall fall from the eyes of a mighty nation!
Long as the sun doth shine upon it
Shall grow the goodly pine upon it,
Long as the stars do gleam upon it
Shall Memory come to dream upon it.

Thomas William Parsons [1819–1892]

DIRGE FOR A SOLDIER

Close his eyes; his work is done!
What to him is friend or foeman,
Rise of moon, or set of sun,
Hand of man, or kiss of woman?
Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

As man may, he fought his fight,
Proved his truth by his endeavor;
Let him sleep in solemn night,
Sleep forever and forever.

Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

Fold him in his country's stars,
Roll the drum and fire the volley!
What to him are all our wars,
What but death-bemocking folly?
Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

Leave him to God's watching eye;
Trust him to the hand that made him.
Mortal love weeps idly by:
God alone has power to aid him.
Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

George Henry Boker [1823–1890]

"BLOW, BUGLES, BLOW"

Blow, bugles, blow, soft and sweet and low,
Sing a good-night song for them who bravely faced the foe;
Sing a song of truce to pain,
Where they sleep nor wake again,
'Neath the sunshine or the rain—
Blow, bugles, blow.

Wave, banners, wave, above each hero's grave,
Fold them, O thou stainless flag that they died to save;
All thy stars with glory bright,
Bore they on through Treason's night,
Through the darkness to the light—
Wave, banners, wave.

Fall, blossoms, fall, over one and all,
They who heard their country's cry and answered to the call;
'Mid the shock of shot and shell,
Where they bled and where they fell,
They who fought so long and well—
Fall, blossoms, fall.

Sigh, breezes, sigh, so gently wandering by,
Bend above them tenderly, blue of summer sky;
All their weary marches done,
All their battles fought and won,
Friend and lover, sire and son—
Sigh, breezes, sigh.

John S. McGroarty [1862–

"SUCH IS THE DEATH THE SOLDIER DIES"

Such is the death the soldier dies:
He falls,—the column speeds away;
Upon the dabbled grass he lies,
His brave heart following, still, the fray.

The smoke-wraiths drift among the trees,
The battle storms along the hill;
The glint of distant arms he sees;
He hears his comrades shouting still.

A glimpse of far-borne flags, that fade
And vanish in the rolling din:
He knows the sweeping charge is made,
The cheering lines are closing in.

Unmindful of his mortal wound,
He faintly calls and seeks to rise;
But weakness drags him to the ground:—
Such is the death the soldier dies.

Robert Burns Wilson [1850–

THE BRAVE AT HOME

From "The Wagoner of the Alleghanies"

THE maid who binds her warrior's sash
With smile that well her pain dissembles,
The while beneath her drooping lash
One starry tear-drop hangs and trembles,
Though Heaven alone records the tear,
And Fame shall never know her story,
Her heart has shed a drop as dear
As e'er bedewed the field of glory.

The wife who girds her husband's sword,
Mid little ones who weep or wonder,
And bravely speaks the cheering word,
What though her heart be rent asunder,
Doomed nightly in her dreams to hear
The bolts of death around him rattle,
Hath shed as sacred blood as e'er
Was poured upon the field of battle!

The mother who conceals her grief
While to her breast her son she presses,
Then breathes a few brave words and brief,
Kissing the patriot brow she blesses,
With no one but her secret God
To know the pain that weighs upon her,
Sheds holy blood as e'er the sod
Received on Freedom's field of honor!

Thomas Buchanan Read [1822–1872]

SOMEBODY'S DARLING

INTO a ward of the whitewashed walls
Where the dead and the dying lay—
Wounded by bayonets, shells, and balls—
Somebody's darling was borne one day.

Somebody's darling! so young and so brave,
Wearing still on his pale, sweet face—
Soon to be hid by the dust of the grave—
The lingering light of his boyhood's grace.

Matted and damp are the curls of gold
Kissing the snow of that fair young brow;
Pale are the lips of delicate mould—
Somebody's darling is dying now.
Back from the beautiful blue-veined brow
Brush the wandering waves of gold;
Cross his hands on his bosom now—
Somebody's darling is still and cold.

Kiss him once for Somebody's sake;
Murmur a prayer, soft and low;
One bright curl from the cluster take—
They were Somebody's pride, you know.
Somebody's hand hath rested there;
Was it a mother's, soft and white?
And have the lips of a sister fair
Been baptized in those waves of light?

God knows best. He has Somebody's love;
Somebody's heart enshrined him there;
Somebody wafted his name above,
Night and morn, on the wings of prayer.
Somebody wept when he marched away,
Looking so handsome, brave, and grand;
Somebody's kiss on his forehead lay;
Somebody clung to his parting hand;—

Somebody's watching and waiting for him,
Yearning to hold him again to her heart;
There he lies—with the blue eyes dim,
And the smiling, child-like lips apart.
Tenderly bury the fair young dead,
Pausing to drop on his grave a tear;
Carve on the wooden slab at his head,
"Somebody's darling slumbers here!"

Marie R. La Conte [18 –

LITTLE GIFFEN

Out of the focal and foremost fire,
Out of the hospital walls as dire,
Smitten of grape-shot and gangrene
(Eighteenth battle and *he* sixteen!)—
Spectre such as you seldom see,
Little Giffen of Tennessee.

"Take him and welcome!" the surgeon said;
"Little the doctor can help the dead!"
So we took him and brought him where
The balm was sweet on the summer air;
And we laid him down on a wholesome bed—
Utter Lazarus, heel to head!

And we watched the war with bated breath—
Skeleton Boy against skeleton Death.
Months of torture, how many such!
Weary weeks of the stick and crutch;
And still a glint in the steel-blue eye
Told of a spirit that wouldn't die,—

And didn't. Nay, more! in death's despite
The crippled skeleton learned to write.
"Dear Mother," at first, of course; and then,
"Dear Captain," inquiring about "the men."
Captain's answer: "Of eighty-and-five,
Giffen and I are left alive."

Word of gloom from the war, one day:
"Johnston's pressed at the front, they say!"
Little Giffen was up and away;
A tear—his first—as he bade good-by,
Dimmed the glint of his steel-blue eye.
"I'll write, if spared." There was news of the fight;
But none of Giffen.—He did not write.

I sometimes fancy that, were I king
Of the princely Knights of the Golden Ring,
With the song of the minstrel in mine ear,
And the tender legend that trembles here,
I'd give the best on his bended knee,
The whitest soul of my chivalry,
For Little Giffen of Tennessee.

Francis Orray Ticknor [1822–1874]

ODE

Sung on the occasion of decorating the graves of the Confederate dead, at Magnolia Cemetery, Charleston, S. C., 1867.

Sleep sweetly in your humble graves,
Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause;
Though yet no marble column craves
The pilgrim here to pause.

In seeds of laurel in the earth
The blossom of your fame is blown,
And somewhere, waiting for its birth,
The shaft is in the stone!

Meanwhile, behalf the tardy years
Which keep in trust your storied tombs,
Behold! your sisters bring their tears,
And these memorial blooms.

Small tributes! but your shades will smile
More proudly on these wreaths to-day,
Than when some cannon-moulded pile
Shall overlook this bay.

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
There is no holier spot of ground
Than where defeated valor lies,
By mourning beauty crowned!

Henry Timrod [1829–1867]

SENTINEL SONGS

When falls the soldier brave,
Dead at the feet of wrong,
The poet sings and guards his grave
With sentinels of song.

Songs, march! he gives command,
Keep faithful watch and true;
The living and dead of the Conquered Land
Have now no guards save you.

Gray Ballads! mark ye well!
Thrice holy is your trust!
Go! halt by the fields where warriors fell;
Rest arms! and guard their dust.

List! Songs! your watch is long,
The soldiers' guard was brief;
Whilst right is right, and wrong is wrong,
Ye may not seek relief.

Go! wearing the gray of grief!
Go! watch o'er the Dead in Gray!
Go! guard the private and guard the chief,
And sentinel their clay!

And the songs, in stately rhyme,
And with softly-sounding tread,
Go forth, to watch for a time—a time—
Where sleep the Deathless Dead.

And the songs, like funeral dirge,
In music soft and low,
Sing round the graves, whilst hot tears surge
From hearts that are homes of woe.

What though no sculptured shaft
Immortalize each brave?
What though no monument epitaphed
Be built above each grave?

When marble wears away,
And monuments are dust,
The songs that guard our soldiers' clay
Will still fulfil their trust.

With lifted head, and steady tread,
Like stars that guard the skies,
Go watch each bed, where rest the dead,
Brave Songs, with sleepless eyes.

Abram J. Ryan [1839–1888]

HEROES

THE winds that once the Argo bore
Have died by Neptune's ruined shrines,
And her hull is the drift of the deep-sea floor,
Though shaped of Pelion's tallest pines.
You may seek her crew on every isle
Fair in the foam of Ægean seas,
But, out of their rest, no charm can wile
Jason and Orpheus and Hercules.

And Priam's wail is heard no more
By windy Ilion's sea-built walls;
Nor great Achilles, stained with gore,
Shouts, "O ye gods, 'tis Hector falls!"
On Ida's mount is the shining snow,
But Jove has gone from its brow away;
And red on the plain the poppies grow
Where Greek and Trojan fought that day.

Mother Earth, are the heroes dead?
Do they thrill the soul of the years no more?
Are the gleaming snows and the poppies red
All that is left of the brave of yore?
Are there none to fight as Theseus fought,
Far in the young world's misty dawn?
Or to teach as gray-haired Nestor taught?
Mother Earth, are the heroes gone?

Gone? In a grander form they rise.
  Dead? We may clasp their hands in ours,
And catch the light of their clearer eyes,
  And wreathe their brows with immortal flowers.
Wherever a noble deed is done,
  'Tis the pulse of a hero's heart is stirred;
Wherever Right has a triumph won,
  There are the heroes' voices heard.

Their armor rings on a fairer field
  Than Greek and Trojan fiercely trod;
For Freedom's sword is the blade they wield,
  And the gleam above is the smile of God.
So, in his isle of calm delight,
  Jason may sleep the years away;
For the heroes live, and the sky is bright,
  And the world is a braver world to-day.

Edna Dean Proctor [1838–

THE ONLY SON

O BITTER wind toward the sunset blowing,
  What of the dales to-night?
In yonder gray old hall what fires are glowing,
  What ring of festal light?

"*In the great window as the day was dwindling*
  I saw an old man stand;
His head was proudly held and his eyes kindling,
  But the list shook in his hand."

O wind of twilight, was there no word uttered,
  No sound of joy or wail?
"'*A great fight and a good death,*' *he muttered;*
  '*Trust him, he would not fail.*'"

What of the chamber dark where she was lying
  For whom all life is done?
"*Within her heart she rocks a dead child, crying*
  '*My son, my little son.*'"

Henry Newbolt [1862–

YOUNG WINDEBANK

THEY shot young Windebank just here,
By Merton, where the sun
Strikes on the wall. 'Twas in a year
Of blood the deed was done.

At morning from the meadows dim
He watched them dig his grave.
Was this in truth the end for him,
The well beloved and brave?

He marched with soldier scarf and sword,
Set free to die that day,
And free to speak once more the word
That marshalled men obey.

But silent on the silent band
That faced him stern as death,
He looked and on the summer land,
And on the grave beneath.

Then with a sudden smile and proud
He waved his plume and cried,
"The king! the king!" and laughed aloud,
'The king! the king!" and died.

Let none affirm he vainly fell,
And paid the barren cost
Of having loved and served too well
A poor cause and a lost.

He in the soul's eternal cause
Went forth as martyrs must—
The kings who make the spirit laws
And rule us from the dust.

Whose wills unshaken by the breath
Of adverse Fate endure,
To give us honor strong as death
And loyal love as sure.

Margaret L. Woods [1856–

A HARROW GRAVE IN FLANDERS

HERE in the marshland, past the battered bridge,
One of a hundred grains untimely sown,
Here, with his comrades of the hard-won ridge,
He rests, unknown.

His horoscope had seemed so plainly drawn:
School triumphs earned apace in work and play;
Friendships at will; then love's delightful dawn
And mellowing day.

Home fostering hope; some service to the State;
Benignant age; then the long tryst to keep
Where in the yew-tree shadow congregate
His fathers sleep.

Was here the one thing needful to distil
From life's alembic, through this holier fate,
The man's essential soul, the hero-will?
We ask: and wait.

Robert Offley Ashburton [1858–

V. D. F.

YOU from Givenchy, since no years can harden
The beautiful dead, when holy twilight reaches
The sleeping cedar and the copper beeches,
Return to walk again in Wadham Garden.
We, growing old, grow stranger to the College,
Symbol of youth, where we were young together,
But you, beyond the reach of time and weather,
Of youth in death forever keep the knowledge.
We hoard our youth, we hoard our youth, and fear it,
But you, who freely gave what we have hoarded,
Are with the final goal of youth rewarded—
The road to travel and the traveler's spirit.
And therefore, when for us the stars go down,
Your star is steady over Oxford Town.

Unknown

POEMS OF HISTORY

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

[710 B. C.]

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

THE VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

[538 B. C.]

The King was on his throne,
The Satraps thronged the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deemed divine,—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine!

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless waxed his look,
And tremulous his voice.
"Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood,
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw,—but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
  A stranger and a youth,
He heard the King's command,
  He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
  The prophecy in view:
He read it on that night,—
  The morrow proved it true.

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
  His kingdom passed away,
He, in the balance weighed,
  Is light and worthless clay;
The shroud, his robe of state,
  His canopy, the stone:
The Mede is at his gate!
  The Persian on his throne!"

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

HORATIUS AT THE BRIDGE

[c. 496 B. C.]

Lars Porsena of Clusium
  By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
  Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
  And named a trysting-day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
  To summon his array.

East and west and south and north
  The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
  Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
  Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
  Is on the march for Rome.

The horsemen and the footmen
Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place,
From many a fruitful plain,
From many a lonely hamlet,
Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
Of purple Apennine;

From lordly Volaterræ
Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
For godlike kings of old;
From sea-girt Populonia,
Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
Fringing the southern sky;

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
Heavy with fair-haired slaves;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
Through corn and vines and flowers,
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
Her diadem of towers.

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
Drop in dark Auser's rill;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill;
Beyond all streams, Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volsinian mere.

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill;

Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer;
Unharmed the water-fowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

The harvests of Arretium,
This year, old men shall reap;
This year, young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand:
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena,—
Go forth, beloved of Heaven!
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome,
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome!"

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten.
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array;
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting-day.

For all the Etruscan armies
  Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
  And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following,
  To join the muster, came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name.

But by the yellow Tiber
  Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
  To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
  The throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see
  Through two long nights and days.

For agèd folk on crutches,
  And women great with child,
And mothers, sobbing over babes
  That clung to them and smiled,
And sick men borne in litters
  High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sunburned husbandmen
  With reaping-hooks and staves,

And droves of mules and asses
  Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
  And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of wagons,
  That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
  Choked every roaring gate.

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
  Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
  Red in the midnight sky.

The Fathers of the City,
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
With tidings of dismay.

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands,
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

I wis, in all the Senate
There was no heart so bold
But sore it ached, and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

They held a council, standing
Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly:
"The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Naught else can save the town."

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear:
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul,—
Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still, and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

And plainly and more plainly,
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,—
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

And plainly and more plainly
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest,
Each warlike Lucumo:
There Cilnius of Arretium
On his fleet roan was seen;
And Astur of the fourfold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield;
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By reedy Thrasymene.

Fast by the royal standard,
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car.

By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name;
And by the left false Sextus,
  That wrought the deed of shame.

But when the face of Sextus
  Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
  From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
  But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
  And shook its little fist.

But the Consul's brow was sad,
  And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
  And darkly at the foe:
"Their van will be upon us
  Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
  What hope to save the town?"

Then out spake brave Horatius,
  The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
  Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
  Than facing fearful odds
For the ashes of his fathers
  And the temples of his Gods,

"And for the tender mother
  Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
  His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
  Who feed the eternal flame,—
To save them from false Sextus
  That wrought the deed of shame?

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three:
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

Then out spake Spurius Lartius,—
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius,—
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.

As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold;
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe;
And Fathers, mixed with Commons,
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose;
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way:

Aunus, from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,

Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that gray crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath;
Herminius struck at Seius;
And clove him to the teeth;
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust,
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three;
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,—
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

Herminius smote down Aruns;
Lartius laid Ocnus low;
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow:
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark;
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns, when they spy
Thy thrice-accursèd sail!"

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes;
A wild and wrathful clamor
From all the vanguard rose.

Six spears' lengths from the entrance,
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

But, hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

He smiled on those bold Romans,
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay;
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?"

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh.
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space,
Then, like a wild-cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face.
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

And the great lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Avernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
"And see," he cried, "the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer?"

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race,
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three;
And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who, unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack;

But those behind cried "Forward!"
And those before cried "Back!"
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel
To and fro the standards reel,
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

Yet one man for one moment
Stood out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud:
"Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
Here lies the road to Rome."

Thrice looked he at the city;
Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread;
And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
Loud cried the Fathers all.—
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!"

Back darted Spurius Lartius;—
Herminius darted back;
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.

But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more;

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream:
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

And, like a horse unbroken,
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free;
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind,—
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face;
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace."

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus naught spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome:

"O Tiber! Father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and, speaking, sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And, with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank,
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain;
And fast his blood was flowing,
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor,
And spent with changing blows;
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing-place;
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,
And our good Father Tiber
Bore bravely up his chin.

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;—
"Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!"

"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
"And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before."

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folk to see,—
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee;
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

And in the nights of winter
When the cold north-winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows;

When the goodman mends his armor,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

Thomas Babington Macaulay [1800–1859]

LEONIDAS

[480 B. C.]

Shout for the mighty men
Who died along this shore,
Who died within this mountain's glen!
For never nobler chieftain's head
Was laid on valor's crimson bed,
Nor ever prouder gore
Sprang forth, than theirs who won the day
Upon thy strand, Thermopylæ!

Shout for the mighty men
Who on the Persian tents,

Like lions from their midnight den
Bounding on the slumbering deer,
Rushed—a storm of sword and spear;
  Like the roused elements,
Let loose from an immortal hand
To chasten or to crush a land!

But there are none to hear—
  Greece is a hopeless slave.
Leonidas! no hand is near
To lift thy falchion now;
No warrior makes the warrior's vow
  Upon thy sea-washed grave.
The voice that should be raised by men
Must now be given by wave and glen.

And it is given! The surge,
  The tree, the rock, the sand
On freedom's kneeling spirit urge,
In sounds that speak but to the free,
The memory of thine and thee!
  The vision of thy band
Still gleams within the glorious dell
Which their gore hallowed as it fell!

And is thy grandeur done?
  Mother of men like these!
Has not thy outcry gone
Where justice has an ear to hear?
Be holy! God shall guide thy spear,
  Till in thy crimsoned seas
Are plunged the chain and scimitar.
Greece shall be a new-born star!

George Croly [1780–1860]

ANTONY TO CLEOPATRA

[AUGUST, 30 B. C.]

I AM dying, Egypt, dying!
  Ebbs the crimson life-tide fast,
And the dark Plutonian shadows
  Gather on the evening blast;

Let thine arms, O Queen, enfold me,
Hush thy sobs and bow thine ear,
Listen to the great heart-secrets
Thou, and thou alone, must hear.

Though my scarred and veteran legions
Bear their eagles high no more,
And my wrecked and scattered galleys
Strew dark Actium's fatal shore;
Though no glittering guards surround me,
Prompt to do their master's will,
I must perish like a Roman,
Die the great Triumvir still.

Let not Cæsar's servile minions
Mock the lion thus laid low;
'Twas no foeman's arm that felled him,
'Twas his own that struck the blow:
His who, pillowed on thy bosom,
Turned aside from glory's ray—
His who, drunk with thy caresses,
Madly threw a world away.

Should the base plebeian rabble
Dare assail my name at Rome,
Where the noble spouse, Octavia,
Weeps within her widowed home,
Seek her; say the gods bear witness,—
Altars, augurs, circling wings,—
That her blood, with mine commingled,
Yet shall mount the throne of kings.

And for thee, star-eyed Egyptian—
Glorious sorceress of the Nile!—
Light the path to Stygian horrors,
With the splendor of thy smile;
Give the Cæsar crowns and arches,
Let his brow the laurel twine:
I can scorn the Senate's triumphs,
Triumphing in love like thine.

I am dying, Egypt, dying!
Hark! the insulting foeman's cry;
They are coming—quick, my falchion!
Let me front them ere I die.
Ah, no more amid the battle
Shall my heart exulting swell;
Isis and Osiris guard thee—
Cleopatra—Rome—farewell!

William Haines Lytle [1826–1863]

BOADICEA: AN ODE

[62 A. D.]

When the British warrior queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods,

Sage beneath a spreading oak
Sat the Druid, hoary chief,
Every burning word he spoke
Full of rage and full of grief:

"Princess! if our agèd eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

"Rome shall perish:—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish, hopeless and abhorred,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

"Rome, for empire far renowned,
Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground,—
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates.

"Other Romans shall arise
Heedless of a soldier's name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
Harmony the path to fame.

"Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

"Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they."

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow,
Rushed to battle, fought and died;
Dying, hurled them at the foe.

"Ruffians! pitiless as proud,
Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestowed,
Shame and ruin wait for you!"

William Cowper [1731–1800]

"HE NEVER SMILED AGAIN"

[NOVEMBER, 1120]

THE bark that held the prince went down,
The sweeping waves rolled on;
And what was England's glorious crown
To him that wept a son?
He lived—for life may long be borne,
Ere sorrow break its chain;—
Why comes not death to those who mourn?—
He never smiled again!

There stood proud forms around his throne,
The stately and the brave;
But which could fill the place of one,
That one beneath the wave?

Before him passed the young and fair,
In pleasure's reckless train;
But seas dashed o'er his son's bright hair—
He never smiled again!

He sat where festal bowls went round,
He heard the minstrel sing;
He saw the tourney's victor crowned
Amidst the knightly ring;
A murmur of the restless deep
Was blent with every strain,
A voice of winds that would not sleep—
He never smiled again!

Hearts, in that time, closed o'er the trace
Of vows once fondly poured,
And strangers took the kinsman's place
At many a joyous board;
Graves, which true love had bathed with tears,
Were left to heaven's bright rain,
Fresh hopes were born for other years—
He never smiled again!

Felicia Dorothea Hemans [1793–1835]

BRUCE TO HIS MEN AT BANNOCKBURN

[JUNE 24, 1314]

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory!

Now's the day, and now's the hour:
See the front o' battle lour:
See approach proud Edward's power,—
Chains and slavery!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa',
Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!—
Let us do or die!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

CORONACH

From "The Lady of the Lake"

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are serest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!

Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

CREÇY

[AUGUST 26, 1346]

AT Creçy by Somme in Ponthieu
High up on a windy hill
A mill stands out like a tower:
King Edward stands on the mill.
The plain is seething below,
As Vesuvius seethes with flame,
But O! not with fire, but gore,
Earth incarnadined o'er,
Crimson with shame and with fame.
To the King run the messengers, crying,
"Thy Son is hard pressed to the dying!"
"Let alone: for to-day will be written in story
To the great world's end and for ever:
So let the boy have the glory."

Erin and Gwalia there
With England are ranked against France;
Out-facing the oriflamme red
The red dragons of Merlin advance;
As a harvest in autumn renewed
The lances bend over the fields;
Snow-thick our arrow-heads white
Level the foe as they light;
Knighthood to yeomanry yields:
Proud heart, the King watches, as higher
Goes the blaze of the battle, and nigher:
"To-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
Let the boy alone have the glory."

Harold at Senlac-on-Sea
By Norman arrow laid low,
When the shield-wall was breached by the shaft,
Thou art avenged by the bow!
Chivalry! name of romance!
Thou art henceforth but a name;
Weapon that none can withstand,
Yew in the Englishman's hand,
Flight-shaft unerring in aim!
As a lightning-struck forest the foemen
Shiver down to the stroke of the bowmen;
"O to-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
So, let the boy have the glory."

Pride of Liguria's shore
Genoa wrestles in vain;
Vainly Bohemia's king
King-like is laid with the slain.
The Blood-lake is wiped out in blood,
The shame of the centuries o'er;
Where the pride of the Norman had sway,
The lions lord over the fray,
The legions of France are no more:
The Prince to his father kneels lowly:
"His is the battle—his wholly!
For to-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
So, let him have the spurs and the glory."

Francis Turner Palgrave [1824–1897]

THE PATRIOT'S PASS-WORD

[JULY 9, 1386]

"MAKE way for Liberty!" he cried,
Made way for Liberty, and died.

In arms the Austrian phalanx stood,
A living wall, a human wood;

A wall,—where every conscious stone
Seemed to its kindred thousands grown;
A rampart all assaults to bear,
Till time to dust their frames should wear:
A wood,—like that enchanted grove
In which with fiends Rinaldo strove,
Where every silent tree possessed
A spirit prisoned in its breast,
Which the first stroke of coming strife
Might startle into hideous life:
So still, so dense, the Austrians stood,
A living wall, a human wood.
Impregnable their front appears,
All-horrent with projected spears,
Whose polished points before them shine,
From flank to flank, one brilliant line,
Bright as the breakers' splendors run
Along the billows to the sun.

Opposed to these, a hovering band
Contended for their father-land:
Peasants, whose new-found strength had broke
From manly necks the ignoble yoke,
And forged their fetters into swords,
On equal terms to fight their lords,
And what insurgent rage had gained
In many a mortal fray maintained.
Marshalled once more, at Freedom's call,
They came to conquer or to fall,
Where he who conquered, he who fell,
Was deemed a dead, or living, Tell;
Such virtue had that patriot breathed,
So to the soil his soul bequeathed,
That wheresoe'er his arrows flew,
Heroes in his own likeness grew,
And warriors sprang from every sod,
Which his awakening footstep trod.

And now the work of life and death
Hung on the passing of a breath;

The fire of conflict burned within,
The battle trembled to begin;
Yet, while the Austrians held their ground,
Point for assault was nowhere found;
Where'er the impatient Switzers gazed,
The unbroken line of lances blazed:
That line 'twere suicide to meet,
And perish at their tyrants' feet:
How could they rest within their graves,
And leave their homes the haunts of slaves?
Would they not feel their children tread
With clanging chains, above their head?

It must not be: this day, this hour,
Annihilates the invader's power:
All Switzerland is in the field,
She will not fly, she cannot yield,
She must not fall; her better fate
Here gives her an immortal date.
Few were the number she could boast,
Yet every freeman was a host,
And felt as 'twere a secret known
That one should turn the scale alone,
While each unto himself were he
On whose sole arm hung victory.

It did depend on *one* indeed;
Behold him,—Arnold Winkelried!
There sounds not to the trump of fame
The echo of a nobler name.
Unmarked he stood amid the throng,
In rumination deep and long,
Till you might see, with sudden grace,
The very thought come o'er his face,
And by the motion of his form
Anticipate the bursting storm,
And by the uplifting of his brow
Tell where the bolt would strike, and how.

But 'twas no sooner thought than done,
The field was in a moment won;

"Make way for Liberty!" he cried,
Then ran, with arms extended wide,
As if his dearest friend to clasp;
Ten spears he swept within his grasp;
"Make way for Liberty!" he cried;
Their keen points met from side to side;
He bowed amidst them, like a tree,
And thus made way for Liberty.

Swift to the breach his comrades fly;
"Make way for Liberty!" they cry,
And through the Austrian phalanx dart,
As rushed the spears through Arnold's heart;
While, instantaneous as his fall,
Rout, ruin, panic seized them all;
An earthquake could not overthrow
A city with a surer blow.

Thus Switzerland again was free;
Thus Death made way for Liberty!

James Montgomery [1771–1854]

THE BATTLE OF OTTERBURN

[AUGUST 10, 1388]

It fell about the Lammas tide,
When muir-men win their hay,
That the doughty Earl of Douglas rade
Into England, to take a prey.

He chose the Gordons and the Græmes,
With them the Lindsays gay;
But the Jardines wald not with him ride,
And they rue it to this day.

And they hae harried the dales o' Tyne,
And half o' Bambrough-shire,
And the Otter-dale they burned it hale,
And set it a' on fire.

Then he cam' up to Newcastle,
And rade it round about:
"O wha's the lord of this castle?
Or wha's the lady o't?"

But up spake proud Lord Percy then,
And O but he spake hie!
"I am the lord of this castle,
My wife's the lady gay."

"If thou'rt the lord of this castle,
Sae weel it pleases me,
For, ere I cross the Border fells,
The tane of us shall dee."

He took a lang spear in his hand,
Shod with the metal free,
And for to meet the Douglas there
He rode right furiouslie.

But O how pale his lady looked,
Frae aff the castle-wa',
As down before the Scottish spear
She saw proud Percy fa'.

"Had we twa been upon the green,
And never an eye to see,
I wad hae had you, flesh and fell;
But your sword sall gae wi me."

"Now gae ye up to Otterbourne,
And wait there dayis three,
And gin I come not ere they end,
A fause knight ca' ye me."

"The Otterbourne's a bonnie burn;
'Tis pleasant there to be;
But there is naught at Otterbourne
To feed my men and me.

"The deer rins wild on hill and dale,
The birds fly wild frae tree to tree;
But there is neither bread nor kale
To fend my men and me.

"Yet I will stay at Otterbourne,
Where you sall welcome be;
And, if ye come not at three days' end,
A fause lord I'll ca' thee."

"Thither will I come," proud Percy said,
"By the might of Our Ladye;"
"There will I bide thee," said the Douglas,
"My troth I plight to thee."

They licted high on Otterbourne,
Upon the bent sae broun;
They licted high on Otterbourne,
And pitched their pallions doun.

And he that had a bonnie boy,
He sent his horse to grass;
And he that had not a bonnie boy,
His ain servant he was.

But up then spak' a little page,
Before the peep o' dawn:
"O waken ye, waken ye, my good lord,
For Percy's hard at hand."

"Ye lie, ye lie, ye liar loud!
Sae loud I hear ye lie:
For Percy had not men yestreen
To dight my men and me.

"But I hae dreamed a dreary dream,
Beyond the Isle of Sky;
I saw a deid man win a fight,
And I think that man was I."

He belted on his gude braid-sword,
And to the field he ran,
But he forgot the hewmont strong,
That should have kept his brain.

When Percy wi' the Douglas met,
I wot he was fu' fain;
They swakkit swords, till sair they swat,
And the blud ran down like rain.

But Percy wi' his gude braid-sword,
That could sae sharply wound,
Has wounded Douglas on the brow,
Till he fell to the ground.

And then he called his little foot-page,
And said, "Run speedily,
And fetch my ain dear sister's son,
Sir Hugh Montgomery.

"My nephew gude," the Douglas said,
"What recks the death of ane?
Last night I dreamed a dreary dream,
And I ken the day's thy ain!

"My wound is deep; I fain wad sleep;
Tak' thou the vanguard o' the three,
And bury me by the braken-bush,
That grows on yonder lilye lea.

"O bury me by the braken-bush,
Beneath the blumin' brier;
Let never living mortal ken
That a kindly Scot lies here."

He lifted up that noble lord,
Wi' the saut tear in his e'e;
He hid him by the braken-bush,
That his merrie men might not see.

The moon was clear, the day drew near,
  The spears in flinders flew,
And mony a gallant Englishman
  Ere day the Scotsmen slew.

The Gordons gude, in English blude
  They wat their hose and shoon;
The Lindsays flew like fire about,
  Till a' the fray was dune.

The Percy and Montgomery met,
  That either of other was fain;
They swakkit swords, and sair they swat,
  And the blude ran down between.

"Now yield thee, yield thee, Percy," he said,
  "Or else I will lay thee low!"
"To whom maun I yield," quoth Earl Percy,
  "Since I see it maun be so?"

"Thou shalt not yield to lord or loun,
  Nor yet shalt thou yield to me;
But yield thee to the braken-bush,
  That grows upon yon lilye lea."

"I will not yield to a braken-bush,
  Nor yet will I yield to a brier;
But I would yield to Earl Douglas,
  Or Sir Hugh the Montgomery, if he were here."

As soon as he knew it was Montgomery,
  He struck his sword's point in the gronde;
The Montgomery was a courteous knight,
  And quickly took him by the honde.

This deed was done at the Otterbourne,
  About the breaking o' the day;
Earl Douglas was buried at the braken-bush,
  And the Percy led captive away.

Unknown

AGINCOURT

[OCTOBER 25, 1415]

FAIR stood the wind for France
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train
Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth towards Agincourt
In happy hour;
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French general lay
With all his power.

Which, in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
Unto him sending;
Which he neglects the while
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
"Though they to one be ten
Be not amazèd:
Yet have we well begun:
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
By fame been raisèd.

"And for myself (quoth he)
This my full rest shall be:
England ne'er mourn for me
Nor more esteem me:
Victor I will remain
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me.

"Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell:
No less our skill is
Than when our grandsire great
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
Lopped the French lilies."

The Duke of York so dread
The eager vanguard led;
With the main Henry sped
Among his henchmen.
Excester had the rear,
A braver man not there;
O Lord, how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armor on armor shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
To hear was wonder;
That with the cries they make
The very earth did shake:
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signal aim
To our hid forces!

When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly
The English archery
Struck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long
That like to serpents stung,
Piercing the weather;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbos drew,
And on the French they flew,
Not one was tardy;
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went—
Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broadsword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding
As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruisèd his helmet.

Gloster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood
With his brave brother;
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's Day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
To England to carry.
O when shall English men
With such acts fill a pen?
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry?

Michael Drayton [1563–1631]

A BALLAD OF ORLEANS

[1429]

THE fray began at the middle-gate,
Between the night and the day;
Before the matin bell was rung
The foe was far away.
There was no knight in the land of France
Could gar that foe to flee,
Till up there rose a young maiden,
And drove them to the sea.

Sixty forts around Orleans town,
And sixty forts of stone!
Sixty forts at our gates last night—
To-day there is not one!

Talbot, Suffolk, and Pole are fled
Beyond the Loire, in fear—
Many a captain who would not drink,
Hath drunken deeply there—

Many a captain is fallen and drowned,
And many a knight is dead,
And many die in the misty dawn
While forts are burning red.

The blood ran off our spears all night
As the rain runs off the roofs—
God rest their souls that fell i' the fight
Among our horses' hoofs!
They came to rob us of our own
With sword and spear and lance,
They fell and clutched the stubborn earth,
And bit the dust of France!

We fought across the moonless dark
Against their unseen hands—
A knight came out of Paradise
And fought among our bands.
Fight on, O maiden knight of God,
Fight on and do not tire—
For lo! the misty break o' the day
Sees all their forts on fire!

Sixty forts around Orleans town,
And sixty forts of stone!
Sixty forts at our gates last night—
To-day there is not one!

A. Mary F. Robinson [1857–

COLUMBUS

[JANUARY, 1487]

St. Stephen's cloistered hall was proud
In learning's pomp that day,
For there a robed and stately crowd
Pressed on in long array.
A mariner with simple chart
Confronts that conclave high,
While strong ambition stirs his heart,
And burning thoughts of wonder part
From lip and sparkling eye.

What hath he said? With frowning face,
In whispered tones they speak,
And lines upon their tablets trace,
Which flush each ashen cheek;
The Inquisition's mystic doom
Sits on their brows severe,
And bursting forth in visioned gloom,
Sad heresy from burning tomb
Groans on the startled ear.

Courage, thou Genoese! Old Time
Thy splendid dream shall crown;
Yon Western Hemisphere sublime,
Where unshorn forests frown,
The awful Andes' cloud-wrapped brow,
The Indian hunter's bow,
Bold streams untamed by helm or prow,
And rocks of gold and diamonds, thou
To thankless Spain shalt show.

Courage, World-finder! Thou hast need!
In Fate's unfolding scroll,
Dark woes and ingrate wrongs I read,
That rack the noble soul.
On! on! Creation's secrets probe,
Then drink thy cup of scorn,
And wrapped in fallen Cæsar's robe,
Sleep like that master of the globe,
All glorious,—yet forlorn.

Lydia Huntly Sigourney [1791–1865]

COLUMBUS

[AUGUST 3—OCTOBER 12, 1492]

BEHIND him lay the gray Azores,
Behind the Gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.

The good mate said: "Now must we pray,
For lo! the very stars are gone,
Brave Admiral, speak, what shall I say?"
"Why, say 'Sail on! sail on! and on!'"

"My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly wan and weak."
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.
"What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"
"Why, you shall say at break of day,
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!'"

They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said:
"Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
These very winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Admiral, speak and say"—
He said: "Sail on! sail on! and on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
"This mad sea shows his teeth to-night.
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth, as if to bite!
Brave Admiral, say but one good word:
What shall we do when hope is gone?"
The words leapt like a leaping sword:
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then, pale and worn, he kept his deck,
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night
Of all dark nights! And then a speck—
A light! a light! a light! a light!
It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!
It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.
He gained a world; he gave that world
Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!"

Joaquin Miller [1841–1913]

A LAMENT FOR FLODDEN

[SEPTEMBER 9, 1513]

I'VE heard them lilting at our ewe-milking,
Lasses a-lilting before dawn o' day;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning:
"The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away."

At buchts, in the morning, nae blithe lads are scorning,
Lasses are lanely and dowie and wae;
Nae daffing, nae gabbing, but sighing and sabbing,
Ilk ane lifts her leglen and hies her away.

In har'st, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
The bandsters are lyart, and runkled, and gray:
At fair or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, in the gloaming, nae swankies are roaming
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play;
But ilk ane sits eerie, lamenting her dearie—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Dool and wae for the order sent our lads to the Border!
The English, for ance, by guile wan the day;
The Flowers of the Forest, that fought aye the foremost,
The prime o' our land, lie cauld in the clay.

We'll hear nae mair lilting at our ewe-milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning:
"The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away."

Jane Elliot [1727–1805]

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT

[1583]

SOUTHWARD with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
  Glisten in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
  Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist
  Dripped with silver rain;
But where he passed there was cast
  Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
  Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed;
Three days or more seaward he bore,
  Then, alas! the land-wind failed.

Alas! the land-wind failed,
  And ice-cold grew the night;
And nevermore, on sea or shore,
  Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck,
  The Book was in his hand;
"Do not fear! Heaven is as near,"
  He said, "by water as by land!"

In the first watch of the night,
  Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously,
  The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star
  Were hanging in the shrouds;
Every mast, as it passed,
  Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
  At midnight black and cold!
As of a rock was the shock;
  Heavily the ground-swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark,
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain, o'er the open main;
Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, forever southward,
They drift through dark and day;
And like a dream, in the Gulf-Stream,
Sinking, vanish all away.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THE ARMADA: A FRAGMENT

[JULY 21–29, 1588]

ATTEND, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise;
I sing of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore, in vain,
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Plymouth Bay;
The crew had seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace;
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast;
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.

With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes;
Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound the drums:
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space;
For there behooves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,
As slow upon the laboring wind the royal blazon swells.

Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely hunters lay.
Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho! scatter flowers, fair maids:
Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: ho! gallants, draw your blades:
Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft her wide;
Our glorious *Semper Eadem*, the banner of our pride.

The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold;
Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone: it shone on Beachy Head.
Far o'er the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering waves:
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves:
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery herald flew:
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of Beaulieu.

Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out from Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton Down;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the night,
And saw, o'erhanging Richmond Hill, the streak of blood-red light:
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathlike silence broke,
And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city woke.

At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice of fear;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder cheer:
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down each roaring street:
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring in;
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright couriers forth;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started for the north;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded still:
All night from tower to tower they sprang; they sprang from hill to hill;
Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's rocky dales;
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of Wales;

Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely
height;
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of
light;
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately
fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless
plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of Trent:
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled
pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

Thomas Babington Macaulay [1800–1859]

"GOD SAVE ELIZABETH!"

Let them come, come never so proudly,
O'er the green waves as giants ride;
Silver clarions menacing loudly,
"All the Spains" on their banners wide;
High on deck of the gilded galleys
Our light sailors they scorn below:—
We will scatter them, plague, and shatter them,
Till their flag hauls down to their foe!
For our oath we swear
By the name we bear,
By England's Queen, and England free and fair,—
Her's ever and her's still, come life, come death!
God save Elizabeth!

Sidonia, Recalde, and Leyva
Watch from their bulwarks in swarthy scorn,
Lords and Princes by Philip's favor;—
We by birthright are noble born!
Freemen born of the blood of freemen:
Sons of Creçy and Flodden are we!
We shall sunder them, fire, and plunder them;
English boats on the English sea!

Drake and Frobisher, Hawkins and Howard,
Raleigh, Cavendish, Cecil, and Brooke,
Hang like wasps by the flagships towered,
Sting their way through the thrice-piled oak!
Let them range their seven-mile crescent,
Giant galleons, canvas wide!
Ours will harry them, board, and carry them,
Plucking the plumes of the Spanish pride.

Has God risen in wrath and scattered?
Have His tempests smote them in scorn?
Past the Orcades, dumb and tattered,
'Mong sea-beasts do they drift forlorn?
We were as lions hungry for battle;
God has made our battle His own!
God has scattered them, sunk, and shattered them:
Give the glory to Him alone!
While our oath we swear
By the name we bear,
By England's Queen, and England free and fair,—
Her's ever and her's still, come life, come death!
God save Elizabeth!

Francis Turner Palgrave [1824–1897]

IVRY

[MARCH 14, 1590]

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, oh pleasant land of France!
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy;
For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.

Hurrah! hurrah! a single field hath turned the chance of war.
Hurrah! hurrah! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre.

Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand;
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The King is come to marshal us, in all his armor dressed;
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout: "God save our Lord the King!"
"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled din,
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring culverin.
The fiery Duke is pricking fast across Saint André's plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,
Charge for the golden lilies,—upon them with the lance!
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest;

And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Navarre.

Now, God be praised, the day is ours. Mayenne hath turned his rein;
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter; the Flemish count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay gale;
The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags, and cloven mail.
And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along our van,
"Remember Saint Bartholomew!" was passed from man to man.
But out spake gentle Henry, "No Frenchman is my foe:
Down, down with every foreigner, but let your brethren go."
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our Sovereign Lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought for France to-day;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in fight;
And the good Lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cornet white.
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath ta'en,
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of false Lorraine.
Up with it high; unfurl it wide; that all the host may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which wrought His Church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a footcloth meet for Henry of Navarre.

Ho! maidens of Vienna; ho! matrons of Lucerne;
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls.

Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright;
Ho! burghers of St. Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night;
For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God hath raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise, and the valor of the brave.
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all glories are;
And glory to our Sovereign Lord, King Henry of Navarre!

Thomas Babington Macaulay [1800–1859]

THE "REVENGE"

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET [SEPTEMBER, 1591]

At Florés in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a fluttered bird, came flying from far away:
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!"
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "'Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?"

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I know you are no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain."

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blessed him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Florés till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
"Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set."
And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
For I never turned my back upon Don or devil yet."

Sir Richard spoke and he laughed, and we roared a hurrah, and so
The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,
And the little *Revenge* ran on through the long sea-lane between.

Thousands of their soldiers looked down from their decks and laughed,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delayed
By their mountain-like *San Philip* that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stayed.

And while now the great *San Philip* hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,

And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

But anon the great *San Philip*, she bethought herself and went,
Having that within her womb that had left her ill content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shattered, and so could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"
Though his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they feared that we still could sting,

So they watched what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maimed for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
"We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!"

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the seamen made reply:
"We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow."
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
"I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do.
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!"
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honor down into the deep,
And they manned the *Revenge* with a swarthier alien crew,
And away she sailed with her loss and longed for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruined awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shattered navy of Spain,
And the little *Revenge* herself went down by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE SONG OF THE SPANISH MAIN

Out in the south, when the day is done,
And the gathered winds go free,
Where golden-sanded rivers run,
Fair islands fade in the setting sun,
And the great ships stagger, one by one,
Up from the windy sea.

Out in the south, where a twilight shroud
Hangs o'er the ocean's rim,
Sail on sail, like a floating cloud,
Galleon, brigantine, cannon-browed,
Rich from the Indies, homeward crowd,
Singing a Spanish hymn.

Out in the south, when the sun has set
And the lightning flickers pale,
The cannon bellow their steady threat,

The ships grind, all in a crimson sweat,
And hoarse throats call, "Have ye stricken yet?"
Across the quarter-rail.

Out in the south, in the dead of night,
When I hear the thunder speak,
'Tis the Englishmen in their pride and might
Mad with glory and blind with fight,
Locked with the Spaniards, left and right,
Fighting them cheek to cheek.

Out in the south, when the dawn's pale light
Walks cold on the beaten shore,
And the mists of night, like clouds of fight,
Silvery violet, blinding bright,
Drift in glory from height to height
Where the white-tailed eagles soar;

There comes a song through the salt and spray,
Blood-kin to the ocean's roar,
"All day long down Florez way
Richard Grenville stands at bay.
Come and take him if ye may!"
Then hush, forevermore.

John Bennett [1865–

HENRY HUDSON'S QUEST

[1609]

Out from the harbor of Amsterdam
The Half Moon turned her prow to sea;
The coast of Norway dropped behind,
Yet Northward still kept she
Through the drifting fog and the driving snow,
Where never before man dared to go:
"O Pilot, shall we find the strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"A waste of ice before us lies—we must turn back," said he.

Westward they steered their tiny bark,
  Westward through weary weeks they sped,
Till the cold gray strand of a stranger-land
  Loomed through the mist ahead.
League after league they hugged the coast,
And their Captain never left his post:
"O Pilot, see you yet the strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"I see but the rocks and the barren shore; no strait is there," quoth he.

They sailed to the North—they sailed to the South—
  And at last they rounded an arm of sand
Which held the sea from a harbor's mouth—
  The loveliest in the land;
They kept their course across the bay,
And the shore before them fell away:
"O Pilot, see you not the strait that leads to the Eastern sea?"
"Hold the rudder true! Praise Christ Jesu! the strait is here," said he.

Onward they glide with wind and tide,
  Past marshes gray and crags sun-kissed;
They skirt the sills of green-clad hills,
  And meadows white with mist—
But alas! the hope and the brave, brave dream!
For rock and shallow bar the stream:
"O Pilot, can this be the strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"Nay, Captain, nay; 'tis not this way; turn back we must," said he.

Full sad was Hudson's heart as he turned
  The Half Moon's prow to the South once more;
He saw no beauty in crag or hill,
  No beauty in curving shore;
For they shut him away from that fabled main
He sought his whole life long,—in vain:

"O Pilot, say, can there be a strait that leads to the Eastern Sea?"
"God's crypt is sealed! 'Twill stand revealed in His own good time," quoth he.

Burton Egbert Stevenson [1872–

TO THE VIRGINIAN VOYAGE

[1611]

You brave heroic minds,
Worthy your country's name,
That honor still pursue;
Go and subdue!
Whilst loitering hinds
Lurk here at home, with shame.

Britons, you stay too long:
Quickly aboard bestow you,
And with a merry gale
Swell your stretched sail,
With vows as strong
As the winds that blow you.

Your course securely steer,
West and by south forth keep!
Rocks, lee-shores, nor shoals,
When Eolus scowls,
You need not fear,
So absolute the deep.

And cheerfully at sea,
Success you still entice,
To get the pearl and gold,
And ours to hold
Virginia,
Earth's only paradise;

Where nature hath in store
Fowl, venison, and fish,

And the fruitful'st soil,
Without your toil,
Three harvests more,
All greater than your wish

And the ambitious vine
Crowns with his purple mass
The cedar reaching high
To kiss the sky,
The cypress, pine,
And useful sassafras;

To whom the Golden Age
Still nature's laws doth give,
No other cares attend,
But them to defend
From winter's rage,
That long there doth not live.

When as the luscious smell
Of that delicious land,
Above the seas that flows,
The clear wind throws,
Your hearts to swell
Approaching the dear strand;

In kenning of the shore
(Thanks to God first given)
O you the happiest men,
Be frolic then!
Let cannons roar,
Frighting the wide heaven;

And in regions far,
Such heroes bring ye forth
As those from whom we came,
And plant our name
Under that star
Not known unto our North;

And as there plenty grows
Of laurel everywhere,—
  Apollo's sacred tree,—
  You it may see,
A poet's brow
To crown, that may sing there.

Thy *Voyages* attend
Industrious Hakluyt,
  Whose reading shall inflame
  Men to seek fame,
And much commend
To after-times thy wit.

Michael Drayton [1563–1631]

"THE WORD OF GOD TO LEYDEN CAME"

[AUGUST 15, 1620]

THE word of God to Leyden came,
  Dutch town by Zuyder Zee:
Rise up, my children of no name,
  My kings and priests to be.
There is an empire in the West,
  Which I will soon unfold;
A thousand harvests in her breast,
  Rocks ribbed with iron and gold.

Rise up, my children, time is ripe!
  Old things are passed away.
Bishops and kings from earth I wipe;
  Too long they've had their day.
A little ship have I prepared
  To bear you o'er the seas;
And in your souls, my will declared,
  Shall grow by slow degrees.

Beneath my throne the martyrs cry:
  I hear their voice, How long?
It mingles with their praises high,
  And with their victor song.

The thing they longed and waited for,
  But died without the sight;
So, this shall be! I wrong abhor,
  The world I'll now set right.

Leave, then, the hammer and the loom,
  You've other work to do;
For Freedom's commonwealth there's room,
  And you shall build it too.
I'm tired of bishops and their pride,
  I'm tired of kings as well;
Henceforth I take the people's side,
  And with the people dwell.

Tear off the mitre from the priest,
  And from the king, his crown;
Let all my captives be released;
  Lift up, whom men cast down.
Their pastors let the people choose,
  And choose their rulers too;
Whom they select, I'll not refuse,
  But bless the work they do.

The Pilgrims rose, at this, God's word,
  And sailed the wintry seas:
With their own flesh nor blood conferred,
  Nor thought of wealth or ease.
They left the towers of Leyden town,
  They left the Zuyder Zee;
And where they cast their anchor down,
  Rose Freedom's realm to be.

Jeremiah Eames Rankin [1828–1904]

THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS

[NOVEMBER 19, 1620]

THE breaking waves dashed high
  On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods, against a stormy sky,
  Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came:
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear,—
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

The ocean-eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest roared;
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim-band;
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow, serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Aye, call it holy ground,
  The soil where first they trod!
They have left unstained what there they found—
  Freedom to worship God!

Felicia Dorothea Hemans [1793–1835]

THE MAYFLOWER

[DECEMBER 21, 1620]

DOWN in the bleak December bay
The ghostly vessel stands away;
Her spars and halyards white with ice,
Under the dark December skies.
A hundred souls, in company,
Have left the vessel pensively,—
Have reached the frosty desert there,
And touched it with the knees of prayer.
  And now the day begins to dip,
The night begins to lower
  Over the bay, and over the ship
    Mayflower.

Neither the desert nor the sea
Imposes rites: their prayers are free;
Danger and toil the wild imposes,
And thorns must grow before the roses.
And who are these?—and what distress
The savage-acred wilderness
On mother, maid, and child may bring,
Beseems them for a fearful thing;
  For now the day begins to dip,
The night begins to lower
  Over the bay, and over the ship
    Mayflower.

But Carver leads (in heart and health
A hero of the commonwealth)
The axes that the camp requires,
To build the lodge, and heap the fires.
And Standish from his warlike store
Arrays his men along the shore,

Distributes weapons resonant,
And dons his harness militant;
For now the day begins to dip,
The night begins to lower
Over the bay, and over the ship
Mayflower;

And Rose, his wife, unlocks a chest—
She sees a Book, in vellum dressed,
She drops a tear, and kisses the tome,
Thinking of England and of home:
Might they—the Pilgrims, there and then
Ordained to do the work of men—
Have seen, in visions of the air,
While pillowed on the breast of prayer
(When now the day began to dip,
The night began to lower
Over the bay, and over the ship
Mayflower),

The Canaan of their wilderness
A boundless empire of success;
And seen the years of future nights
Jewelled with myriad household lights;
And seen the honey fill the hive;
And seen a thousand ships arrive;
And heard the wheels of travel go;
It would have cheered a thought of woe,
When now the day began to dip,
The night began to lower
Over the bay, and over the ship
Mayflower.

Erastus Wolcott Ellsworth [1822–1902]

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

The Pilgrim Fathers,—where are they?
The waves that brought them o'er
Still roll in the bay, and throw their spray
As they break along the shore;

Still roll in the bay, as they rolled that day
When the Mayflower moored below;
When the sea around was black with storms,
And white the shore with snow.

The mists that wrapped the Pilgrim's sleep
Still brood upon the tide;
And his rocks yet keep their watch by the deep
To stay its waves of pride.
But the snow-white sail that he gave to the gale,
When the heavens looked dark, is gone,—
As an angel's wing through an opening cloud
Is seen, and then withdrawn.

The pilgrim exile,—sainted name!
The hill whose icy brow
Rejoiced, when he came, in the morning's flame,
In the morning's flame burns now.
And the moon's cold light, as it lay that night
On the hillside and the sea,
Still lies where he laid his houseless head,—
But the Pilgrim,—where is he?

The Pilgrim Fathers are at rest:
When summer's throned on high,
And the world's warm breast is in verdure dressed,
Go, stand on the hill where they lie.
The earliest ray of the golden day
On that hallowed spot is cast;
And the evening sun, as he leaves the world,
Looks kindly on that spot last.

The Pilgrim spirit has not fled:
It walks in noon's broad light;
And it watches the bed of the glorious dead,
With the holy stars, by night.
It watches the bed of the brave who have bled,
And still guard this ice-bound shore,
Till the waves of the bay, where the Mayflower lay,
Shall foam and freeze no more.

John Pierpont [1785–1866]

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

BY OBADIAH BIND-THEIR-KINGS-IN-CHAINS-AND-THEIR-NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON; SERGEANT IN IRETON'S REGIMENT.

[JUNE 14, 1645]

Oh, wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press that ye tread?

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us for the fight;
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into a shout
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line:
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!
For Charles, King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks! Grasp your pikes! Close your ranks!
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are
gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth Thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last!

Stout Skippon hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark! what means the trampling of horsemen on
our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he! thank God! 'tis he,
boys!
Bear up another minute! Brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accursed,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar;
And he,—he turns, he flies:—shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war!

Ho! comrades, scour the plain; and, ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure;
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and
lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were
gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chamber in the rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven, and hell,
and fate?
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades?
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and
your spades?

Down! down! forever down, with the mitre and the crown!
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope!
There is woe in Oxford halls; there is wail in Durham's stalls;
The Jesuit smites his bosom; the Bishop rends his cope.

And she of the Seven Hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word!

Thomas Babington Macaulay [1800–1859]

THE EXECUTION OF MONTROSE

[MAY 21, 1650]

COME hither, Evan Cameron!
Come, stand beside my knee:
I hear the river roaring down
Towards the wintry sea.
There's shouting on the mountain-side,
There's war within the blast;
Old faces look upon me,
Old forms go trooping past:
I hear the pibroch wailing
Amidst the din of fight,
And my dim spirit wakes again
Upon the verge of night.

'Twas I that led the Highland host
Through wild Lochaber's snows,
What time the plaided clans came down
To battle with Montrose.
I've told thee how the Southrons fell
Beneath the broad claymore,
And how we smote the Campbell clan
By Inverlochy's shore.

I've told thee how we swept Dundee,
And tamed the Lindsays' pride;
But never have I told thee yet
How the great Marquis died.

A traitor sold him to his foes;—
O deed of deathless shame!
I charge thee, boy, if e'er thou meet
With one of Assynt's name—
Be it upon the mountain's side,
Or yet within the glen,
Stand he in martial gear alone,
Or backed by armèd men—
Face him, as thou wouldst face the man
Who wronged thy sire's renown;
Remember of what blood thou art,
And strike the caitiff down!

They brought him to the Watergate,
Hard bound with hempen span,
As though they held a lion there,
And not a fenceless man.
They set him high upon a cart,—
The hangman rode below,—
They drew his hands behind his back,
And bared his noble brow.
Then, as a hound is slipped from leash,
They cheered the common throng,
And blew the note with yell and shout,
And bade him pass along.

It would have made a brave man's heart
Grow sad and sick that day,
To watch the keen malignant eyes
Bent down on that array.
There stood the Whig west-country lords,
In balcony and bow;
There sat their gaunt and withered dames,
And their daughters all a-row.

And every open window
Was full as full might be
With black-robed Covenanting carles,
That goodly sport to see!

But when he came, though pale and wan,
He looked so great and high,
So noble was his manly front,
So calm his steadfast eye,
The rabble rout forebore to shout,
And each man held his breath,
For well they knew the hero's soul
Was face to face with death.
And then a mournful shudder
Through all the people crept,
And some that came to scoff at him
Now turned aside and wept.

But onwards—always onwards,
In silence and in gloom,
The dreary pageant labored,
Till it reached the house of doom.
Then first a woman's voice was heard
In jeer and laughter loud,
And an angry cry and a hiss arose
From the heart of the tossing crowd:
Then, as the Graeme looked upwards,
He saw the ugly smile
Of him who sold his king for gold,—
The master-fiend Argyle!

The Marquis gazed a moment,
And nothing did he say,
But Argyle's cheek grew ghastly pale
And he turned his eyes away.
The painted harlot by his side,
She shook through every limb,
For a roar like thunder swept the street,
And hands were clenched at him;

And a Saxon soldier cried aloud,
"Back, coward, from thy place!
For seven long years thou hast not dared
To look him in the face."

Had I been there with sword in hand,
And fifty Camerons by,
That day through high Dunedin's streets
Had pealed the slogan-cry.
Not all their troops of trampling horse,
Nor might of mailèd men,
Not all the rebels in the south
Had borne us backwards then!
Once more his foot on Highland heath
Had trod as free as air,
Or I, and all who bore my name,
Been laid around him there!

It might not be. They placed him next
Within the solemn hall,
Where once the Scottish kings were throned
Amidst their nobles all.
But there was dust of vulgar feet
On that polluted floor,
And perjured traitors filled the place
Where good men sate before.
With savage glee came Warriston
To read the murderous doom;
And then uprose the great Montrose
In the middle of the room.

"Now, by my faith as belted knight,
And by the name I bear,
And by the bright Saint Andrew's cross
That waves above us there,
Yea, by a greater, mightier oath—
And oh, that such should be!—
By that dark stream of royal blood
That lies 'twixt you and me,—

I have not sought in battle-field
A wreath of such renown,
Nor dared I hope on my dying day
To win the martyr's crown!

'There is a chamber far away
Where sleep the good and brave,
But a better place ye have named for me
Than by my fathers' grave.
For truth and right, 'gainst treason's might,
This hand hath always striven,
And ye raise it up for a witness still
In the eye of earth and heaven.
Then nail my head on yonder tower,
Give every town a limb,—
And God who made shall gather them:
I go from you to Him!"

The morning dawned full darkly,
The rain came flashing down,
And the jagged streak of the levin-bolt
Lit up the gloomy town:
The thunder crashed across the heaven,
The fatal hour was come;
Yet aye broke in, with muffled beat,
The 'larum of the drum.
There was madness on the earth below
And anger in the sky,
And young and old, and rich and poor,
Came forth to see him die.

Ah, God! that ghastly gibbet!
How dismal 'tis to see
The great tall spectral skeleton,
The ladder and the tree!
Hark! hark! it is the clash of arms—
The bells begin to toll—
"He is coming! he is coming!
God's mercy on his soul!"

One last long peal of thunder:
The clouds are cleared away,
And the glorious sun once more looks down
Amidst the dazzling day.

"He is coming! he is coming!"
Like a bridegroom from his room,
Came the hero from his prison
To the scaffold and the doom.
There was glory on his forehead,
There was luster in his eye,
And he never walked to battle
More proudly than to die;
There was color in his visage,
Though the cheeks of all were wan,
And they marvelled as they saw him pass,
That great and goodly man!

He mounted up the scaffold,
And he turned him to the crowd;
But they dared not trust the people,
So he might not speak aloud.
But he looked upon the heavens,
And they were clear and blue,
And in the liquid ether
The eye of God shone through;
Yet a black and murky battlement
Lay resting on the hill,
As though the thunder slept within—
All else was calm and still.

The grim Geneva ministers
With anxious scowl drew near,
As you have seen the ravens flock
Around the dying deer.
He would not deign them word nor sign,
But alone he bent the knee,
And veiled his face for Christ's dear grace
Beneath the gallows-tree.

Then radiant and serene he rose,
And cast his cloak away:
For he had ta'en his latest look
Of earth and sun and day.

A beam of light fell o'er him,
Like a glory round the shriven,
And he climbed the lofty ladder
As it were the path to heaven.
Then came a flash from out the cloud,
And a stunning thunder-roll;
And no man dared to look aloft,
For fear was on every soul.
There was another heavy sound,
A hush and then a groan;
And darkness swept across the sky—
The work of death was done!

William Edmondstoune Aytoun [1813–1865]

AN HORATIAN ODE UPON CROMWELL'S RETURN FROM IRELAND

[1650]

The forward youth that would appear
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing.

'Tis time to leave the books in dust,
And oil the unused armor's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corselet of the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urged his active star;

And, like the three-forked lightning, first
Breaking the clouds where it was nursed,

Did through his own side
His fiery way divide;

For 'tis all one to courage high,
The emulous, or enemy,
And with such, to enclose
Is more than to oppose;—

Then burning through the air he went,
And palaces and temples rent;
And Cæsar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.

'Tis madness to resist or blame
The face of angry Heaven's flame;
And if we would speak true,
Much to the man is due,

Who, from his private gardens, where
He lived reservèd and austere
(As if his highest plot
To plant the bergamot),

Could by industrious valor climb
To ruin the great work of time,
And cast the Kingdoms old
Into another mould;

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain—
But those do hold or break
As men are strong or weak—

Nature, that hateth emptiness,
Allows of penetration less,
And therefore must make room
Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the civil war
Where his were not the deepest scar?
And Hampton shows what part
He had of wiser art;

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope
That Charles himself might chase
To Caresbrooke's narrow case;

That thence the Royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn:
While round the armèd bands
Did clap their bloody hands.

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;

Nor called the gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

This was that memorable hour
Which first assured the forcèd power:
So when they did design
The Capitol's first line,

A Bleeding Head, where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run;
And yet in that the State
Foresaw its happy fate!

And now the Irish are ashamed
To see themselves in one year tamed;
So much one man can do
That does both act and know.

They can affirm his praises best,
And have, though overcome, confessed
How good he is, how just
And fit for highest trust.

Nor yet grown stiffer with command,
But still in the republic's hand—

How fit he is to sway
That can so well obey!

He to the Commons' feet presents
A Kingdom for his first year's rents,
And, what he may, forbears
His fame, to make it theirs:

And has his sword and spoils ungirt
To lay them at the public's skirt.
So when the falcon high
Falls heavy from the sky,

She, having killed, no more doth search
But on the next green bough to perch;
Where, when he first does lure,
The falconer has her sure.

What may not then our Isle presume,
While victory his crest does plume?
What may not others fear,
If thus he crowns each year?

As Cæsar, he, ere long, to Gaul,
To Italy an Hannibal,
And to all States not free
Shall Climacteric be.

The Pict no shelter now shall find
Within his parti-colored mind,
But, from this valor, sad,
Shrink underneath the plaid:

Happy, if in the tufted brake
The English hunter him mistake,
Nor lay his hounds in near
The Caledonian deer.

But thou, the war's and fortune's son,
March indefatigably on,
And for the last effect,
Still keep the sword erect:

Besides the force it has to fright
The spirits of the shady night;
The same arts that did gain
A power, must it maintain.

Andrew Marvell [1621–1678]

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

[1655]

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

John Milton [1608–1674]

MORGAN

[1668]

Oh, what a set of Vagabundos,
Sons of Neptune, sons of Mars,
Raked from todos otros mundos,
Lascars, Gascons, Portsmouth tars,
Prison mate and dock-yard fellow,
Blades to Meg and Molly dear,
Off to capture Porto Bello
Sailed with Morgan the Buccaneer!

Out they voyaged from Port Royal
(Fathoms deep its ruins be,
Pier and convent, fortress loyal,
Sunk beneath the gaping sea);

On the Spaniard's beach they landed,
  Dead to pity, void of fear,—
Round their blood-red flag embanded,
  Led by Morgan the Buccaneer.

Dawn till dusk they stormed the castle,
  Beat the gates and gratings down;
Then, with ruthless rout and wassail,
  Night and day they sacked the town,
Staved the bins its cellars boasted,
  Port and Lisbon, tier on tier,
Quaffed to heart's content, and toasted
  Harry Morgan the Buccaneer:

Stripped the church and monastery,
  Racked the prior for his gold,
With the traders' wives made merry,
  Lipped the young and mocked the old,
Diced for hapless señoritas
  (Sire and brother bound anear),—
Juanas, Lolas, Manuelitas,
  Cursing Morgan the Buccaneer.

Lust and rapine, flame and slaughter,
  Forayed with the Welshman grim:
"Take my pesos, spare my daughter!"
  "Ha! ha!" roared that devil's limb,
"These shall jingle in our pouches,
  She with us shall find good cheer."
"Lash the graybeard till he crouches!"
  Shouted Morgan the Buccaneer.

Out again through reef and breaker,
  While the Spaniard moaned his fate,
Back they voyaged to Jamaica,
  Flush with doubloons, coins of eight,
Crosses wrung from Popish varlets,
  Jewels torn from arm and ear,—
Jesu! how the Jews and harlots
  Welcomed Morgan the Buccaneer!

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

THE LAMENTABLE BALLAD OF THE BLOODY BROOK

[SEPTEMBER 18, 1675]

COME listen to the Story of brave Lathrop and his Men,—
How they fought, how they died,
When they marched against the Red Skins in the Autumn
Days, and then
How they fell, in their pride,
By Pocumtuck Side.

"Who will go to Deerfield Meadows and bring the ripened
Grain?"
Said old Mosely to his men in Array.
"Take the Wagons and the Horses, and bring it back again:
But be sure that no Man stray
All the Day, on the Way."

Then the Flower of Essex started, with Lathrop at their
head,
Wise and brave, bold and true.
He had fought the Pequots long ago, and now to Mosely said,
"Be there Many, be there Few,
I will bring the Grain to you."

They gathered all the Harvest, and marched back on their
Way,
Through the Woods which blazed like Fire.
No Soldier left the Line of march to wander or to stray,
Till the Wagons were stalled in the Mire,
And the Beasts began to tire.

The Wagons have all forded the Brook as it flows,
And then the Rear-Guard stays
To pick the purple Grapes that are hanging from the Boughs,
When, crack!—to their Amaze,
A hundred Fire-locks blaze!

Brave Lathrop, he lay dying; but as he fell he cried,
"Each Man to his Tree," said he,
"Let no one yield an Inch;" and so the Soldier died;
And not a Man of all can see
Where the Foe can be.

And Philip and his Devils pour in their Shot so fast,
From behind and before,
That Man after Man is shot down and breathes his last.
Every Man lies dead in his Gore
To fight no more,—no more!

Oh, weep, ye Maids of Essex, for the Lads who have died,—
The Flower of Essex they!
The Bloody Brook still ripples by the black Mountain-side,
But never shall they come again to see the ocean-tide,
And never shall the Bridegroom return to his Bride,
From that dark and cruel Day,—cruel Day!

Edward Everett Hale [1822–1909]

THE SONG OF THE WESTERN MEN

[1688]

A good sword and a trusty hand!
A merry heart and true!
King James's men shall understand
What Cornish lads can do.

And have they fixed the where and when?
And shall Trelawny die?
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men
Will know the reason why!

Out spake their captain brave and bold,
A merry wight was he:
"If London Tower were Michael's hold,
We'll set Trelawny free!

"We'll cross the Tamar, land to land,
The Severn is no stay,
With 'One and all!' and hand in hand,
And who shall bid us nay?

"And when we come to London Wall,
A pleasant sight to view,
Come forth! come forth, ye cowards all,
Here's men as good as you!

"Trelawny he's in keep and hold,
Trelawny he may die;
But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold
Will know the reason why!"

Robert Stephen Hawker [1803–1875]

BONNIE DUNDEE

From "The Doom of Devoirgoil"

[1689]

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who spoke,
"Ere the King's crown shall fall, there are crowns to be broke;
So let each Cavalier who loves honor and me
Come follow the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee!

"Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come open the West Port and let me gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonnie Dundee!"

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward, the drums they are beat;
But the Provost, douce man, said, "Just e'en let him be,
The Gude Town is well quit of that deil of Dundee!"

As he rode doun the sanctified bends of the Bow,
Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her pow;
But the young plants of grace they looked couthie and slee,
Thinking, Luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonnie Dundee!

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass-market was thranged,
As if half the West had set tryst to be hanged;
There was spite in each look, there was fear in each e'e,
As they watched for the bonnets of Bonnie Dundee.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies to kill cavaliers;
But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway was free
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee.

He spurred to the foot of the proud Castle rock,
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke:
"Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak twa words or three,
For the love of the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee."

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes.
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose!
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee.

"There are hills beyond Pentland, and lands beyond Forth;
If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs in the North;
There are wild Duniewassals three thousand times three
Will cry 'Hoigh!' for the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee.

"There's brass on the target of barkened bull-hide,
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside;
The brass shall be burnished, the steel shall flash free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks,—
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the fox;
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me!"

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were blown,
The kettle-drums clashed, and the horsemen rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lea
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonnie Dundee.

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

A BALLAD OF SARSFIELD

[1690]

Sarsfield went out the Dutch to rout,
And to take and break their cannon;
To Mass went he at half-past three,
And at four he crossed the Shannon.

Tirconnel slept. In dream his thoughts
Old fields of victory ran on;
And the chieftains of Thomond in Limerick's towers
Slept well by the banks of Shannon.

He rode ten miles and he crossed the ford,
And couched in the wood and waited;
Till, left and right, on marched in sight
That host which the true men hated.

"Charge!" Sarsfield cried; and the green hill-side
As they charged replied in thunder;
They rode o'er the plain and they rode o'er the slain
And the rebel rout lay under.

The spark flashed out—like a sailor's shout
The sound into heaven ascended;
The hosts of the sky made to earth reply,
And the thunders twain were blended!

Sarsfield went out the Dutch to rout,
And to take and break their cannon;—
A century after, Sarsfield's laughter
Was echoed from Dungannon.

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814–1902]

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

[August 13, 1704]

It was a summer evening;
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage-door
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild, Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
  Roll something large and round,
That he beside the rivulet,
  In playing there, had found:
She ran to ask what he had found,
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
  Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
  And with a natural sigh,
"'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
"Who fell in the great victory.

"I find them in my garden,
  For there's many here about;
And often, when I go to plough,
  The ploughshare turns them out;
For many thousand men," said he,
"Were slain in that great victory."

"Now tell us what 'twas all about,"
  Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
  With wonder-waiting eyes;
"Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for."

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
  "Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for
  I could not well make out;
But everybody said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory.

"My father lived at Blenheim then,
  Yon little stream hard by;
They burned his dwelling to the ground,
  And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

"With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then,
And new-born baby, died;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

"They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun:
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlborough won
And our good Prince Eugene."
"Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!"
Said little Wilhelmine.
"Nay, nay, my little girl," quoth he,
"It was a famous victory.

"And everybody praised the Duke,
Who this great fight did win."
"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin.
"Why, that I cannot tell," said he;
"But 'twas a famous victory."

Robert Southey [1774–1843]

LOVEWELL'S FIGHT

[MAY 8, 1725]

Of worthy Captain Lovewell I purpose now to sing,
How valiantly he served his country and his King;
He and his valiant soldiers did range the woods full wide
And hardships they endured to quell the Indian's pride.

'Twas nigh unto Pigwacket, on the eighth day of May,
They spied a rebel Indian soon after break of day;
He on a bank was walking, upon a neck of land,
Which leads into a pond, as we're made to understand.

Our men resolved to have him, and travelled two miles round
Until they met the Indian, who boldly stood his ground;
Then spake up Captain Lovewell, "Take you good heed," says he,
"This rogue is to decoy us, I very plainly see.

"The Indians lie in ambush, in some place nigh at hand,
In order to surround us upon this neck of land;
Therefore we'll march in order, and each man leave his pack
That we may briskly fight them, when they make their attack."

They came unto this Indian, who did them thus defy,
As soon as they came nigh him, two guns he did let fly,
Which wounded Captain Lovewell, and likewise one man more,
But when this rogue was running, they laid him in his gore.

Then having scalped the Indian, they went back to the spot
Where they had laid their packs down, but there they found them not,
For the Indians having spied them, when they them down did lay,
Did seize them for their plunder, and carry them away.

These rebels lay in ambush, this very place hard by,
So that an English soldier did one of them espy,
And cried out, "Here's an Indian!" With that they started out,
As fiercely as old lions, and hideously did shout.

With that our valiant English all gave a loud huzza,
To show the rebel Indians they feared them not a straw:
So now the fight began, and as fiercely as could be,
The Indians ran up to them, but soon were forced to flee.

Then spake up Captain Lovewell, when first the fight began:
"Fight on, my valiant heroes! you see they fall like rain."
For as we are informed, the Indians were so thick
A man could scarcely fire a gun and not some of them hit.

Then did the rebels try their best our soldiers to surround,
But they could not accomplish it, because there was a pond
To which our men retreated, and covered all the rear;
The rogues were forced to face them, although they skulked
for fear.

Two logs there were behind them, that close together lay,
Without being discovered, they could not get away;
Therefore our valiant English they travelled in a row,
And at a handsome distance, as they were wont to go.

'Twas ten o'clock in the morning when first the fight begun,
And fiercely did continue until the setting sun;
Excepting that the Indians some hours before 'twas night
Drew off into the bushes and ceased awhile to fight;

But soon again returned, in fierce and furious mood,
Shouting as in the morning, but yet not half so loud;
For as we are informed, so thick and fast they fell,
Scarce twenty of their number at night did get home well.

And that our valiant English till midnight there did stay,
To see whether the rebels would have another fray;
But they no more returning, they made off towards their
home,
And brought away their wounded as far as they could come.

Of all our valiant English there were but thirty-four,
And of the rebel Indians there were about fourscore.
And sixteen of our English did safely home return,
The rest were killed and wounded, for which we all must
mourn.

Our worthy Captain Lovewell among them there did die,
They killed Lieutenant Robbins, and wounded good young
Frye,
Who was our English Chaplain; he many Indians slew,
And some of them he scalped when bullets round him flew.

Young Fullam, too, I'll mention, because he fought so well;
Endeavoring to save a man, a sacrifice he fell:

But yet our valiant Englishmen in fight were ne'er dismayed,
But still they kept their motion, and Wymans Captain made,

Who shot the old chief Paugus, which did the foe defeat,
Then set his men in order, and brought off the retreat;
And, braving many dangers and hardships in the way,
They safe arrived at Dunstable, the thirteenth day of May.

Unknown

ADMIRAL HOSIER'S GHOST

WRITTEN ON THE TAKING OF CARTHAGENA FROM THE SPANIARDS, 1739

As near Portobello lying
On the gently-swelling flood,
At midnight, with streamers flying,
Our triumphant navy rode;
There while Vernon sat all-glorious
From the Spaniards' late defeat,
And his crews, with shouts victorious,
Drank success to England's fleet:

On a sudden, shrilly sounding,
Hideous yells and shrieks were heard;
Then, each heart with fear confounding,
A sad troop of ghosts appeared;
All in dreary hammocks shrouded,
Which for winding-sheets they wore,
And, with looks by sorrow clouded,
Frowning on that hostile shore.

On them gleamed the moon's wan lustre,
When the shade of Hosier brave
His pale bands was seen to muster,
Rising from their watery grave:
O'er the glimmering wave he hied him,
Where the Burford reared her sail,
With three thousand ghosts beside him,
And in groans did Vernon hail.

"Heed, oh, heed our fatal story!
I am Hosier's injured ghost;
You who now have purchased glory
At this place where I was lost:
Though in Portobello's ruin,
You now triumph free from fears,
When you think on our undoing,
You will mix your joys with tears.

"See these mournful spectres sweeping
Ghastly o'er this hated wave,
Whose wan cheeks are stained with weeping;
These were English captains brave.
Mark those numbers, pale and horrid,
Who were once my sailors bold;
Lo! each hangs his drooping forehead,
While his dismal tale is told.

"I, by twenty sail attended,
Did this Spanish town affright;
Nothing then its wealth defended
But my orders—not to fight!
Oh! that in this rolling ocean
I had cast them with disdain,
And obeyed my heart's warm motion,
To have quelled the pride of Spain!

"For resistance I could fear none;
But with twenty ships had done
What thou, brave and happy Vernon,
Hast achieved with six alone.
Then the Bastimentos never
Had our foul dishonor seen,
Nor the sea the sad receiver
Of this gallant train had been.

"Thus, like thee, proud Spain dismaying,
And her galleons leading home,
Though condemned for disobeying,
I had met a traitor's doom:

To have fallen, my country crying,
'He has played an English part,'
Had been better far than dying
Of a grieved and broken heart.

"Unrepining at thy glory,
Thy successful arms we hail;
But remember our sad story,
And let Hosier's wrongs prevail.
Sent in this foul clime to languish,
Think what thousands fell in vain,
Wasted with disease and anguish,
Not in glorious battle slain.

"Hence with all my train attending,
From their oozy tombs below,
Through the hoary foam ascending,
Here I feed my constant woe.
Here the Bastimentos viewing,
We recall our shameful doom,
And, our plaintive cries renewing,
Wander through the midnight gloom.

"O'er these waves forever mourning
Shall we roam, deprived of rest,
If, to Britain's shores returning,
You neglect my just request;
After this proud foe subduing,
When your patriot friends you see,
Think on vengeance for my ruin,
And for England—shamed in me."

Richard Glover [1712–1785]

FONTENOY

[APRIL 30, 1745]

THRICE at the huts of Fontenoy the English column failed,
And twice the lines of Saint Antoine the Dutch in vain assailed;
For town and slope were filled with fort and flanking battery,
And well they swept the English ranks and Dutch auxiliary.

As vainly through De Barri's wood the British soldiers burst,
The French artillery drove them back, diminished and dispersed.
The bloody Duke of Cumberland beheld with anxious eye,
And ordered up his last reserve, his latest chance to try.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, how fast his generals ride!
And mustering come his chosen troops, like clouds at eventide.

Six thousand English veterans in stately column tread;
Their cannon blaze in front and flank, Lord Hay is at their head.
Steady they step a-down the slope, steady they climb the hill,
Steady they load, steady they fire, moving right onward still,
Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy, as through a furnace-blast,
Through rampart, trench, and palisade, and bullets showering fast;
And on the open plain above they rose and kept their course,
With ready fire and grim resolve that mocked at hostile force:
Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thinner grow their ranks,
They break, as broke the Zuyder Zee through Holland's ocean-banks.

More idly than the summer flies, French tirailleurs rush round;
As stubble to the lava-tide, French squadrons strew the ground;
Bombshell and grape and round-shot tore, still on they marched and fired;
Fast, from each volley, grenadier and voltigeur retired.
"Push on my household cavalry!" King Louis madly cried.
To death they rush, but rude their shock; not unavenged they died.
On through the camp the column trod—King Louis turns his rein.
"Not yet, my liege," Saxe interposed; "the Irish troops remain."

And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been a Waterloo,
Had not these exiles ready been, fresh, vehement, and true.

"Lord Clare," he said, "you have your wish; there are your Saxon foes!"
The Marshal almost smiles to see, so furiously he goes.
How fierce the look these exiles wear, who're wont to be so gay!
The treasured wrongs of fifty years are in their hearts today:
The treaty broken, ere the ink wherewith 'twas writ could dry;
Their plundered homes, their ruined shrines, their women's parting cry;
Their priesthood hunted down like wolves, their country overthrown—
Each looks as if revenge for all were staked on him alone.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, nor ever yet elsewhere,
Rushed on to fight a nobler band than these proud exiles were.

O'Brien's voice is hoarse with joy, as, halting, he commands:
"Fix bayonets—charge!" Like mountain-storm rush on those fiery bands.
Thin is the English column now, and faint their volleys grow,
Yet, mustering all the strength they have, they make a gallant show.
They dress their ranks upon the hill, to face that battle-wind!
Their bayonets the breakers' foam, like rocks the men behind!
One volley crashes from their line, when, through the surging smoke,
With empty guns clutched in their hands, the headlong Irish broke.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, hark to that fierce huzza:
"Revenge! remember Limerick! dash down the Sacsanagh!"

Like lions leaping at a fold, when mad with hunger's pang,
Right up against the English line the Irish exiles sprang;
Bright was their steel, 'tis bloody now, their guns are filled
with gore;
Through shattered ranks and severed files and trampled
flags they tore.
The English strove with desperate strength, paused, rallied,
staggered, fled;
The green hillside is matted close with dying and with
dead.
Across the plain and far away passed on that hideous wrack,
While cavalier and fantassin dash in upon their track.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in the sun,
With bloody plumes, the Irish stand—the field is fought and
won!

Thomas Osborne Davis [1814–1845]

LAMENT FOR CULLODEN

[APRIL 16, 1746]

THE lovely lass o' Inverness,
Nae joy nor pleasure can she see;
For e'en and morn she cries, Alas!
And aye the saut tear blins her e'e:
Drumossie moor—Drumossie day—
A waefu' day it was to me!
For there I lost my father dear,
My father dear, and brethren three.

Their winding-sheet the bluidy clay,
Their graves are growing green to see:
And by them lies the dearest lad
That ever blest a woman's e'e!
Now wae to thee, thou cruel lord,
A bluidy man I trow thou be;
For mony a heart thou hast made sair
That ne'er did wrang to thine or thee.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

A BALLAD OF THE FRENCH FLEET

[OCTOBER 15, 1746]

MR. THOMAS PRINCE, *loquitur*

A FLEET with flags arrayed
  Sailed from the port of Brest,
And the Admiral's ship displayed
  The signal: "Steer southwest."
For this Admiral D'Anville
  Had sworn by cross and crown
To ravage with fire and steel
  Our helpless Boston Town.

There were rumors in the street,
  In the houses there was fear
Of the coming of the fleet,
  And the danger hovering near.
And while from mouth to mouth
  Spread the tidings of dismay,
I stood in the Old South,
  Saying humbly: "Let us pray!

"O Lord! we would not advise;
  But if in thy Providence
A tempest should arise
  To drive the French Fleet hence,
And scatter it far and wide,
  Or sink it in the sea,
We should be satisfied,
  And thine the glory be."

This was the prayer I made,
  For my soul was all on flame,
And even as I prayed
  The answering tempest came;
It came with a mighty power,
  Shaking the windows and walls,
And tolling the bell in the tower,
  As it tolls at funerals.

The lightning suddenly
  Unsheathed its flaming sword,
And I cried: "Stand still, and see
  The salvation of the Lord!"
The heavens were black with cloud,
  The sea was white with hail,
And ever more fierce and loud
  Blew the October gale.

The fleet it overtook,
  And the broad sails in the van
Like the tents of Cushan shook,
  Or the curtains of Midian.
Down on the reeling decks
  Crashed the o'erwhelming seas:
Ah, never were there wrecks
  So pitiful as these!

Like a potter's vessel broke
  The great ships of the line;
They were carried away as a smoke,
  Or sank like lead in the brine.
O Lord! before thy path
  They vanished and ceased to be,
When thou didst walk in wrath
  With thine horses through the sea!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

From "Tales of a Wayside Inn"

[APRIL 18–19, 1775]

LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed.
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

NEW ENGLAND'S CHEVY CHASE

[APRIL 19, 1775]

'TWAS the dead of the night. By the pineknot's red light
Brooks lay, half-asleep, when he heard the alarm,—
Only this, and no more, from a voice at the door:
"The Red-Coats are out, and have passed Phips's farm."

Brooks was booted and spurred; he said never a word:
Took his horn from its peg, and his gun from the rack;
To the cold midnight air he led out his white mare,
Strapped the girths and the bridle, and sprang to her back.

Up the North County road at her full pace she strode,
Till Brooks reined her up at John Tarbell's to say,
"We have got the alarm,—they have left Phips's farm;
You rouse the East Precinct, and I'll go this way."

John called his hired man, and they harnessed the span;
They roused Abram Garfield, and Abram called me:
Turn out right away; let no minute-man stay;
The Red-Coats have landed at Phips's," says he.

By the Powder-House Green seven others fell in;
At Nahum's the men from the Saw-Mill came down;
So that when Jabez Bland gave the word of command,
And said, "Forward, march!" there marched forward THE TOWN.

Parson Wilderspin stood by the side of the road,
And he took off his hat, and he said, "Let us pray!
O Lord, God of might, let thine angels of light
Lead thy children to-night to the glories of day!
And let thy stars fight all the foes of the Right
As the stars fought of old against Sisera."

And from heaven's high arch those stars blessed our march,
Till the last of them faded in twilight away;
And with morning's bright beam, by the banks of the stream
Half the county marched in, and we heard Davis say:

"On the King's own highway I may travel all day,
And no man hath warrant to stop me," says he;
"I've no man that's afraid, and I'll march at their head."
Then he turned to the boys, "Forward, march! Follow me."

And we marched as he said, and the Fifer he played
The old "White Cockade," and he played it right well.
We saw Davis fall dead, but no man was afraid;
That bridge we'd have had, though a thousand men fell.

This opened the play, and it lasted all day.
We made Concord too hot for the Red-Coats to stay;
Down the Lexington way we stormed, black, white, and gray
We were first in the feast, and were last in the fray.

They would turn in dismay, as red wolves turn at bay.
They levelled, they fired, they charged up the road.
Cephas Willard fell dead; he was shot in the head
As he knelt by Aunt Prudence's well-sweep to load.

John Danforth was hit just in Lexington Street,
John Bridge at that lane where you cross Beaver Falls,
And Winch and the Snows just above John Munroe's—
Swept away by one swoop of the big cannon-balls.

I took Bridge on my knee, but he said, "Don't mind me;
Fill your horn from mine,—let me lie where I be.
Our fathers," says he, "that their sons might be free,
Left their king on his throne, and came over the sea;
And that man is a knave, or a fool who, to save
His life for a minute, would live like a slave."

Well, all would not do! There were men good as new,—
From Rumford, from Saugus, from towns far away,—
Who filled up quick and well for each soldier that fell;
And we drove them, and drove them, and drove them, all day.
We knew, every one, it was war that begun,
When that morning's marching was only half done.

In the hazy twilight, at the coming of night,
I crowded three buckshot and one bullet down.
'Twas my last charge of lead; and I aimed her and said,
"Good luck to you, lobsters, in old Boston Town."

In a barn at Milk Row, Ephraim Bates and Munroe,
And Baker, and Abram, and I made a bed.
We had mighty sore feet, and we'd nothing to eat;
But we'd driven the Red-Coats, and Amos, he said:
"It's the first time," says he, "that it's happened to me
To march to the sea by this road where we've come;
But confound this whole day, but we'd all of us say
We'd rather have spent it this way than to home."

The hunt had begun with the dawn of the sun,
And night saw the wolf driven back to his den.
And never since then, in the memory of men,
Has the Old Bay State seen such a hunting again.

Edward Everett Hale [1822–1909]

WARREN'S ADDRESS AT BUNKER HILL

[JUNE 16–17, 1775]

STAND! the ground's your own, my braves!
Will ye give it up to slaves?
Will ye look for greener graves?

Hope ye mercy still?
What's the mercy despots feel?
Hear it in that battle-peal!
Read it on yon bristling steel!
Ask it,—ye who will.

Fear ye foes who kill for hire?
Will ye to your homes retire?
Look behind you!—they're afire!
And, before you, see
Who have done it! From the vale
On they come—and will ye quail?
Leaden rain and iron hail
Let their welcome be!

In the God of battles trust!
Die we may,—and die we must:
But, O, where can dust to dust
Be consigned so well,
As where heaven its dews shall shed
On the martyred patriot's bed,
And the rocks shall raise their head,
Of his deeds to tell?

John Pierpont [1785–1866]

THE MARYLAND BATTALION

[BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND, AUGUST 27, 1776]

SPRUCE Macaronis, and pretty to see,
Tidy and dapper and gallant were we;
Blooded fine gentlemen, proper and tall,
Bold in a fox-hunt, and gay at a ball;
Prancing soldados, so martial and bluff,
Billets for bullets, in scarlet and buff—
But our cockades were clasped with a mother's low prayer,
And the sweethearts that braided the swordknots were fair.

There was grummer of drums humming hoarse in the hills,
And the bugles sang fanfaron down by the mills;
By Flatbush the bagpipes were droning amain,
And keen cracked the rifles in Martense's lane;
For the Hessians were flecking the hedges with red,
And the grenadiers' tramp marked the roll of the dead.

Three to one, flank and rear, flashed the files of St. George,
The fierce gleam of their steel as the glow of a forge.
The brutal boom-boom of their swart cannoneers
Was sweet music compared with the taunt of their cheers—
For the brunt of their onset, our crippled array,
And the light of God's leading gone out in the fray!

Oh, the rout on the left and the tug on the right!
The mad plunge of the charge and the wreck of the flight!
When the cohorts of Grant held stout Stirling at strain,
And the mongrels of Hesse went tearing the slain;
When at Freeke's Mill the flumes and the sluices ran red,
And the dead choked the dyke and the marsh choked the dead!

"Oh, Stirling, good Stirling! how long must we wait?
Shall the shout of your trumpet unleash us too late?
Have you never a dash for brave Mordecai Gist,
With his heart in his throat, and his blade in his fist?
Are we good for no more than to prance in a ball,
When the drums beat the charge and the clarions call?"

Tralára, Tralára! Now praise we the Lord,
For the clang of His call and the flash of His sword!
Tralára! Tralára! Now forward to die;
For the banner, hurrah! and for sweethearts, good-by!
"Four hundred wild lads!" Maybe so. I'll be bound
'Twill be easy to count us, face up, on the ground.
If we hold the road open, though Death take the toll,
We'll be missed on parade when the States call the roll—
When the flags meet in peace and the guns are at rest,
And fair Freedom is singing Sweet Home in the West.

John Williamson Palmer [1825–1906]

SEVENTY-SIX

WHAT heroes from the woodland sprung,
When, through the fresh-awakened land,
The thrilling cry of freedom rung
And to the work of warfare strung
The yeoman's iron hand!

Hills flung the cry to hills around,
And ocean-mart replied to mart,
And streams, whose springs were yet unfound,
Pealed far away the startling sound
Into the forest's heart.

Then marched the brave from rocky steep,
From mountain-river swift and cold;
The borders of the stormy deep,
The vales where gathered waters sleep,
Sent up the strong and bold,—

As if the very earth again
Grew quick with God's creating breath,
And, from the sods of grove and glen,
Rose ranks of lion-hearted men
To battle to the death.

The wife, whose babe first smiled that day,
The fair fond bride of yestereve,
And aged sire and matron gray,
Saw the loved warriors haste away,
And deemed it sin to grieve.

Already had the strife begun;
Already blood, on Concord's plain,
Along the springing grass had run,
And blood had flowed at Lexington,
Like brooks of April rain.

That death-stain on the vernal sward
Hallowed to freedom all the shore;
In fragments fell the yoke abhorred—
The footstep of a foreign lord
Profaned the soil no more.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

SONG OF MARION'S MEN

[1780–1781]

Our band is few, but true and tried,
Our leader frank and bold;
The British soldier trembles
When Marion's name is told.
Our fortress is the good greenwood,
Our tent the cypress-tree;
We know the forest round us
As seamen know the sea.
We know its walls of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass.

Woe to the English soldiery
That little dread us near!
On them shall light at midnight
A strange and sudden fear:
When, waking to their tents on fire,
They grasp their arms in vain,
And they who stand to face us
Are beat to earth again;
And they who fly in terror deem
A mighty host behind,
And hear the tramp of thousands
Upon the hollow wind.

Then sweet the hour that brings release
From danger and from toil;
We talk the battle over,
We share the battle's spoil.

The woodland rings with laugh and shout
As if a hunt were up,
And woodland flowers are gathered
To crown the soldier's cup.
With merry songs we mock the wind
That in the pine-top grieves,
And slumber long and sweetly
On beds of oaken leaves.

Well knows the fair and friendly moon
The band that Marion leads—
The glitter of their rifles,
The scampering of their steeds.
'Tis life to guide the fiery barb
Across the moonlight plain;
'Tis life to feel the night-wind
That lifts his tossing mane.
A moment in the British camp—
A moment—and away,
Back to the pathless forest
Before the peep of day.

Grave men there are by broad Santee,
Grave men with hoary hairs;
Their hearts are all with Marion,
For Marion are their prayers.
And lovely ladies greet our band
With kindliest welcoming,
With smiles like those of summer,
And tears like those of spring.
For them we wear these trusty arms,
And lay them down no more
Till we have driven the Briton,
Forever, from our shore.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

CARMEN BELLICOSUM

In their ragged regimentals
Stood the old Continentals,
Yielding not,

While the grenadiers were lunging,
And like hail fell the plunging
Cannon-shot;
When the files
Of the isles,
From the smoky night-encampment, bore the banner of the rampant
Unicorn;
And grummer, grummer, grummer, rolled the roll of the drummer,
Through the morn!

Then with eyes to the front all,
And with guns horizontal,
Stood our sires;
And the balls whistled deadly,
And in streams flashing redly
Blazed the fires;
As the roar
On the shore,
Swept the strong battle-breakers o'er the green-sodded acres
Of the plain;
And louder, louder, louder, cracked the black gunpowder,
Cracking amain!

Now like smiths at their forges
Worked the red St. George's
Cannoneers;
And the villainous saltpetre
Rung a fierce, discordant metre
Round their ears;
As the swift
Storm-drift,
With hot sweeping anger, came the horseguards' clangor
On our flanks;
Then higher, higher, higher, burned the old-fashioned fire
Through the ranks!

Then the bare-headed colonel
Galloped through the white infernal
Powder-cloud;

And his broad-sword was swinging,
And his brazen throat was ringing
Trumpet-loud.
Then the blue
Bullets flew,
And the trooper-jackets redden at the touch of the leaden
Rifle-breath;
And rounder, rounder, rounder, roared the iron six-pounder,
Hurling death!

Guy Humphreys McMaster [1829–1887]

ON THE LOSS OF THE "ROYAL GEORGE"

[AUGUST 29, 1782]

TOLL for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land-breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the "Royal George,"
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought,
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

CREMONA

[FEBRUARY 1, 1702]

THE Grenadiers of Austria are proper men and tall;
The Grenadiers of Austria have scaled the city wall;
They have marched from far away
Ere the dawning of the day,
And the morning saw them masters of Cremona.

There's not a man to whisper, there's not a horse to neigh,
Of the footmen of Lorraine and the riders of Duprés;
They have crept up every street,
In the market-place they meet,
They are holding every vantage in Cremona.

The Marshal Villeroy he has started from his bed;
The Marshal Villeroy has no wig upon his head;
"I have lost my men!" quoth he,
"And my men they have lost me,
And I sorely fear we both have lost Cremona."

Prince Eugène of Austria is in the market-place;
Prince Eugène of Austria has smiles upon his face;
Says he, "Our work is done,
For the Citadel is won,
And the black and yellow flag floats o'er Cremona."

Major Dan O'Mahony is in the barrack square,
And just six hundred Irish lads are waiting for him there;
Says he, "Come in your shirt,
And you won't take any hurt,
For the morning air is pleasant in Cremona."

Major Dan O'Mahony is at the barrack gate,
And just six hundred Irish lads will neither stay nor wait
There's Dillon and there's Burke,
And there'll be some bloody work
Ere the Kaiserlics shall boast they hold Cremona.

Major Dan O'Mahony has reached the river fort,
And just six hundred Irish lads are joining in the sport;
"Come, take a hand!" says he,
"And if you will stand by me,
Then it's glory to the man who takes Cremona!"

Prince Eugène of Austria has frowns upon his face,
And loud he calls his Galloper of Irish blood and race:
"MacDonnell, ride, I pray,
To your countrymen, and say
That only they are left in all Cremona!"

MacDonnell he has reined his mare beside the river dike,
And he has tied the parley flag upon a sergeant's pike;
Six companies were there
From Limerick and Clare,
The last of all the guardians of Cremona.

"Now, Major Dan O'Mahony, give up the river gate,
Or, Major Dan O'Mahony, you'll find it is too late;
For when I gallop back
'Tis the signal for attack,
And no quarter for the Irish in Cremona!"

And Major Dan he laughed: "Faith, if what you say be true,
And if they will not come until they hear again from you,
Then there will be no attack,
For you're never going back,
And we'll keep you snug and safely in Cremona."

All the weary day the German stormers came,
All the weary day they were faced by fire and flame;
They have filled the ditch with dead,
And the river's running red,
But they cannot win the gateway of Cremona.

All the weary day, again, again, again,
The horsemen of Duprés and the footmen of Lorraine,
Taafe and Herberstein,
And the riders of the Rhine;
It's a mighty price they're paying for Cremona.

Time and time they came with the deep-mouthed German roar,
Time and time they broke like the wave upon the shore;
For better men were there
From Limerick and Clare,
And who will take the gateway of Cremona?

Prince Eugène has watched, and he gnaws his nether lip;
Prince Eugène has cursed as he saw his chances slip:
"Call off! Call off!" he cried,
"It is nearing eventide,
And I fear our work is finished in Cremona."

Says Wauchop to McAuliffe, "Their fire is growing slack."
Says Major Dan O'Mahony, "It is their last attack;
But who will stop the game
While there's light to play the same,
And to walk a short way with them from Cremona?"

And so they snarl behind them, and beg them turn and come,
They have taken Neuberg's standard, they have taken Diak's drum;

And along the winding Po,
Beard on shoulder, stern and slow,
The Kaiserlics are riding from Cremona.

Just two hundred Irish lads are shouting on the wall;
Four hundred more are lying who can hear no slogan call;
But what's the odds of that,
For it's all the same to Pat
If he pays his debt in Dublin or Cremona.

Says General de Vaudray, "You've done a soldier's work!
And every tongue in France shall talk of Dillon and of Burke!
Ask what you will this day,
And be it what it may,
It is granted to the heroes of Cremona."

"Why, then," says Dan O'Mahony, "one favor we entreat,
We were called a little early, and our toilet's not complete.
We've no quarrel with the shirt,
But the breeches wouldn't hurt,
For the evening air is chilly in Cremona."

Arthur Conan Doyle [1859–

CASABIANCA

[BATTLE OF THE NILE, AUGUST, 1798]

THE boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but him had fled;
The flame that lit the battle's wreck
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
As born to rule the storm;
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud, though child-like form.

The flames rolled on; he would not go
Without his father's word;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud, "Say, father, say,
If yet my task be done!"
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father!" once again he cried,
"If I may yet be gone!"
And but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair,
And looked from that lone post of death
In still, yet brave despair;

And shouted but once more aloud,
"My father! must I stay?"
While o'er him, fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapped the ship in splendor wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child,
Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder sound;
The boy,—oh! where was he?
Ask of the winds, that far around
With fragments strewed the sea,—

With mast, and helm, and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part,—
But the noblest thing that perished there,
Was that young, faithful heart.

Felicia Dorothea Hemans [1793–1835]

HOHENLINDEN

[DECEMBER 3, 1800]

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat, at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neighed
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven;
Then rushed the steed, to battle driven;
And louder than the bolts of heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainèd snow;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye Brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part, where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

[APRIL 2, 1801]

Of Nelson and the North,
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,

And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand,
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat,
Lay their bulwarks on the brine;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line;
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death;
And the boldest held his breath,
For a time.—

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
"Hearts of oak!" our captain cried; when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail;
Or, in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.—

Outspoke the victor then,
As he hailed them o'er the wave:
"Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save:—

So peace instead of death let us bring.
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King."—

Then Denmark blessed our chief,
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief,
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day;
While the sun looked smiling bright
O'er a wide and woful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, Old England, raise!
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light;
And yet, amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!—

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died;—
With the gallant good Riou:
Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

THE FIGHTING TÉMÉRAIRE

[OCTOBER 21, 1805]

It was eight bells ringing,
For the morning watch was done,
And the gunner's lads were singing
As they polished every gun.
It was eight bells ringing,
And the gunner's lads were singing,
For the ship she rode a-swinging,
As they polished every gun.

Oh! to see the linstock lighting,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Oh! to hear the round shot biting,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Oh! to see the linstock lighting,
And to hear the round shot biting,
For we're all in love with fighting
On the Fighting Téméraire.

It was noontide ringing,
And the battle just begun,
When the ship her way was winging,
As they loaded every gun,
It was noontide ringing,
When the ship her way was winging,
And the gunner's lads were singing,
As they loaded every gun.

There'll be many grim and gory,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
There'll be few to tell the story,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
There'll be many grim and gory,
There'll be few to tell the story,
But we'll all be one in glory
With the Fighting Téméraire.

There's a far bell ringing
At the setting of the sun,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of the great days done.
There's a far bell ringing,
And a phantom Voice is singing
Of renown for ever clinging
To the great days done.

Now the sunset breezes shiver,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
And she's fading down the river,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Now the sunset breezes shiver,
And she's fading down the river,
But in England's song for ever
She's the Fighting Téméraire.

Henry Newbolt [1862–

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE

[1808]

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,
Or one-eyed Calender's horse of brass,
Witch astride of a human back,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borák,—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of fowl,
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,

Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Mænads sang:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him!—He sailed away
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay,—
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's-people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forevermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—
Looked for the coming that might not be!
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim,
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting, far and near:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried,—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered, and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "God has touched him! why should we!"
Said an old wife mourning her only son,
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"

So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AFTER CORUNNA

[JANUARY 16, 1809]

NOT a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lanthorn dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

Charles Wolfe [1791–1823]

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

[APRIL 23, 1809]

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon:
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming-day;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused, "My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall,"—
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy:
You hardly could suspect—

(So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through),
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon!
The Marshal's in the market-place,
And you'll be there anon
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire,
Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed; his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed; but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film the mother-eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes;
"You're wounded!" "Nay," the soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said:
"I'm killed, Sire!" And his chief beside,
Smiling the boy fell dead.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE EVE OF WATERLOO

From "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"

[JUNE 18, 1815]

THERE was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;—
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a windowed niche of that high wall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! they come! they come!"

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valor, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

WATERLOO

Why have the Mighty lived—why have they died?
Is it ever thus with idle wreck to strew
Fields such as thine, remorseless Waterloo?
Hopeless the lesson! Vainly hath ever cried
Stern Fate to man—"So perish human pride!"
Still must the Many combat for the Few:
Still must the noblest blood fair earth bedew:
Tyrants, slaves, freemen, mouldering side by side!

On such a day the World was lost, and won,
By Pompey at Pharsalia: such a day
Saw glorious Hannibal a fugitive:
So faded 'neath the Macedonian Sun
Persia's pale star: so empire passed away
From Harold's brow,—but He disdained to live!

Aubrey De Vere [1788–1846]

MARCO BOZZARIS

[APRIL 20, 1823]

At midnight, in his guarded tent,
The Turk was dreaming of the hour
When Greece, her knee in suppliance bent,
Should tremble at his power:
In dreams, through camp and court, he bore
The trophies of a conqueror;
In dreams his song of triumph heard;
Then wore his monarch's signet ring:
Then pressed that monarch's throne—a king;
As wild his thoughts, and gay of wing,
As Eden's garden bird.

At midnight, in the forest shades,
Bozzaris ranged his Suliote band,
True as the steel of their tried blades,
Heroes in heart and hand.
There had the Persian's thousands stood,
There had the glad earth drunk their blood
On old Platæa's day;
And now there breathed that haunted air
The sons of sires who conquered there,
With arm to strike, and soul to dare,
As quick, as far as they.

An hour passed on—the Turk awoke;
That bright dream was his last;
He woke—to hear his sentries shriek,
"To arms! they come! the Greek! the Greek!"

He woke—to die midst flame, and smoke,
And shout, and groan, and sabre-stroke,
And death-shots falling thick and fast
As lightnings from the mountain-cloud;
And heard, with voice as trumpet loud,
Bozzaris cheer his band:
"Strike—till the last armed foe expires;
Strike—for your altars and your fires;
Strike—for the green graves of your sires;
God—and your native land!"

They fought—like brave men, long and well;
They piled that ground with Moslem slain,
They conquered—but Bozzaris fell,
Bleeding at every vein.
His few surviving comrades saw
His smile when rang their proud hurrah,
And the red field was won;
Then saw in death his eyelids close
Calmly, as to a night's repose,
Like flowers at set of sun.

Come to the bridal-chamber, Death!
Come to the mother's, when she feels,
For the first time, her first-born's breath;
Come when the blessèd seals
That close the pestilence are broke,
And crowded cities wail its stroke;
Come in consumption's ghastly form,
The earthquake shock, the ocean storm;
Come when the heart beats high and warm
With banquet-song, and dance, and wine;
And thou art terrible,—the tear,
The groan, the knell, the pall, the bier,
And all we know, or dream, or fear
Of agony, are thine.

But to the hero, when his sword
Has won the battle for the free,
Thy voice sounds like a prophet's word;
And in its hollow tones are heard

The thanks of millions yet to be.
Come, when his task of fame is wrought—
Come, with her laurel-leaf, blood-bought—
Come in her crowning hour—and then
Thy sunken eye's unearthly light
To him is welcome as the sight
Of sky and stars to prisoned men:
Thy grasp is welcome as the hand
Of brother in a foreign land;
Thy summons welcome as the cry
That told the Indian isles were nigh
To the world-seeking Genoese,
When the land wind, from woods of palm,
And orange groves, and fields of balm,
Blew o'er the Haytian seas.

Bozzaris! with the storied brave
Greece nurtured in her glory's time,
Rest thee—there is no prouder grave,
Even in her own proud clime.
She wore no funeral-weeds for thee,
Nor bade the dark hearse wave its plume
Like torn branch from death's leafless tree
In sorrow's pomp and pageantry,
The heartless luxury of the tomb:
But she remembers thee as one
Long loved, and for a season gone;
For thee her poet's lyre is wreathed,
Her marble wrought, her music breathed;
For thee she rings the birthday bells;
Of thee her babes' first lisping tells;
For thine her evening prayer is said
At palace-couch and cottage-bed;
Her soldier, closing with the foe,
Gives for thy sake a deadlier blow;
His plighted maiden, when she fears
For him, the joy of her young years,
Thinks of thy fate, and checks her tears:
And she, the mother of thy boys,

Though in her eye and faded cheek
Is read the grief she will not speak,
The memory of her buried joys,
And even she who gave thee birth,
Will, by their pilgrim-circled hearth,
Talk of thy doom without a sigh:
For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's:
One of the few, the immortal names,
That were not born to die.

Fitz-Greene Halleck [1790–1867]

OLD IRONSIDES

[SEPTEMBER 14, 1830]

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE VALOR OF BEN MILAM

[DECEMBER 5–11, 1835]

Oh, who will follow old Ben Milam into San Antonio?
Such was the thrilling word we heard in the chill December glow;
Such was the thrilling word we heard, and a ringing, answering cry
Went up from the dun adobe walls to the cloudless Texas sky.

He had won from the reek of a Mexique jail back without map or chart,
With his mother-wit and his hero-grit and his stanch Kentucky heart;
He had trudged by vale and by mountain trail, and by thorn and thirsty plain,
And now, with joy on his grizzled brow, he had come to his own again.

They're the spawn of Hell! we heard him tell; *they will knife and lie and cheat*
At the board of none of the swarthy horde would I deign to sit at meat;
They hold it naught that I bled and fought when Spain was their ruthless foe;
Oh, who will follow old Ben Milam into San Antonio?

It was four to one, not gun for gun, but never a curse cared we,
Three hundred faithful and fearless men who had sworn to make Texas free.
It was mighty odds, by all the gods, this brute of the Mexique dam,
But it was not much for heroes such as followed old Ben Milam!

With rifle-crack and sabre-hack we drove them back in the street;
From house to house in the red carouse we hastened their flying feet;

And ever that shout kept pealing out with a swift and sure
death-blow:
Oh, who will follow old Ben Milam into San Antonio?

Behind the walls from the hurtling balls Cos cowered and
swore in his beard,
While we slashed and slew from dawn till dew, and, Bexar,
how we cheered!
But ere failed each ruse, and the white of truce on the fail-
ing day was thrown,
Our fearless soul had gone to the goal, the Land of the Great
Unknown.

Death brought the darksome boon too soon to this truest
one of the true,
Or, men of the fated Alamo, Milam had died with you!
So when their names that now are Fame's—the scorners of
braggard sham;—
In song be praised, let a rouse be raised for the name of Ben
Milam!

Clinton Scollard [1860–

THE DEFENCE OF THE ALAMO

[MARCH 6, 1836]

SANTA ANA came storming, as a storm might come;
There was rumble of cannon; there was rattle of blade;
There was cavalry, infantry, bugle and drum,—
Full seven thousand, in pomp and parade,
The chivalry, flower of Mexico;
And a gaunt two hundred in the Alamo!

And thirty lay sick, and some were shot through;
For the siege had been bitter, and bloody, and long.
"Surrender, or die!"—"Men, what will *you* do?"
And Travis, great Travis, drew sword, quick and strong;
Drew a line at his feet . . . "Will you come? Will you go?
I die with my wounded, in the Alamo."

The Bowie gasped, "Lead me over that line!"
Then Crockett, one hand to the sick, one hand to his gun,
Crossed with him; then never a word or a sign
Till all, sick or well, all, all save but one,

One man. Then a woman stepped, praying, and slow
Across; to die at her post in the Alamo.

Then that one coward fled, in the night, in that night
When all men silently prayed and thought
Of home; of to-morrow; of God and the right,
Till dawn: and with dawn came Travis's cannon-shot,
In answer to insolent Mexico,
From the old bell-tower of the Alamo.

Then came Santa Ana; a crescent of flame!
Then the red escalade; then the fight hand to hand;
Such an unequal fight as never had name
Since the Persian hordes butchered that doomed Spartan band.
All day—all day and all night; and the morning? so slow,
Through the battle-smoke mantling the Alamo.

Now silence! Such silence! Two thousand lay dead
In a crescent outside! And within? Not a breath
Save the gasp of a woman, with gory gashed head,
All alone, all alone there, waiting for death;
And she but a nurse. Yet when shall we know
Another like this of the Alamo?

Shout "Victory, victory, victory ho!"
I say 'tis not always to the hosts that win!
I say that the victory, high or low,
Is given the hero who grapples with sin,
Or legion or single; just asking to know
When duty fronts death in his Alamo.

Joaquin Miller [1841–1913]

THE FIGHT AT SAN JACINTO

[APRIL 21, 1836]

"Now for a brisk and cheerful fight!"
Said Harman, big and droll,
As he coaxed his flint and steel for a light.
And puffed at his cold clay bowl;

"For we are a skulking lot," says he,
"Of land-thieves hereabout,
And the bold señores, two to one,
Have come to smoke us out."

Santa Anna and Castrillon,
Almonte brave and gay,
Portilla red from Goliad,
And Cos with his smart array.
Dulces and cigaritos,
And the light guitar, ting-tum!
Sant' Anna courts siesta—
And Sam Houston taps his drum.

The buck stands still in the timber—
"Is it patter of nuts that fall?"
The foal of the wild mare whinnies—
Did he hear the Comanche call?
In the brake by the crawling bayou
The slinking she-wolves howl,
And the mustang's snort in the river sedge
Has startled the paddling fowl.

A soft, low tap, and a muffled tap,
And a roll not loud nor long—
We would not break Sant' Anna's nap,
Nor spoil Almonte's song.
Saddles and knives and rifles!
Lord! but the men were glad
When Deaf Smith muttered "Alamo!"
And Karnes hissed "Goliad!"

The drummer tucked his sticks in his belt,
And the fifer gripped his gun.
Oh, for one free, wild, Texan yell,
As we took the slope in a run!
But never a shout nor a shot we spent,
Nor an oath nor a prayer, that day,
Till we faced the bravos, eye to eye,
And then we blazed away.

Then we knew the rapture of Ben Milam,
And the glory that Travis made,
With Bowie's lunge, and Crockett's shot,
And Fannin's dancing blade;
And the heart of the fighter, bounding free
In his joy so hot and mad—
When Millard charged for Alamo,
Lamar for Goliad.

Deaf Smith rode straight, with reeking spur,
Into the shock and rout:
"I've hacked and burned the bayou bridge,
There's no sneak's back-way out!"
Muzzle or butt for Goliad,
Pistol and blade and fist!
Oh, for the knife that never glanced,
And the gun that never missed!

Dulces and cigaritos,
Song and the mandolin!
That gory swamp was a gruesome grove
To dance fandangos in.
We bridged the bog with the sprawling herd
That fell in that frantic rout;
We slew and slew till the sun set red,
And the Texan star flashed out.

John Williamson Palmer [1825–1906]

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

[DECEMBER 17, 1839]

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughtèr,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,
Had sailed to the Spanish main,
"I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast,
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little daughtèr,
And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,
Oh say, what may it be?"
"'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"—
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
Oh say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,
Oh say, what may it be!"
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That saved she might be;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts, went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THE LOST COLORS

[1843]

Frowning, the mountain stronghold stood,
Whose front no mortal could assail;
For more than twice three hundred years
The terror of the Indian vale.
By blood and fire the robber band
Answered the helpless village wail.

Hot was his heart and cool his thought,
When Napier from his Englishmen
Up to the bandits' rampart glanced,
And down upon his ranks again.
Summoned to dare a deed like that,
Which of them all would answer then?

What sullen regiment is this
That lifts its eyes to dread Cutchee?

Abased, its standard bears no flag.
For thus the punishment shall be
That England metes to Englishmen
Who shame her once by mutiny.

From out the disgraced Sixty-Fourth
There stepped a hundred men of might.
Cried Napier: "Now prove to me
I read my soldiers' hearts aright!
Form! Forward! Charge, my volunteers!
Your colors are on yonder height!"

So sad is shame, so wise is trust!
The challenge echoed bugle-clear.
Like fire along the Sixty-Fourth
From rank to file rang cheer on cheer.
In death and glory up the pass
They fought for all to brave men dear.

Old is the tale, but read anew
In every warring human heart,
What rebel hours, what coward shame,
Upon the aching memory start!
To find the ideal forfeited,
—What tears can teach the holy art?

Thou great Commander! leading on
Through weakest darkness to strong light;
By any anguish, give us back
Our life's young standard, pure and bright.
O fair, lost Colors of the soul!
For your sake storm we any height.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward [1844–1911]

A BALLAD OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

[1845–47]

O, WHITHER sail you, Sir John Franklin?
Cried a whaler in Baffin's Bay.
To know if between the land and the pole
I may find a broad sea-way.

I charge you back, Sir John Franklin,
As you would live and thrive;
For between the land and the frozen pole
No man may sail alive.

But lightly laughed the stout Sir John,
And spoke unto his men:
Half England is wrong, if he be right;
Bear off to westward then.

O, whither sail you, brave Englishman?
Cried the little Esquimau.
Between your land and the polar star
My goodly vessels go.

Come down, if you would journey there,
The little Indian said;
And change your cloth for fur clothing,
Your vessel for a sled.

But lightly laughed the stout Sir John,
And the crew laughed with him too:—
A sailor to change from ship to sled,
I ween, were something new.

All through the long, long polar day,
The vessels westward sped;
And wherever the sail of Sir John was blown,
The ice gave way and fled:—

Gave way with many a hollow groan,
And with many a surly roar,
But it murmured and threatened on every side,
And closed where he sailed before.

Ho! see ye not, my merry men,
The broad and open sea?
Bethink ye what the whaler said,
Think of the little Indian's sled!
The crew laughed out in glee.

Sir John, Sir John, 'tis bitter cold,
The scud drives on the breeze,
The ice comes looming from the north,
The very sunbeams freeze.

Bright summer goes, dark winter comes,—
We cannot rule the year;
But long ere summer's sun goes down,
On yonder sea we'll steer.

The dripping icebergs dipped and rose,
And floundered down the gale;
The ships were stayed, the yards were manned,
And furled the useless sail.

The summer's gone, the winter's come,—
We sail not on yonder sea:
Why sail we not, Sir John Franklin?—
A silent man was he.

The summer goes, the winter comes,—
We cannot rule the year:
I ween we cannot rule the ways,
Sir John, wherein we'd steer.

The cruel ice came floating on,
And closed beneath the lee,
Till the thickening waters dashed no more:
'Twas ice around, behind, before—
My God! there is no sea!

What think you of the whaler now?
What of the Esquimau?
A sled were better than a ship,
To cruise through ice and snow.

Down sank the baleful crimson sun,
The northern light came out,
And glared upon the ice-bound ships,
And shook its spears about.

The snow came down, storm breeding storm,
And on the decks was laid,
Till the weary sailor, sick at heart,
Sank down beside his spade.

Sir John, the night is black and long,
The hissing wind is bleak,
The hard, green ice as strong as death:—
I prithee, Captain, speak!

The night is neither bright nor short,
The singing breeze is cold,—
The ice is not so strong as hope,
The heart of man is bold!

What hope can scale this icy wall,
High over the main flag-staff?
Above the ridges the wolf and bear
Look down, with a patient, settled stare,
Look down on us and laugh.

The summer went, the winter came,—
We could not rule the year;
But summer will melt the ice again,
And open a path to the sunny main,
Whereon our ships shall steer.

The winter went, the summer went,
The winter came around;
But the hard, green ice was strong as death,
And the voice of hope sank to a breath,
Yet caught at every sound.

Hark! heard you not the noise of guns?—
And there, and there, again?
'Tis some uneasy iceberg's roar,
As he turns in the frozen main.

Hurra! Hurra! the Esquimaux
Across the ice-fields steal:
God give them grace for their charity!—
Ye pray for the silly seal.

Sir John, where are the English fields,
  And where are the English trees,
And where are the little English flowers
  That open in the breeze?

Be still, be still, my brave sailors!
  You shall see the fields again,
And smell the scent of the opening flowers,
  The grass, and the waving grain.

Oh! when shall I see my orphan child?
  My Mary waits for me.
Oh! when shall I see my old mother,
  And pray at her trembling knee?

Be still, be still, my brave sailors!
  Think not such thoughts again.
But a tear froze slowly on his cheek:
  He thought of Lady Jane.

Ah! bitter, bitter grows the cold,
  The ice grows more and more;
More settled stare the wolf and bear,
  More patient than before.

Oh, think you, good Sir John Franklin,
  We'll ever see the land?
'Twas cruel to send us here to starve,
  Without a helping hand.

'Twas cruel, Sir John, to send us here,
  So far from help or home,
To starve and freeze on this lonely sea:
I ween the lords of the Admiralty
  Would rather send than come.

Oh! whether we starve to death alone,
  Or sail to our own country,
We have done what man has never done—
The truth is founded, the secret won—
  We passed the Northern Sea!

George Henry Boker [1823–1890]

MONTEREY

[SEPTEMBER 23, 1846]

We were not many, we who stood
Before the iron sleet that day:
Yet many a gallant spirit would
Give half his years if but he could
Have been with us at Monterey.

Now here, now there, the shot it hailed
In deadly drifts of fiery spray,
Yet not a single soldier quailed
When wounded comrades round them wailed
Their dying shout at Monterey.

And on—still on our column kept
Through walls of flame its withering way;
Where fell the dead, the living stepped,
Still charging on the guns which swept
The slippery streets of Monterey.

The foe himself recoiled aghast,
When, striking where he strongest lay,
We swooped his flanking batteries past,
And braving full their murderous blast,
Stormed home the towers of Monterey.

Our banners on those turrets wave,
And there our evening bugles play:
Where orange-boughs above their grave
Keep green the memory of the brave
Who fought and fell at Monterey.

We are not many—we who pressed
Beside the brave who fell that day—
But who of us has not confessed
He'd rather share their warrior rest
Than not have been at Monterey?

Charles Fenno Hoffman [1806–1884]

PESCHIERA

[MAY, 1848]

WHAT voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crossed?
"'Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all."

The tricolor—a trampled rag
Lies, dirt and dust; the lines I track
By sentry boxes, yellow-black,
Lead up to no Italian flag.

I see the Croat soldier stand
Upon the grass of your redoubts;
The eagle with his black wing flouts
The breath and beauty of your land.

Yet not in vain, although in vain,
O men of Brescia, on the day
Of loss past hope, I heard you say
Your welcome to the noble pain.

You said: "Since so it is, good-bye,
Sweet life, high hope; but whatsoe'er
May be, or must, no tongue shall dare
To tell, 'The Lombard feared to die!'"

You said (there shall be answer fit):
"And if our children must obey,
They must; but, thinking on this day,
'Twill less debase them to submit."

You said (O not in vain you said):
"Haste, brothers, haste, while yet we may;
The hours ebb fast of this one day,
While blood may yet be nobly shed."

Ah! not for idle hatred, not
For honor, fame, nor self-applause,
But for the glory of the cause,
You did, what will not be forgot.

And though the stranger stand, 'tis true,
By force and fortune's right he stands:
By fortune, which is in God's hands,
And strength, which yet shall spring in you.

This voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crossed:
"'Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all."

Arthur Hugh Clough [1819–1861]

THE LOSS OF THE BIRKENHEAD

SUPPOSED TO BE TOLD BY A SOLDIER WHO SURVIVED

[FEBRUARY 26, 1852]

RIGHT on our flank the crimson sun went down;
The deep sea rolled around in dark repose;
When, like the wild shriek from some captured town,
A cry of women rose.

The stout ship *Birkenhead* lay hard and fast,
Caught without hope upon a hidden rock;
Her timbers thrilled as nerves, when through them passed
The spirit of that shock.

And ever like base cowards, who leave their ranks
In danger's hour, before the rush of steel,
Drifted away disorderly the planks
From underneath her keel.

So calm the air, so calm and still the flood,
That low down in its blue translucent glass
We saw the great fierce fish, that thirst for blood,
Pass slowly, then repass.

They tarried, the waves tarried, for their prey!
The sea turned one clear smile! Like things asleep
Those dark shapes in the azure silence lay,
As quiet as the deep.

Then amidst oath, and prayer, and rush, and wreck,
Faint screams, faint questions waiting no reply,
Our Colonel gave the word, and on the deck
Formed us in line to die.

To die!—'twas hard, whilst the sleek ocean glowed
Beneath a sky as fair as summer flowers:—
All to the boats! cried one:—he was, thank God,
No officer of ours!

Our English hearts beat true:—we would not stir:
That base appeal we heard, but heeded not:
On land, on sea, we had our Colors, sir,
To keep without a spot!

They shall not say in England, that we fought
With shameful strength, unhonored life to seek;
Into mean safety, mean deserters, brought
By trampling down the weak.

So we made women with their children go,
The oars ply back again, and yet again;
Whilst, inch by inch, the drowning ship sank low,
Still under steadfast men.

—What follows, why recall?—The brave who died,
Died without flinching in the bloody surf,
They sleep as well beneath that purple tide,
As others under turf:—

They sleep as well! and, roused from their wild grave,
Wearing their wounds like stars, shall rise again,
Joint-heirs with Christ, because they bled to save
His weak ones, not in vain.

Francis Hastings Doyle [1810–1888]

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

[BALACLAVA, OCTOBER 25, 1852]

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
Some one had blundered:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre-stroke,
Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them

Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE RELIEF OF LUCKNOW

[SEPTEMBER 26, 1857]

Oh, that last day in Lucknow fort!
We knew that it was the last;
That the enemy's lines crept surely on,
And the end was coming fast.

To yield to that foe meant worse than death;
And the men and we all worked on;
It was one day more of smoke and roar,
And then it would all be done.

There was one of us, a corporal's wife,
A fair, young, gentle thing,
Wasted with fever in the siege,
And her mind was wandering.

She lay on the ground, in her Scottish plaid,
And I took her head on my knee;
"When my father comes hame frae the pleugh," she said,
"Oh! then please wauken me."

She slept like a child on her father's floor,
In the flecking of woodbine-shade,
When the house-dog sprawls by the open door,
And the mother's wheel is stayed.

It was smoke and roar and powder-stench,
And hopeless waiting for death;
And the soldier's wife, like a full-tired child,
Seemed scarce to draw her breath.

I sank to sleep; and I had my dream
Of an English village-lane,
And wall and garden;—but one wild scream
Brought me back to the roar again.

There Jessie Brown stood listening
Till a sudden gladness broke
All over her face; and she caught my hand
And drew me near as she spoke:—

"The Hielanders! O! dinna ye hear
The slogan far awa'?
The McGregor's. O! I ken it weel;
It's the grandest o' them a'!

"God bless the bonny Hielanders!
We're saved! we're saved!" she cried;
And fell on her knees; and thanks to God
Flowed forth like a full flood-tide.

Along the battery-line her cry
Had fallen among the men,
And they started back;—they were there to die;
But was life so near them, then?

They listened for life; the rattling fire
Far off, and the far-off roar,
Were all; and the colonel shook his head,
And they turned to their guns once more.

But Jessie said, "The slogan's done;
But winna ye hear it noo,—
The Campbells are comin'? It's no a dream;
Our succors hae broken through!"

We heard the roar and the rattle afar,
But the pipes we could not hear;
So the men plied their work of hopeless war,
And knew that the end was near.

It was not long ere it made its way,—
A thrilling, ceaseless sound:
It was no noise from the strife afar,
Or the sappers under ground.

It *was* the pipes of the Highlanders!
And now they played *Auld Lang Syne*,
It came to our men like the voice of God,
And they shouted along the line.

And they wept, and shook one another's hands,
And the women sobbed in a crowd;
And every one knelt down where he stood,
And we all thanked God aloud.

That happy time, when we welcomed them,
Our men put Jessie first;
And the general gave her his hand, and cheers
Like a storm from the soldiers burst.

And the pipers' ribbons and tartans streamed,
Marching round and round our line;
And our joyful cheers were broken with tears,
As the pipes played *Auld Lang Syne*.

Robert Traill Spence Lowell [1816–1891]

THE PRIVATE OF THE BUFFS; OR, THE BRITISH SOLDIER IN CHINA

[1857]

Last night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaffed, and swore;
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never looked before.
To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewildered, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.
Ay, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or axe, or flame,
He only knows that not through him
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hop-fields round him seemed,
Like dreams, to come and go;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleamed,
One sheet of living snow;
The smoke above his father's door
In gray soft eddyings hung;
Must he then watch it rise no more,
Doomed by himself, so young?

Yes, honor calls!—with strength like steel
He put the vision by;
Let dusky Indians whine and kneel,
An English lad must die.
And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
With knee to man unbent,
Unfaltering on its dreadful brink,
To his red grave he went.

Vain, mightiest fleets of iron framed,
Vain, those all-shattering guns,
Unless proud England keep, untamed,
The strong heart of her sons;
So let his name through Europe ring,—
A man of mean estate,
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
Because his soul was great.

Francis Hastings Doyle [1810–1888]

HOW OLD BROWN TOOK HARPER'S FERRY

[OCTOBER 16, 1859]

JOHN BROWN in Kansas settled, like a steadfast Yankee farmer,
Brave and godly, with four sons, all stalwart men of might.
There he spoke aloud for freedom, and the Border-strife grew warmer,
Till the Rangers fired his dwelling, in his absence, in the night;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Came homeward in the morning—to find his house burned down.

Then he grasped his trusty rifle and boldly fought for freedom;
Smote from border unto border the fierce, invading band;
And he and his brave boys vowed—so might Heaven help and speed 'em!—
They would save those grand old prairies from the curse that blights the land;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Said, "Boys, the Lord will aid us!" and he shoved his ramrod down.

And the Lord *did* aid these men, and they labored day and even,
Saving Kansas from its peril; and their very lives seemed charmed,
Till the ruffians killed one son, in the blessèd light of Heaven:
In cold blood the fellows slew him, as he journeyed all unarmed;
Then Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Shed not a tear, but shut his teeth, and frowned a terrible frown!

Then they seized another brave boy,—not amid the heat of battle,
But in peace, behind his ploughshare,—and they loaded him with chains,
And with pikes, before their horses, even as they goad their cattle,
Drove him cruelly, for their sport, and at last blew out his brains;
Then Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Raised his right hand up to Heaven, calling Heaven's vengeance down.

And he swore a fearful oath, by the name of the Almighty,
He would hunt this ravening evil that had scathed and torn him so;
He would seize it by the vitals; he would crush it day and night; he
Would so pursue its footsteps, so return it blow for blow,
That Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Should be a name to swear by, in backwoods or in town!

Then his beard became more grizzled, and his wild blue eye grew wilder,
And more sharply curved his hawk's-nose, snuffing battle from afar;

And he and the two boys left, though the Kansas strife waxed milder,
Grew more sullen, till was over the bloody Border War,
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Had gone crazy, as they reckoned by his fearful glare and frown.

So he left the plains of Kansas and their bitter woes behind him,
Slipped off into Virginia, where the statesmen all are born.
Hired a farm by Harper's Ferry, and no one knew where to find him,
Or whether he'd turned parson, or was jacketed and shorn;
For Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Mad as he was, knew texts enough to wear a parson's gown.

He bought no ploughs and harrows, spades and shovels, and such trifles;
But quietly to his rancho there came, by every train,
Boxes full of pikes and pistols, and his well-beloved Sharp's rifles;
And eighteen other madmen joined their leader there again.
Says Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
"Boys, we've got an army large enough to march and take the town!

"Take the town, and seize the muskets, free the negroes, and then arm them;
Carry the County and the State, ay, and all the potent South.
On their own heads be the slaughter, if their victims rise to harm them—
These Virginians! who believed not, nor would heed the warning mouth."
Says Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
"The world shall see a Republic, or my name is not John Brown."

'Twas the sixteenth of October, on the evening of a Sunday:
"This good work," declared the captain, "shall be on a holy night!"
It was on a Sunday evening, and before the noon of Monday,
With two sons, and Captain Stephens, fifteen privates —black and white,
Captain Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Marched across the bridged Potomac, and knocked the sentry down;

Took the guarded armory-building, and the muskets and the cannon;
Captured all the county majors and the colonels, one by one;
Scared to death each gallant scion of Virginia they ran on,
And before the noon of Monday, I say, the deed was done.
Mad Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
With his eighteen other crazy men, went in and took the town.

Very little noise and bluster, little smell of powder made he;
It was all done in the midnight, like the Emperor's *coup d'etat*.
"Cut the wires! Stop the rail-cars! Hold the streets and bridges!" said he,
Then declared the new Republic, with himself for guiding star,—
This Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
And the bold two thousand citizens ran off and left the town.

Then was riding and railroading and expressing here and thither;
And the Martinsburg Sharpshooters and the Charlestown Volunteers,
And the Shepherdstown and Winchester Militia hastened whither
Old Brown was said to muster his ten thousand grenadiers.

General Brown!
Osawatomie Brown!
Behind whose rampant banner all the North was pouring down.

But at last, 'tis said, some prisoners escaped from Old Brown's durance,
And the effervescent valor of the Chivalry broke out,
When they learned that nineteen madmen had the marvellous assurance—
Only nineteen—thus to seize the place and drive them straight about;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Found an army come to take him, encamped around the town.

But to storm, with all the forces I have mentioned, was too risky;
So they hurried off to Richmond for the Government Marines,
Tore them from their weeping matrons, fired their souls with Bourbon whiskey,
Till they battered down Brown's castle with their ladders and machines;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Received three bayonet stabs, and a cut on his brave old crown.

Tallyho! the old Virginia gentry gather to the baying!
In they rushed and killed the game, shooting lustily away;
And whene'er they slew a rebel, those who came too late for slaying,
Not to lose a share of glory, fired their bullets in his clay;
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
Saw his sons fall dead beside him, and between them laid him down.

How the conquerors wore their laurels; how they hastened on the trial;
How Old Brown was placed, half dying, on the Charlestown court-house floor;
How he spoke his grand oration, in the scorn of all denial;
What the brave old madman told them,—these are known the country o'er.
"Hang Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,"
Said the judge, "and all such rebels!" with his most judicial frown.

But, Virginians, don't do it! for I tell you that the flagon,
Filled with blood of Old Brown's offspring, was first poured by Southern hands;
And each drop from Old Brown's life-veins, like the red gore of the dragon,
May spring up a vengeful Fury, hissing through your slave-worn lands!
And Old Brown,
Osawatomie Brown,
May trouble you more than ever, when you've nailed his coffin down!

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

BROWN OF OSSAWATOMIE

[DECEMBER 2, 1859]

JOHN BROWN of Ossawatomie spake on his dying day:
"I will not have to shrive my soul a priest in Slavery's pay.
But let some poor slave-mother whom I have striven to free,
With her children, from the gallows-stair put up a prayer for me!"

John Brown of Ossawatomie, they led him out to die;
And lo! a poor slave-mother with her little child pressed nigh.

Then the bold, blue eye grew tender, and the old harsh face
grew mild,
As he stooped between the jeering ranks and kissed the
negro's child!

The shadows of his stormy life that moment fell apart;
And they who blamed the bloody hand forgave the loving
heart.
That kiss from all its guilty means redeemed the good intent,
And round the grisly fighter's hair the martyr's aureole bent!

Perish with him the folly that seeks through evil good!
Long live the generous purpose unstained with human blood!
Not the raid of midnight terror, but the thought which un-
derlies;
Not the borderer's pride of daring, but the Christian's sacri-
fice.

Nevermore may yon Blue Ridges the Northern rifle hear,
Nor see the light of blazing homes flash on the negro's spear;
But let the free-winged angel Truth their guarded passes
scale,
To teach that right is more than might, and justice more
than mail!

So vainly shall Virginia set her battle in array;
In vain her trampling squadrons knead the winter snow with
clay.
She may strike the pouncing eagle, but she dares not harm
the dove;
And every gate she bars to Hate, shall open wide to Love!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

BROTHER JONATHAN'S LAMENT FOR SISTER CAROLINE

[DECEMBER 20, 1860]

She has gone,—she has left us in passion and pride,—
Our stormy-browed sister, so long at our side!
She has torn her own star from our firmament's glow,
And turned on her brother the face of a foe!

Oh, Caroline, Caroline, child of the sun,
We can never forget that our hearts have been one,—
Our foreheads both sprinkled in Liberty's name,
From the fountain of blood with the finger of flame!

You were always too ready to fire at a touch;
But we said: "She is hasty,—she does not mean much."
We have scowled when you uttered some turbulent threat;
But Friendship still whispered: "Forgive and forget!"

Has our love all died out? Have its altars grown cold?
Has the curse come at last which the fathers foretold?
Then Nature must teach us the strength of the chain
That her petulant children would sever in vain.

They may fight till the buzzards are gorged with their spoil,
Till the harvest grows black as it rots in the soil,
Till the wolves and the catamounts troop from their caves,
And the shark tracks the pirate, the lord of the waves:

In vain is the strife! When its fury is past,
Their fortunes must flow in one channel at last,
As the torrents that rush from the mountains of snow
Roll mingled in peace through the valleys below.

Our Union is river, lake, ocean, and sky;
Man breaks not the medal, when God cuts the die!
Though darkened with sulphur, though cloven with steel,
The blue arch will brighten, the waters will heal!

Oh, Caroline, Caroline, child of the sun,
There are battles with Fate that can never be won!
The star-flowering banner must never be furled,
For its blossoms of light are the hope of the world!

Go, then, our rash sister! afar and aloof,
Run wild in the sunshine away from our roof;
But when your heart aches and your feet have grown sore,
Remember the pathway that leads to our door!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

THE REVEILLE

[APRIL, 1861]

HARK! I hear the tramp of thousands,
And of armèd men the hum;
Lo! a nation's hosts have gathered
Round the quick alarming drum,—
Saying, "Come,
Freemen, come!
Ere your heritage be wasted," said the quick alarming drum.

"Let me of my heart take counsel:
War is not of life the sum;
Who shall stay and reap the harvest
When the autumn days shall come?"
But the drum
Echoed, "Come!
Death shall reap the braver harvest," said the solemn-sounding drum.

"But when won the coming battle,
What of profit springs therefrom?
What if conquest, subjugation,
Even greater ills become?"
But the drum
Answered, "Come!
You must do the sum to prove it," said the Yankee answering drum.

"What if, 'mid the cannons' thunder,
Whistling shot and bursting bomb,
When my brothers fall around me,
Should my heart grow cold and numb?"
But the drum
Answered, "Come!
Better there in death united, than in life a recreant.—Come!"

Thus they answered,—hoping, fearing,
Some in faith, and doubting some,

Till a trumpet-voice proclaiming,
Said, "My chosen people, come!"
Then the drum,
Lo! was dumb,
For the great heart of the nation, throbbing, answered,
"Lord, we come!"

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

THE WASHERS OF THE SHROUD

[OCTOBER, 1861]

ALONG a river-side, I know not where,
I walked one night in mystery of dream;
A chill creeps curdling yet beneath my hair,
To think what chanced me by the pallid gleam
Of a moon-wraith that waned through haunted air.

Pale fireflies pulsed within the meadow-mist
Their halos, wavering thistledowns of light;
The loon, that seemed to mock some goblin tryst,
Laughed; and the echoes, huddling in affright,
Like Odin's hounds, fled baying down the night.

Then all was silent, till there smote my ear
A movement in the stream that checked my breath:
Was it the slow plash of a wading deer?
But something said, "This water is of Death!
The Sisters wash a shroud,—ill thing to hear!"

I, looking then, beheld the ancient Three
Known to the Greek's and to the Northman's creed,
That sit in shadow of the mystic Tree,
Still crooning, as they weave their endless brede,
One song: "Time was, Time is, and Time shall be."

No wrinkled crones were they, as I had deemed,
But fair as yesterday, to-day, to-morrow,
To mourner, lover, poet, ever seemed;
Something too high for joy, too deep for sorrow,
Thrilled in their tones, and from their faces gleamed.

"Still men and nations reap as they have strawn,"
So sang they, working at their task the while;
"The fatal raiment must be cleansed ere dawn:
For Austria? Italy? the Sea-Queen's isle?
O'er what quenched grandeur must our shroud be drawn?

"Or is it for a younger, fairer corse,
That gathered States like children round his knees,
That tamed the wave to be his posting-horse,
Feller of forests, linker of the seas,
Bridge-builder, hammerer, youngest son of Thor's?

"What make we, murmurest thou? and what are we?
When empires must be wound, we bring the shroud,
The time-old web of the implacable Three:
Is it too coarse for him, the young and proud?
Earth's mightiest deigned to wear it,—why not he?"

"Is there no hope?" I moaned, "so strong, so fair!
Our Fowler whose proud bird would brook erewhile
No rival's swoop in all our western air!
Gather the ravens, then, in funeral file
For him, life's morn yet golden in his hair?

"Leave me not hopeless, ye unpitying dames!
I see, half seeing. Tell me, ye who scanned
The stars, Earth's elders, still must noblest aims
Be traced upon oblivious ocean-sands?
Must Hesper join the wailing ghosts of names?"

"When grass-blades stiffen with red battle-dew,
Ye deem we choose the victor and the slain:
Say, choose we them that shall be leal and true
To the heart's longing, the high faith of brain?
Yet there the victory lies, if ye but knew.

"Three roots bear up Dominion: Knowledge, Will,—
These twain are strong, but stronger yet the third,—
Obedience,—'tis the great tap-root that still,
Knit round the rock of Duty, is not stirred,
Though Heaven-loosed tempests spend their utmost skill.

"Is the doom sealed for Hesper? 'Tis not we
Denounce it, but the Law before all time:
The brave makes danger opportunity;
The waverer, paltering with the chance sublime,
Dwarfs it to peril: which shall Hesper be?

"Hath he let vultures climb his eagle's seat
To make Jove's bolts purveyors of their maw?
Hath he the Many's plaudits found more sweet
Than Wisdom? held Opinion's wind for Law?
Then let him hearken for the doomster's feet!

"Rough are the steps, slow-hewn in flintiest rock,
States climb to power by; slippery those with gold
Down which they stumble to eternal mock:
No chafferer's hand shall long the sceptre hold,
Who, given a Fate to shape, would sell the block.

"We sing old Sagas, songs of weal and woe,
Mystic because too cheaply understood;
Dark sayings are not ours; men hear and know,
See Evil weak, see strength alone in Good,
Yet hope to stem God's fire with walls of tow.

"Time Was unlocks the riddle of Time Is,
That offers choice of glory or of gloom;
The solver makes Time Shall Be surely his.
But hasten, Sisters! for even now the tomb
Grates its slow hinge and calls from the abyss."

"But not for him," I cried, "not yet for him,
Whose large horizon, westering, star by star
Wins from the void to where on Ocean's rim
The sunset shuts the world with golden bar,
Nor yet his thews shall fail, his eye grow dim!

"His shall be larger manhood, saved for those
That walk unblenching through the trial-fires;
Not suffering, but faint heart, is worst of woes,
And he no base-born son of craven sires,
Whose eye need blench confronted with his foes.

"Tears may be ours, but proud, for those who win
Death's royal purple in the foeman's lines;
Peace, too, brings tears; and mid the battle-din,
The wiser ear some text of God divines,
For the sheathed blade may rust with darker sin.

"God, give us peace! not such as lulls to sleep,
But sword on thigh, and brow with purpose knit!
And let our Ship of State to harbor sweep,
Her ports all up, her battle-lanterns lit,
And her leashed thunders gathering for their leap!"

So cried I with clenched hands and passionate pain,
Thinking of dear ones by Potomac's side;
Again the loon laughed mocking, and again
The echoes bayed far down the night and died,
While waking I recalled my wandering brain.

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

THE PICKET-GUARD

[NOVEMBER, 1861]

"ALL quiet along the Potomac," they say,
"Except now and then a stray picket
Is shot, as he walks on his beat to and fro,
By a rifleman hid in the thicket.
'Tis nothing: a private or two, now and then,
Will not count in the news of the battle;
Not an officer lost—only one of the men,
Moaning out, all alone, the death-rattle."

All quiet along the Potomac to-night,
Where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming;
Their tents in the rays of the clear autumn moon,
Or the light of the watch-fire, are gleaming.
A tremulous sigh of the gentle night-wind
Through the forest leaves softly is creeping,
While the stars up above, with their glittering eyes,
Keep guard, for the army is sleeping.

There's only the sound of the lone sentry's tread,
As he tramps from the rock to the fountain,
And thinks of the two in the low trundle-bed
Far away in the cot on the mountain.
His musket falls slack; his face, dark and grim,
Grows gentle with memories tender,
As he mutters a prayer for the children asleep—
For their mother—may Heaven defend her!

The moon seems to shine just as brightly as then,
That night, when the love yet unspoken
Leaped up to his lips—when low-murmured vows
Were pledged to be ever unbroken.
Then drawing his sleeve roughly over his eyes,
He dashes off tears that are welling,
And gathers his gun closer up to its place
As if to keep down the heart-swelling.

He passes the fountain, the blasted pine-tree;
The footstep is lagging and weary;
Yet onward he goes, through the broad belt of light,
Towards the shade of the forest so dreary.
Hark! was it the night-wind that rustled the leaves?
Was it moonlight so wondrously flashing?
It looked like a rifle . . . . "Ha! Mary, good-by!"
The red life-blood is ebbing and plashing.

All quiet along the Potomac to-night;
No sound save the rush of the river;
While soft falls the dew on the face of the dead—
The picket's off duty forever.

Ethel Lynn Beers [1827–1879]

CIVIL WAR

[1861]

"Rifleman, shoot me a fancy shot
Straight at the heart of yon prowling vidette;
Ring me a ball in the glittering spot
That shines on his breast like an amulet!"

"Ah, captain! here goes for a fine-drawn bead,
There's music around when my barrel's in tune!"
Crack! went the rifle, the messenger sped,
And dead from his horse fell the ringing dragoon.

"Now, rifleman, steal through the bushes, and snatch
From your victim some trinket to handsel first blood;
A button, a loop, or that luminous patch
That gleams in the moon like a diamond stud!"

"O captain! I staggered, and sunk on my track,
When I gazed on the face of that fallen vidette,
For he looked so like you, as he lay on his back,
That my heart rose upon me, and masters me yet.

"But I snatched off the trinket,—this locket of gold;
An inch from the center my lead broke its way,
Scarce grazing the picture, so fair to behold,
Of a beautiful lady in bridal array."

"Ha! rifleman, fling me the locket!—'tis she,
My brother's young bride,—and the fallen dragoon
Was her husband—Hush! soldier, 'twas Heaven's decree;
We must bury him there, by the light of the moon!

"But, hark! the far bugles their warnings unite;
War is a virtue,—weakness a sin;
There's a lurking and loping around us to-night;
Load again, rifleman, keep your hand in!"

Charles Dawson Shanly [1811–1875]

KEARNY AT SEVEN PINES

[MAY 31, 1862]

So that soldierly legend is still on its journey,—
That story of Kearny who knew not to yield!
'Twas the day when with Jameson, fierce Berry, and Birney,
Against twenty thousand he rallied the field.

Where the red volleys poured, where the clamor rose highest,
Where the dead lay in clumps through the dwarf oak and pine,
Where the aim from the thicket was surest and nighest,—
No charge like Phil Kearny's along the whole line.

When the battle went ill, and the bravest were solemn,
Near the dark Seven Pines, where we still held our ground,
He rode down the length of the withering column,
And his heart at our war-cry leapt up with a bound;
He snuffed, like his charger, the wind of the powder,—
His sword waved us on and we answered the sign;
Loud our cheer as we rushed, but his laugh rang the louder,
"There's the devil's own fun, boys, along the whole line!"

How he strode his brown steed! How we saw his blade brighten
In the one hand still left,—and the reins in his teeth!
He laughed like a boy when the holidays heighten,
But a soldier's glance shot from his visor beneath.
Up came the reserves to the mellay infernal,
Asking where to go in,—through the clearing or pine?
"Oh, anywhere! Forward! 'Tis all the same, Colonel:
You'll find lovely fighting along the whole line!"

Oh, evil the black shroud of night at Chantilly,
That hid him from sight of his brave men and tried!
Foul, foul sped the bullet that clipped the white lily,
The flower of our knighthood, the whole army's pride!
Yet we dream that he still,—in that shadowy region
Where the dead form their ranks at the wan drummer's sign,—
Rides on, as of old, down the length of his legion,
And the word still is "Forward!" along the whole line.

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833–1908]

BARBARA FRIETCHIE

[SEPTEMBER 13, 1862]

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

"Halt!"—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
"Fire!"—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word;

"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tossed
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

KEENAN'S CHARGE

[MAY 2, 1863]

I

THE sun had set;
The leaves with dew were wet:—
Down fell a bloody dusk
On the woods, that second of May,
Where "Stonewall's" corps, like a beast of prey,
Tore through, with angry tusk.

"They've trapped us, boys!"
Rose from our flank a voice.
With rush of steel and smoke
On came the rebels straight,
Eager as love and wild as hate;
And our line reeled and broke;

Broke and fled.
Not one stayed,— but the dead!
With curses, shrieks, and cries,
Horses and wagons and men
Tumbled back through the shuddering glen,
And above us the fading skies.

There's one hope, still,—
Those batteries, parked on the hill!
"Battery, wheel!" ('mid the roar),
"Pass pieces; fix prolonge to fire
Retiring. Trot!" In the panic dire
A bugle rings "Trot!"—and no more.

The horses plunged,
The cannon lurched and lunged,

To join the hopeless rout.
But suddenly rose a form
Calmly in front of the human storm,
With a stern, commanding shout:

"Align those guns!"
(We knew it was Pleasonton's.)
The cannoneers bent to obey,
And worked with a will at his word,
And the black guns moved as if *they* had heard.
But, ah, the dread delay!

"To wait is crime;
O God, for ten minutes' time!"
The General looked around.
There Keenan sat, like a stone,
With his three hundred horse alone,
Less shaken than the ground.

"Major, your men?"
"Are soldiers, General." "Then,
Charge, Major! Do your best;
Hold the enemy back, at all cost,
Till my guns are placed;—else the army is lost.
You die to save the rest!"

II

By the shrouded gleam of the western skies,
Brave Keenan looked into Pleasonton's eyes
For an instant—clear, and cool, and still;
Then, with a smile, he said: "I will."

"Cavalry, charge!" Not a man of them shrank.
Their sharp, full cheer, from rank on rank,
Rose joyously, with a willing breath,—
Rose like a greeting hail to death.

Then forward they sprang, and spurred, and clashed;
Shouted the officers, crimson-sashed;
Rode well the men, each brave as his fellow,
In their faded coats of the blue and yellow;

And above in the air, with an instinct true,
Like a bird of war their pennon flew.

With clank of scabbards and thunder of steeds,
And blades that shine like sunlit reeds,
And strong brown faces bravely pale
For fear their proud attempt shall fail,
Three hundred Pennsylvanians close
On twice ten thousand gallant foes.

Line after line the troopers came
To the edge of the wood that was ringed with flame;
Rode in, and sabred, and shot,—and fell:
Nor came one back his wounds to tell.
And full in the midst rose Keenan, tall,
In the gloom, like a martyr awaiting his fall,
While the circle-stroke of his sabre, swung
'Round his head, like a halo there, luminous hung.

Line after line, aye, whole platoons,
Struck dead in their saddles, of brave dragoons
By the maddened horses were onward borne
And into the vortex flung, trampled and torn;
As Keenan fought with his men, side by side.

So they rode, till there were no more to ride.

But over them, lying there shattered and mute,
What deep echo rolls? 'Tis a death-salute
From the cannon in place; for, heroes, you braved
Your fate not in vain: the army was saved!

Over them now,—year following year,—
Over their graves the pine-cones fall,
And the whippoorwill chants his spectre-call;
But they stir not again; they raise no cheer;
They have ceased. But their glory shall never cease,
Nor their light be quenched in the light of peace.
The rush of their charge is resounding still,
That saved the army at Chancellorsville.

George Parsons Lathrop [1851–1898]

THE BLACK REGIMENT

[PORT HUDSON, MAY 27, 1863]

DARK as the clouds of even,
Ranked in the western heaven,
Waiting the breath that lifts
All the dead mass, and drifts
Tempest and falling brand
Over a ruined land,—
So still and orderly,
Arm to arm, knee to knee,
Waiting the great event,
Stands the black regiment.

Down the long dusky line
Teeth gleam and eyeballs shine;
And the bright bayonet,
Bristling and firmly set,
Flashed with a purpose grand,
Long ere the sharp command
Of the fierce rolling drum
Told them their time had come,
Told them what work was sent
For the black regiment.

"Now," the flag-sergeant cried,
"Though death and hell betide,
Let the whole nation see
If we are fit to be
Free in this land; or bound
Down, like the whining hound,—
Bound with red stripes of pain
In our old chains again!"
Oh, what a shout there went
From the black regiment!

"Charge!" Trump and drum awoke;
Onward the bondmen broke;
Bayonet and saber-stroke

Vainly opposed their rush.
Through the wild battle's crush,
With but one thought aflush,
Driving their lords like chaff,
In the guns' mouths they laugh;
Or at the slippery brands,
Leaping with open hands,
Down they tear man and horse,
Down in their awful course;
Trampling with bloody heel
Over the crashing steel,
All their eyes forward bent,
Rushed the black regiment.

"Freedom!" their battle-cry,—
"Freedom! or leave to die!"
Ah! and they meant the word,
Not as with us 'tis heard,
Not a mere party shout:
They gave their spirits out;
Trusted the end to God,
And on the gory sod
Rolled in triumphant blood.
Glad to strike one free blow,
Whether for weal or woe;
Glad to breathe one free breath,
Though on the lips of death;
Praying,—alas! in vain!—
That they might fall again,
So they could once more see
That burst to liberty!
This was what "freedom" lent
To the black regiment.

Hundreds on hundreds fell;
But they are resting well;
Scourges and shackles strong
Never shall do them wrong.
Oh, to the living few,
Soldiers, be just and true!

Hail them as comrades tried;
Fight with them side by side;
Never, in field or tent,
Scorn the black regiment!

George Henry Boker [1823–1890]

THE HIGH TIDE AT GETTYSBURG

[JULY 3, 1863]

A CLOUD possessed the hollow field,
The gathering battle's smoky shield:
Athwart the gloom the lightning flashed,
And through the cloud some horsemen dashed,
And from the heights the thunder pealed.

Then, at the brief command of Lee,
Moved out that matchless infantry,
With Pickett leading grandly down,
To rush against the roaring crown
Of those dread heights of destiny.

Far heard above the angry guns,
A cry across the tumult runs:
The voice that rang through Shiloh's woods,
And Chickamauga's solitudes:
The fierce South cheering on her sons!

Ah, how the withering tempest blew
Against the front of Pettigrew!
A Khamsin wind that scorched and singed,
Like that infernal flame that fringed
The British squares at Waterloo!

A thousand fall where Kemper led;
A thousand died where Garnett bled;
In blinding flame and strangling smoke,
The remnant through the batteries broke,
And crossed the works with Armistead.

"Once more in Glory's van with me!"
Virginia cried to Tennessee:
"We two together, come what may,
Shall stand upon those works to-day!"
The reddest day in history.

Brave Tennessee! In reckless way
Virginia heard her comrade say:
"Close round this rent and riddled rag!"
What time she set her battle-flag
Amid the guns of Doubleday.

But who shall break the guards that wait
Before the awful face of Fate?
The tattered standards of the South
Were shrivelled at the cannon's mouth,
And all her hopes were desolate.

In vain the Tennesseean set
His breast against the bayonet;
In vain Virginia charged and raged,
A tigress in her wrath uncaged,
Till all the hill was red and wet!

Above the bayonets, mixed and crossed,
Men saw a gray, gigantic ghost
Receding through the battle-cloud,
And heard across the tempest loud
The death-cry of a nation lost!

The brave went down! Without disgrace
They leaped to Ruin's red embrace;
They only heard Fame's thunders wake,
And saw the dazzling sun-burst break
In smiles on Glory's bloody face!

They fell, who lifted up a hand
And bade the sun in heaven to stand;
They smote and fell, who set the bars
Against the progress of the stars,
And stayed the march of Motherland!

They stood, who saw the future come
On through the fight's delirium;
They smote and stood, who held the hope
Of nations on that slippery slope,
Amid the cheers of Christendom!

God lives! He forged the iron will,
That clutched and held that trembling hill!
God lives and reigns! He built and lent
The heights for Freedom's battlement,
Where floats her flag in triumph still!

Fold up the banners! Smelt the guns!
Love rules. Her gentler purpose runs.
A mighty mother turns in tears,
The pages of her battle years,
Lamenting all her fallen sons!

Will Henry Thompson [1848–

JOHN BURNS OF GETTYSBURG

HAVE you heard the story that gossips tell
Of Burns of Gettysburg? No? Ah, well:
Brief is the glory that hero earns,
Briefer the story of poor John Burns:
He was the fellow who won renown,—
The only man who didn't back down
When the rebels rode through his native town;
But held his own in the fight next day,
When all his townsfolk ran away.
That was in July, sixty-three,—
The very day that General Lee,
Flower of Southern chivalry,
Baffled and beaten, backward reeled
From a stubborn Meade and a barren field.

I might tell how, but the day before,
John Burns stood at his cottage door,
Looking down the village street,

Where, in the shade of his peaceful vine,
He heard the low of his gathered kine,
And felt their breath with incense sweet;
Or I might say, when the sunset burned
The old farm gable, he thought it turned
The milk that fell like a babbling flood
Into the milk-pail, red as blood!
Or how he fancied the hum of bees
Were bullets buzzing among the trees.
But all such fanciful thoughts as these
Were strange to a practical man like Burns,
Who minded only his own concerns,
Troubled no more by fancies fine
Than one of his calm-eyed, long-tailed kine,—
Quite old-fashioned and matter-of-fact,
Slow to argue, but quick to act.
That was the reason, as some folks say,
He fought so well on that terrible day.

And it was terrible. On the right
Raged for hours the heady fight,
Thundered the battery's double bass,—
Difficult music for men to face;
While on the left—where now the graves
Undulate like the living waves
That all that day unceasing swept
Up to the pits the rebels kept—
Round-shot ploughed the upland glades,
Sown with bullets, reaped with blades;
Shattered fences here and there
Tossed their splinters in the air;
The very trees were stripped and bare;
The barns that once held yellow grain
Were heaped with harvests of the slain;
The cattle bellowed on the plain,
The turkeys screamed with might and main,
The brooding barn-fowl left their rest
With strange shells bursting in each nest.

Just where the tide of battle turns,
Erect and lonely, stood old John Burns.

How do you think the man was dressed?
He wore an ancient long buff vest,
Yellow as saffron,—but his best;
And, buttoned over his manly breast,
Was a bright blue coat, with a rolling collar,
And large gilt buttons,—size of a dollar,—
With tails that the country-folk called "swaller."
He wore a broad-brimmed, bell-crowned hat,
White as the locks on which it sat.
Never had such a sight been seen
For forty years on the village green,
Since old John Burns was a country beau,
And went to the "quiltings" long ago.

Close at his elbows all that day,
Veterans of the Peninsula,
Sunburnt and bearded, charged away;
And striplings, downy of lip and chin,—
Clerks that the Home-Guard mustered in,—
Glanced, as they passed, at the hat he wore,
Then at the rifle his right hand bore;
And hailed him, from out their youthful lore,
With scraps of a slangy repertoire:
"How are you, White Hat?" "Put her through!"
"Your head's level!" and "Bully for you!"
Called him "Daddy,"—begged he'd disclose
The name of the tailor who made his clothes,
And what was the value he set on those;
While Burns, unmindful of jeer or scoff,
Stood there picking the rebels off,—
With his long brown rifle, and bell-crowned hat,
And the swallow-tails they were laughing at.

'Twas but a moment, for that respect
Which clothes all courage their voices checked;
And something the wildest could understand
Spake in the old man's strong right hand,
And his corded throat, and the lurking frown
Of his eyebrows under his old bell-crown;
Until, as they gazed, there crept an awe
Through the ranks in whispers, and some men saw,

In the antique vestments and long white hair,
The Past of the Nation in battle there;
And some of the soldiers since declare
That the gleam of his old white hat afar,
Like the crested plume of the brave Navarre,
That day was their oriflamme of war.

So raged the battle. You know the rest:
How the rebels, beaten and backward pressed,
Broke at the final charge and ran.
At which John Burns—a practical man—
Shouldered his rifle, unbent his brows,
And then went back to his bees and cows.

That is the story of old John Burns;
This is the moral the reader learns:
In fighting the battle, the question's whether
You'll show a hat that's white, or a feather!

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

FARRAGUT

[MOBILE BAY, AUGUST 5, 1864]

FARRAGUT, Farragut,
Old Heart of Oak,
Daring Dave Farragut,
Thunderbolt stroke,
Watches the hoary mist
Lift from the bay,
Till his flag, glory-kissed,
Greets the young day.

Far, by gray Morgan's walls,
Looms the black fleet.
Hark, deck to rampart calls
With the drums' beat!
Buoy your chains overboard,
While the steam hums;
Men! to the battlement,
Farragut comes.

See, as the hurricane
Hurtles in wrath
Squadrons of clouds amain
Back from its path!
Back to the parapet,
To the guns' lips,
Thunderbolt Farragut
Hurls the black ships.

Now through the battle's roar
Clear the boy sings,
"By the mark fathoms four,"
While his lead swings.
Steady the wheelmen five
"Nor' by East keep her,"
"Steady," but two alive:
How the shells sweep her!

Lashed to the mast that sways
Over red decks,
Over the flame that plays
Round the torn wrecks,
Over the dying lips
Framed for a cheer,
Farragut leads his ships,
Guides the line clear.

On by heights cannon-browed,
While the spars quiver;
Onward still flames the cloud
Where the hulks shiver.
See, yon fort's star is set,
Storm and fire past.
Cheer him, lads—Farragut,
Lashed to the mast!

Oh! while Atlantic's breast
Bears a white sail,
While the Gulf's towering crest
Tops a green vale,

Men thy bold deeds shall tell,
Old Heart of Oak,
Daring Dave Farragut,
Thunderbolt stroke!

William Tucker Meredith [1839–

CRAVEN

[MOBILE BAY, AUGUST 5, 1864]

Over the turret, shut in his ironclad tower,
Craven was conning his ship through smoke and flame;
Gun to gun he had battered the fort for an hour,
Now was the time for a charge to end the game.

There lay the narrowing channel, smooth and grim,
A hundred deaths beneath it, and never a sign:
There lay the enemy's ships, and sink or swim
The flag was flying, and he was head of the line.

The fleet behind was jamming: the monitor hung
Beating the stream; the roar for a moment hushed;
Craven spoke to the pilot; slow she swung;
Again he spoke, and right for the foe she rushed

Into the narrowing channel, between the shore
And the sunk torpedoes lying in treacherous rank;
She turned but a yard too short; a muffled roar,
A mountainous wave, and she rolled, righted, and sank.

Over the manhole, up in the ironclad tower,
Pilot and captain met as they turned to fly:
The hundredth part of a moment seemed an hour,
For one could pass to be saved, and one must die.

They stood like men in a dream; Craven spoke,—
Spoke as he lived and fought, with a captain's pride:
"After you, Pilot." The pilot woke,
Down the ladder he went, and Craven died.

All men praise the deed and the manner; but we—
We set it apart from the pride that stoops to the proud,
The strength that is supple to serve the strong and free,
The grave of the empty hands and promises loud;

Sidney thirsting a humbler need to slake,
Nelson waiting his turn for the surgeon's hand,
Lucas crushed with chains for a comrade's sake,
Outram coveting right before command,

These were paladins, these were Craven's peers,
These with him shall be crowned in story and song,
Crowned with the glitter of steel and the glimmer of tears,
Princes of courtesy, merciful, proud, and strong.

Henry Newbolt [1862–

SHERIDAN'S RIDE

[OCTOBER 19, 1864]

Up from the South, at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble, and rumble, and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar;
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold,
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad highway leading down:
And there, through the flush of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass, as with eagle flight;

As if he knew the terrible need,
He stretched away with his utmost speed;
Hills rose and fell, but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprang from those swift hoofs, thundering south,
The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth,
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet, the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind;
And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
Swept on, with his wild eye full of fire;
But, lo! he is nearing his heart's desire;
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the general saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops;
What was done? what to do? a glance told him both,
Then, striking his spurs, with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line, 'mid a storm of huzzas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there, because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.
With foam and with dust the black charger was gray;
By the flash of his eye, and the red nostril's play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say:
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester town to save the day!"

Hurrah! hurrah for Sheridan!
Hurrah! hurrah for horse and man!

And when their statues are placed on high,
Under the dome of the Union sky,
The American soldier's Temple of Fame,
There, with the glorious general's name,
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright:
"Here is the steed that saved the day
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester—twenty miles away!"

Thomas Buchanan Read [1822–1872]

SONG OF SHERMAN'S MARCH TO THE SEA

[NOVEMBER, 1864]

Our camp-fires shone bright on the mountains
That frowned on the river below,
While we stood by our guns in the morning,
And eagerly watched for the foe;
When a rider came out from the darkness
That hung over mountain and tree,
And shouted: "Boys, up and be ready,
For Sherman will march to the sea."

Then cheer upon cheer for bold Sherman
Went up from each valley and glen,
And the bugles reëchoed the music
That came from the lips of the men:
For we knew that the stars in our banner
More bright in their splendor would be,
And that blessings from Northland would greet us
When Sherman marched down to the sea.

Then forward, boys, forward to battle!
We marched on our wearisome way,
And we stormed the wild hills of Resaca;
God bless those who fell on that day!
Then Kenesaw, dark in its glory,
Frowned down on the flag of the free,
But the East and the West bore our standards,
And Sherman marched on to the sea.

Still onward we pressed, till our banners
Swept out from Atlanta's grim walls,
And the blood of the patriot dampened
The soil where the traitor flag falls;
Yet we paused not to weep for the fallen,
Who slept by each river and tree;
We twined them a wreath of the laurel
As Sherman marched down to the sea.

Oh! proud was our army that morning,
That stood where the pine darkly towers,
When Sherman said: "Boys, you are weary;
This day fair Savannah is ours!"
Then sang we a song for our chieftain,
That echoed o'er river and lea,
And the stars in our banner shone brighter
When Sherman marched down to the sea.

Samuel H. M. Byers [1838–

A SECOND REVIEW OF THE GRAND ARMY

[MAY 24, 1865]

I READ last night of the Grand Review
In Washington's chiefest avenue,—
Two hundred thousand men in blue,
I think they said was the number,—
Till I seemed to hear their trampling feet,
The bugle blast and the drum's quick beat,
The clatter of hoofs in the stony street,
The cheers of people who came to greet,
And the thousand details that to repeat
Would only my verse encumber,—
Till I fell in a revery, sad and sweet,
And then to a fitful slumber.

When, lo! in a vision I seemed to stand
In the lonely Capitol. On each hand
Far stretched the portico, dim and grand
Its columns ranged like a martial band

Of sheeted spectres, whom some command
Had called to a last reviewing.
And the streets of the city were white and bare;
No footfall echoed across the square;
But out of the misty midnight air
I heard in the distance a trumpet blare,
And the wandering night-winds seemed to bear
The sound of a far tattooing.

Then I held my breath with fear and dread;
For into the square, with a brazen tread,
There rode a figure whose stately head
O'erlooked the review that morning,
That never bowed from its firm-set seat
When the living column passed its feet,
Yet now rode steadily up the street
To the phantom bugle's warning:

Till it reached the Capitol square, and wheeled,
And there in the moonlight stood revealed
A well-known form that in State and field
Had led our patriot sires:
Whose face was turned to the sleeping camp,
Afar through the river's fog and damp,
That showed no flicker, nor waning lamp,
Nor wasted bivouac fires.

And I saw a phantom army come,
With never a sound of fife or drum,
But keeping time to a throbbing hum
Of wailing and lamentation:
The martyred heroes of Malvern Hill,
Of Gettysburg and Chancellorsville,
The men whose wasted figures fill
The patriot graves of the nation.

And there came the nameless dead,—the men
Who perished in fever-swamp and fen,
The slowly-starved of the prison-pen;
And, marching beside the others,

Came the dusky martyrs of Pillow's fight,
With limbs enfranchised and bearing bright;
I thought—perhaps 'twas the pale moonlight—
They looked as white as their brothers!

And so all night marched the Nation's dead,
With never a banner above them spread,
Nor a badge, nor a motto brandishèd;
No mark—save the bare uncovered head
Of the silent bronze Reviewer;
With never an arch save the vaulted sky;
With never a flower save those that lie
On the distant graves—for love could buy
No gift that was purer or truer.

So all night long swept the strange array;
So all night long, till the morning gray,
I watched for one who had passed away,
With a reverent awe and wonder,—
Till a blue cap waved in the lengthening line,
And I knew that one who was kin of mine
Had come; and I spake—and lo! that sign
Awakened me from my slumber.

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

THE CONQUERED BANNER

Furl that Banner, for 'tis weary;
Round its staff 'tis drooping dreary;
Furl it, fold it—it is best;
For there's not a man to wave it,
And there's not a sword to save it,
And there's not one left to lave it
In the blood which heroes gave it;
And its foes now scorn and brave it;
Furl it, hide it—let it rest!

Take that Banner down! 'tis tattered;
Broken is its shaft and shattered;
And the valiant hosts are scattered

Over whom it floated high.
Oh, 'tis hard for us to fold it,
Hard to think there's none to hold it,
Hard that those who once unrolled it
Now must furl it with a sigh!

Furl that Banner—furl it sadly;
Once ten thousands hailed it gladly,
And ten thousands wildly, madly,
Swore it should forever wave—
Swore that foeman's sword should never
Hearts like theirs entwined dissever,
And that flag should float forever
O'er their freedom, or their grave!

Furl it! for the hands that grasped it,
And the hearts that fondly clasped it,
Cold and dead are lying low;
And that Banner—it is trailing,
While around it sounds the wailing
Of its people in their woe.

For, though conquered, they adore it—
Love the cold, dead hands that bore it!
Weep for those who fell before it!
Pardon those who trailed and tore it!
But, oh, wildly they deplore it,
Now who furl and fold it so!

Furl that Banner! True, 'tis gory,
Yet 'tis wreathed around with glory,
And 'twill live in song and story
Though its folds are in the dust!
For its fame on brightest pages,
Penned by poets and by sages,
Shall go sounding down the ages—
Furl its folds though now we must!

Furl that Banner, softly, slowly;
Treat it gently—it is holy,

For it droops above the dead;
Touch it not—unfold it never;
Let it droop there, furled forever,—
For its people's hopes are fled.

Abram J. Ryan [1839–1888]

DRIVING HOME THE COWS

Out of the clover and blue-eyed grass,
He turned them into the river-lane;
One after another he let them pass,
Then fastened the meadow-bars again.

Under the willows, and over the hill,
He patiently followed their sober pace;
The merry whistle for once was still,
And something shadowed the sunny face.

Only a boy! and his father had said
He never could let his youngest go:
Two already were lying dead
Under the feet of the trampling foe.

But after the evening work was done,
And the frogs were loud in the meadow-swamp,
Over his shoulder he slung his gun,
And stealthily followed the foot-path damp,

Across the clover, and through the wheat,
With resolute heart and purpose grim,
Though cold was the dew on his hurrying feet,
And the blind bat's flitting startled him.

Thrice since then had the lanes been white,
And the orchards sweet with apple-bloom;
And now, when the cows came back at night,
The feeble father drove them home.

For news had come to the lonely farm
That three were lying where two had lain;
And the old man's tremulous, palsied arm
Could never lean on a son's again.

The summer day grew cold and late.
He went for the cows when the work was done;
But down the lane, as he opened the gate,
He saw them coming, one by one,—

Brindle, Ebony, Speckle, and Bess,
Shaking their horns in the evening wind;
Cropping the buttercups out of the grass,—
But who was it following close behind?

Loosely swung in the idle air
The empty sleeve of army blue;
And worn and pale, from the crisping hair,
Looked out a face that the father knew.

For Southern prisons will sometimes yawn,
And yield their dead unto life again;
And the day that comes with a cloudy dawn
In golden glory at last may wane.

The great tears sprang to their meeting eyes;
For the heart must speak when the lips are dumb;
And under the silent evening skies,
Together they followed the cattle home.

Kate Putnam Osgood [1841–

ODE RECITED AT THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION

July 21, 1865

I

Weak-winged is song,
Nor aims at that clear ethered height
Whither the brave deed climbs for light:
We seem to do them wrong,
Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse
Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler verse,
Our trivial song to honor those who come
With ears attuned to strenuous trump and drum,
And shaped in squadron-strophes their desire,
Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and fire:
Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,

A gracious memory to buoy up and save
From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common grave
Of the unventurous throng.

II

To-day our Reverend Mother welcomes back
Her wisest Scholars, those who understood
The deeper teaching of her mystic tome,
And offered their fresh lives to make it good:
No lore of Greece or Rome,
No science peddling with the names of things,
Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,
Can lift our life with wings
Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many waits,
And lengthen out our dates
With that clear fame whose memory sings
In manly hearts to come, and nerves them and dilates:
Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!
Not such the trumpet-call
Of thy diviner mood,
That could thy sons entice
From happy homes and toils, the fruitful nest
Of those half-virtues which the world calls best,
Into War's tumult rude;
But rather far that stern device
The sponsors chose that round thy cradle stood
In the dim, unventured wood,
The VERITAS that lurks beneath
The letter's unprolific sheath,
Life of whate'er makes life worth living,
Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food,
One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the giving.

III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil
Amid the dust of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her.
Many in sad faith sought for her;
Many with crossed hands sighed for her;

But these, our brothers, fought for her;
At life's dear peril wrought for her,
So loved her that they died for her,
Tasting the raptured fleetness
Of her divine completeness:
Their higher instinct knew
Those love her best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of, dare to do;
They followed her and found her
Where all may hope to find,
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round her.
Where faith made whole with deed
Breathes its awakening breath
Into the lifeless creed,
They saw her plumed and mailed,
With sweet, stern face unveiled,
And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them in death.

IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides
Into the silent hollow of the past;
What is there that abides
To make the next age better for the last?
Is earth too poor to give us
Something to live for here that shall outlive us?
Some more substantial boon
Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's fickle moon?
The little that we see
From doubt is never free;
The little that we do
Is but half-nobly true;
With our laborious hiving
What men call treasure, and the gods call dross,
Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,
Only secure in every one's conniving,
A long account of nothings paid with loss,
Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen wires,
After our little hour of strut and rave,
With all our pasteboard passions and desires,

Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,
Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.
But stay! no age was e'er degenerate,
Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,
For in our likeness still we shape our fate.
Ah, there is something here
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,
Something that gives our feeble light
A high immunity from Night,
Something that leaps life's narrow bars
To claim its birthright with the hosts of heaven;
A seed of sunshine that can leaven
Our earthly dulness with the beams of stars,
And glorify our clay
With light from fountains elder than the Day;
A conscience more divine than we,
A gladness fed with secret tears,
A vexing, forward-reaching sense
Of some more noble permanence;
A light across the sea,
Which haunts the soul and will not let it be,
Still beaconing from the heights of undegenerate years.

V

Whither leads the path
To ampler fates that leads?
Not down through flowery meads,
To reap an aftermath
Of youth's vainglorious weeds,
But up the steep, amid the wrath
And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,
Where the world's best hope and stay
By battle's flashes gropes a desperate way,
And every turf the fierce foot clings to bleeds.
Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word
Light the black lips of cannon, and the sword
Dreams in its easeful sheath;
But some day the live coal behind the thought,
Whether from Baäl's stone obscene,

Or from the shrine serene
Of God's pure altar brought,
Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue and pen
Learns with what deadly purpose it was fraught,
And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,
Shakes all the pillared state with shock of men:
Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,
And cries reproachful: "Was it, then, my praise,
And not myself was loved? Prove now thy truth;
I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;
Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase,
The victim of thy genius, not its mate!"
Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to Truth be sealed
As bravely in the closet as the field,
So bountiful is Fate;
But then to stand beside her,
When craven churls deride her,
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,
This shows, methinks, God's plan
And measure of a stalwart man,
Limbed like the old heroic breeds,
Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid earth,
Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the Nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.
Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast

Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.
Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface
And thwart her genial will;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.
I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;

These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern
Or only guess some more inspiring goal
Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,
Along whose course the flying axles burn
Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier brood;
Long as below we cannot find
The meed that stills the inexorable mind;
So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal names it masks,
Freedom, Law, Country, this ethereal mood
That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,
Feeling its challenged pulses leap,
While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,
And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it asks
Shall win man's praise and woman's love,
Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to culture dear,
A virtue round whose forehead we inwreathe
Laurels that with a living passion breathe
When other crowns grow, while we twine them, sear.
What brings us thronging these high rites to pay,
And seal these hours the noblest of our year,
Save that our brothers found this better way?

VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 'twas they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.
We welcome back our bravest and our best;—
Ah me! not all! some come not with the rest,
Who went forth brave and bright as any here!
I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,
But the sad strings complain,
And will not please the ear:

I sweep them for a pæan, but they wane
Again and yet again
Into a dirge, and die away, in pain.
In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,
Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf wraps,
Dark to the triumph which they died to gain:
Fitlier may others greet the living,
For me the past is unforgiving;
I with uncovered head
Salute the sacred dead,
Who went, and who return not.—Say not so!
'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,
But the high faith that failed not by the way;
Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave;
No ban of endless night exiles the brave;
And to the saner mind
We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!
For never shall their aureoled presence lack:
I see them muster in a gleaming row,
With ever-youthful brows that nobler show;
We find in our dull road their shining track;
In every nobler mood
We feel the orient of their spirit glow,
Part of our life's unalterable good,
Of all our saintlier aspiration;
They come transfigured back,
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
Of morn on their white Shields of Expectation!

IX

But is there hope to save
Even this ethereal essence from the grave?
What ever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle wrong
Save a few clarion names, or golden threads of song?
Before my musing eye
The mighty ones of old sweep by,
Disvoicëd now and insubstantial things,
As noisy once as we; poor ghosts of kings,

Shadows of empire wholly gone to dust,
And many races, nameless long ago,
To darkness driven by that imperious gust
Of ever-rushing Time that here doth blow:
O visionary world, condition strange,
Where naught abiding is but only Change,
Where the deep-bolted stars themselves still shift and range!
Shall we to more continuance make pretence?
Renown builds tombs; a life-estate is Wit;
And, bit by bit,
The cunning years steal all from us but woe;
Leaves are we, whose decays no harvest sow.
But, when we vanish hence,
Shall they lie forceless in the dark below,
Save to make green their little length of sods,
Or deepen pansies for a year or two,
Who now to us are shining-sweet as gods?
Was dying all they had the skill to do?
That were not fruitless: but the Soul resents
Such short-lived service, as if blind events
Ruled without her, or earth could so endure;
She claims a more divine investiture
Of longer tenure than Fame's airy rents;
Whate'er she touches doth her nature share;
Her inspiration haunts the ennobled air,
Gives eyes to mountains blind,
Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the wind,
And her clear trump sings succor everywhere
By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful mind;
For soul inherits all that soul could dare:
Yea, Manhood hath a wider span
And larger privilege of life than man.
The single deed, the private sacrifice,
So radiant now through proudly-hidden tears,
Is covered up erelong from mortal eyes
With thoughtless drift of the deciduous years;
But that high privilege that makes all men peers,
That leap of heart whereby a people rise
Up to a noble anger's height,
And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink, but grow more bright,

That swift validity in noble veins,
Of choosing danger and disdaining shame,
Of being set on flame
By the pure fire that flies all contact base,
But wraps its chosen with angelic might,
These are imperishable gains,
Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,
These hold great futures in their lusty reins
And certify to earth a new imperial race.

X

Who now shall sneer?
Who dare again to say we trace
Our lines to a plebeian race?
Roundhead and Cavalier!
Dumb are those names erewhile in battle loud;
Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,
They flit across the ear:
That is best blood that hath most iron in't.
To edge resolve with, pouring without stint
For what makes manhood dear.
Tell us not of Plantagenets,
Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin bloods crawl
Down from some victor in a border-brawl!
How poor their outworn coronets,
Matched with one leaf of that plain civic wreath
Our brave for honor's blazon shall bequeath,
Through whose desert a rescued Nation sets
Her heel on treason, and the trumpet hears
Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears
With vain resentments and more vain regrets!

XI

Not in anger, not in pride,
Pure from passion's mixture rude
Ever to base earth allied,
But with far-heard gratitude,
Still with heart and voice renewed,
To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,
The strain should close that consecrates our brave.
Lift the heart and lift the head!
Lofty be its mood and grave,

Not without a martial ring,
Not without a prouder tread
And a peal of exultation:
Little right has he to sing
Through whose heart in such an hour
Beats no march of conscious power,
Sweeps no tumult of elation!
'Tis no Man we celebrate,
By his country's victories great,
A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,
But the pith and marrow of a Nation
Drawing force from all her men,
Highest, humblest, weakest, all,
For her time of need, and then
Pulsing it again through them,
Till the basest can no longer cower,
Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,
Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.
Come back, then, noble pride, for 'tis her dower!
How could poet ever tower,
If his passions, hopes, and fears,
If his triumphs and his tears,
Kept not measure with his people?
Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and waves!
Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking steeple!
Banners, adance with triumph, bend your staves!
And from every mountain-peak
Let beacon-fire to answering beacon speak,
Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface he,
And so leap on in light from sea to sea,
Till the glad news be sent
Across a kindling continent,
Making earth feel more firm and air breathe braver:
"Be proud! for she is saved, and all have helped to save her!
She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,
She of the open soul and open door,
With room about her hearth for all mankind!
The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more;
From her bold front the helm she doth unbind,
Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,

And bids her navies, that so lately hurled
Their crashing battle, hold their thunders in,
Swimming like birds of calm along the unharmful shore.
No challenge sends she to the elder world,
That looked askance and hated; a light scorn
Plays o'er her mouth, as round her mighty knees
She calls her children back, and waits the morn
Of nobler day, enthroned between her subject seas."

XII

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release!
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace!
Bow down in prayer and praise!
No poorest in thy borders but may now
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow.
O Beautiful! my Country! ours once more!
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?
What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee?
We reck not what we gave thee;
We will not dare to doubt thee,
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

CUSTER'S LAST CHARGE

(JUNE 25, 1876)

DEAD! Is it possible? He, the bold rider,
Custer, our hero, the first in the fight,
Charming the bullets of yore to fly wider,
Far from our battle-king's ringlets of light!

Dead, our young chieftain, and dead, all forsaken!
No one to tell us the way of his fall!
Slain in the desert, and never to waken,
Never, not even to victory's call!

Proud for his fame that last day that he met them!
All the night long he had been on their track,
Scorning their traps and the men that had set them,
Wild for a charge that should never give back.
There on the hilltop he halted and saw them.—
Lodges all loosened and ready to fly;
Hurrying scouts with the tidings to awe them,
Told of his coming before he was nigh.

All the wide valley was full of their forces,
Gathered to cover the lodges' retreat!—
Warriors running in haste to their horses,
Thousands of enemies close to his feet!
Down in the valleys the ages had hollowed,
There lay the Sitting Bull's camp for a prey!
Numbers! What recked he? What recked those who followed—
Men who had fought ten to one ere that day?

Out swept the squadrons, the fated three hundred,
Into the battle-line steady and full;
Then down the hillside exultingly thundered,
Into the hordes of the old Sitting Bull!
Wild Ogalallah, Arapahoe, Cheyenne,
Wild Horse's braves, and the rest of their crew,
Shrank from that charge like a herd from a lion,—
Then closed around, the grim horde of wild Sioux!

Right to their centre he charged, and then facing—
Hark to those yells! and around them, O see!
Over the hilltops the Indians come racing,
Coming as fast as the waves of the sea!
Red was the circle of fire around them;
No hope of victory, no ray of light,
Shot through that terrible black cloud without them,
Brooding in death over Custer's last fight.

Then did he blench? Did he die like a craven,
Begging those torturing fiends for his life?
Was there a soldier who carried the Seven
Flinched like a coward or fled from the strife?
No, by the blood of our Custer, no quailing!
There in the midst of the Indians they close,
Hemmed in by thousands, but ever assailing,
Fighting like tigers, all bayed amid foes!

Thicker and thicker the bullets came singing;
Down go the horses and riders and all;
Swiftly the warriors round them were ringing,
Circling like buzzards awaiting their fall.
See the wild steeds of the mountain and prairie,
Savage eyes gleaming from forests of mane;
Quivering lances with pennons so airy,
War-painted warriors charging amain.

Backward, again and again, they were driven,
Shrinking to close with the lost little band;
Never a cap that had worn the bright Seven
Bowed till its wearer was dead on the strand.
Closer and closer the death-circle growing,
Ever the leader's voice, clarion clear,
Rang out his words of encouragement glowing,
"We can but die once, boys,—we'll sell our lives dear!"

Dearly they sold them like Berserkers raging,
Facing the death that encircled them round;
Death's bitter pangs by their vengeance assuaging,
Marking their tracks by their dead on the ground.
Comrades, our children shall yet tell their story,—
Custer's last charge on the old Sitting Bull;
And ages shall swear that the cup of his glory
Needed but that death to render it full.

Frederick Whittaker [1838–1917]

THE LAST REDOUBT

[SEPTEMBER, 1877]

KACELYEVO'S slope still felt
The cannons' bolts and the rifles' pelt;

For the last redoubt up the hill remained,
By the Russ yet held, by the Turk not gained.

Mehemet Ali stroked his beard;
His lips were clinched and his look was weird;
Round him were ranks of his ragged folk,
Their faces blackened with blood and smoke.

"Clear me the Muscovite out!" he cried;
Then the name of "Allah!" echoed wide,
And the fezzes were waved and the bayonets lowered,
And on to the last redoubt they poured.

One fell, and a second quickly stopped
The gap that he left when he reeled and dropped;
The second,—a third straight filled his place;
The third,—and a fourth kept up the race.

Many a fez in the mud was crushed,
Many a throat that cheered was hushed,
Many a heart that sought the crest
Found Allah's arms and a houri's breast.

Over their corpses the living sprang,
And the ridge with their musket-rattle rang,
Till the faces that lined the last redoubt
Could see their faces and hear their shout.

In the redoubt a fair form towered,
That cheered up the brave and chid the coward;
Brandishing blade with a gallant air;
His head erect and his bosom bare.

"Fly! they are on us!" his men implored;
But he waved them on with his waving sword.
"It cannot be held; 'tis no shame to go!"
But he stood with his face set hard to the foe.

Then clung they about him, and tugged, and knelt;
He drew a pistol from out his belt,
And fired it blank at the first that set
Foot on the edge of the parapet

Over that first one toppled; but on
Clambered the rest till their bayonets shone,
As hurriedly fled his men dismayed,
Not a bayonet's length from the length of his blade.

"Yield!" But aloft his steel he flashed,
And down on their steel it ringing clashed;
Then back he reeled with a bladeless hilt,
His honor full, but his life-blood spilt.

They lifted him up from the dabbled ground;
His limbs were shapely and soft and round,
No down on his lip, on his cheek no shade,—
"Bismillah!" they cried, "'tis an infidel maid!"

Mehemet Ali came and saw
The riddled breast and the tender jaw.
"Make her a bier of your arms," he said,
"And daintily bury this dainty dead!

"Make her a grave where she stood and fell,
'Gainst the jackal's scratch and the vulture's smell
Did the Muscovite men like their maidens fight,
In their lines we had scarcely supped to-night."

So a deeper trench 'mong the trenches there
Was dug, for the form as brave as fair;
And none, till the judgment trump and shout,
Shall drive her out of the last redoubt.

Alfred Austin [1835–1913]

"FUZZY-WUZZY"

(SOUDAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, 1889)

We've fought with many men acrost the seas,
An' some of em' was brave an' some was not:
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.

We never got a ha' porth's change of 'im:
'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our 'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Sua*kim*,
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our forces.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class fightin' man;
We gives you your certifikit, an' if you want it signed
We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you whenever you're inclined.

We took our chanst among the Kyber 'ills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman guv us Irriwaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style:
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us swaller;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us 'oller.
Then 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the missis and the kid;
Our orders was to break you, an' of course we went and did.
We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it wasn't 'ardly fair;
But for all the odds agin you, Fuzzy-Wuz, you bruk the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own,
'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,
So we most certify the skill 'e's shown
In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords:
When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
With 'is coffin-'eaded shield an' shovel-spear,
A 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
Will last a 'ealthy Tommy for a year.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your friends which is no more,

If we 'adn't lost some messmates we would 'elp
you to deplore;
But give an' take's the gospel, an' we'll call the
bargain fair,
For if you 'ave lost more than us, you crumpled
up the square!

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ead;
'E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.
'E's a daisy, 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb!
'E's a injia-rubber idiot on a spree,
'E's the only thing that doesn't care a damn
For the Regiment o' British Infantree.
So here's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in
the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class
fightin' man;
An' 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your 'ayrick
'ead of hair—
You big black boundin' beggar—for you bruk a
British square.

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

THE WORD OF THE LORD FROM HAVANA

[FEBRUARY 16, 1898]

THUS spake the Lord:
Because ye have not heard,
Because ye have given no heed
To my people in their need,

Because the oppressed cried
From the dust where he died,
And ye turned your face away
From his cry in that day,

Because ye have bought and sold
That which is above gold,

Because your brother is slain
While ye get you drunk with gain,

(Behold, these are my people, I have brought them to birth
On whom the mighty have trod,
The kings of the earth,
Saith the Lord God!)

Because ye fawned and bowed down
Lest the spoiler frown,
And the wrongs that the spoiled have borne
Ye have held in scorn,

Therefore with rending and flame
I have marred and smitten you,
Therefore I have given you to shame,
That the nations shall spit on you.

Therefore my Angel of Death
Hath stretched out his hand on you,
Therefore I speak in my wrath,
Laying command on you;

(Once have I bared my sword,
And the kings of the earth gave a cry;
Twice have I bared my sword,
That the kings of the earth should die;
Thrice shall I bare my sword,
And ye shall know my name, that it is I!)

Ye who held peace less than right
When a king laid a pitiful tax on you,
Hold not your hand from the fight
When freedom cries under the axe on you!

(I who called France to you, call you to Cuba in turn!
Repay—lest I cast you adrift and you perish astern!)

Ye who made war that your ships
Should lay to at the beck of no nation,
Make war now on Murder, that slips
The leash of her hounds of damnation!

Ye who remembered the Alamo,
Remember the Maine!

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

DEWEY AT MANILA

[MAY 1, 1898]

'TWAS the very verge of May
When the bold Olympia led
Into Bocagrande Bay
Dewey's squadron, dark and dread,—
Creeping past Corregidor,
Guardian of Manila's shore.

Do they sleep who wait the fray?
Is the moon so dazzling bright
That our cruisers' battle-gray
Melts into the misty light? . . .
Ah! the red flash and the roar!
Wakes at last Corregidor!

All too late their screaming shell
Tears the silence with its track;
This is but the *gate* of hell,
We've no leisure to turn back.
Answer, Concord!—then once more
Slumber on, Corregidor!

And as, like a slowing tide,
Onward still the vessels creep,
Dewey, watching, falcon-eyed,
Orders,—"Let the gunners sleep;
For we meet a foe at four
Fiercer than Corregidor."

Well they slept, for well they knew
What the morrow taught us all,—
He was wise (as well as true)
Thus upon the foe to fall.
Long shall Spain the day deplore
Dewey ran Corregidor.

May is dancing into light
  As the Spanish Admiral
From a dream of phantom fight
  Wakens at his sentry's call.
Shall he leave Cavité's lee,
Hunt the Yankee fleet at sea?

O Montojo, to thy deck,
  That to-day shall float its last!
Quick! To quarters! Yonder speck
  Grows a hull of portent vast.
Hither, toward Cavité's lee
Comes the Yankee hunting thee!

Not for fear of hidden mine
  Halts our doughty Commodore.
He, of old heroic line,
  Follows Farragut once more,
Hazards all on victory,
Here within Cavité's lee.

If he loses, all is gone;
  He will win because he must.
And the shafts of yonder dawn
  Are not quicker than his thrust.
Soon, Montojo, he shall be
With thee in Cavité's lee.

Now, Manila, to the fray!
  Show the hated Yankee host
This is not a holiday,—
  Spanish blood is more than boast.
Fleet and mine and battery,
Crush him in Cavité's lee!

Lo, hell's geysers at our fore
  Pierce the plotted path—in vain,
Nerving every man the more
  With the memory of the Maine!
Now at last our guns are free
Here within Cavité's lee.

"Gridley," says the Commodore,
"You may fire when ready." Then
Long and loud, like lions' roar
When a rival dares the den,
Breaks the awful cannonry
Full across Cavité's lee.

Who shall tell the daring tale
Of our Thunderbolt's attack,
Finding, when the chart should fail,
By the lead his dubious track,
Five ships following faithfully
Five times o'er Cavité's lee;

Of our gunners' deadly aim;
Of the gallant foe and brave
Who, unconquered, faced with flame,
Seek the mercy of the wave,—
Choosing honor in the sea
Underneath Cavité's lee?

Let the meed the victors gain
Be the measure of their task.
Less of flinching, stouter strain,
Fiercer combat—who could ask?
And "surrender,"—'twas a word
That Cavité ne'er had heard.

Noon,—the woful work is done!
Not a Spanish ship remains;
But, of their eleven, none
Ever was so truly Spain's!
Which is prouder, they or we,
Thinking of Cavité's lee?

ENVOY

But remember, when we've ceased
Giving praise and reckoning odds,
Man shares courage with the beast,
Wisdom cometh from the gods:

Who would win, on land or wave,
Must be wise as well as brave.

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853–

DEEDS OF VALOR AT SANTIAGO

[JULY 1, 1898]

WHO cries that the days of daring are those that are faded far,
That never a light burns planet-bright to be hailed as the hero's star?
Let the deeds of the dead be laureled, the brave of the elder years,
But a song, we say, for the men of to-day, who have proved themselves their peers!

High in the vault of the tropic sky is the garish eye of the sun,
And down with its crown of guns afrown looks the hilltop to be won;
There is the trench where the Spaniard lurks, his hold and his hiding-place,
And he who would cross the space between must meet death face to face.

The black mouths belch and thunder, and the shrapnel shrieks and flies;
Where are the fain and the fearless, the lads with the dauntless eyes?
Will the moment find them wanting! Nay, but with valor stirred!
Like the leashed hound on the coursing-ground they wait but the warning word.

"Charge!" and the line moves forward, moves with a shout and a swing,
While sharper far than the cactus-thorn is the spiteful bullet's sting.

Now they are out in the open, and now they are breasting
the slope,
While into the eyes of death they gaze as into the eyes of
hope.

Never they wait nor waver, but on they clamber and on,
With "Up with the flag of the Stripes and Stars, and down
with the flag of the Don!"
What should they bear through the shot-rent air but rout
to the ranks of Spain,
For the blood that throbs in their hearts is the blood of the
boys of Anthony Wayne!

See, they have taken the trenches! Where are the foemen?
Gone!
And now "Old Glory" waves in the breeze from the heights
of San Juan!
And so, while the dead are laureled, the brave of the elder
years,
A song, we say, for the men of to-day, who have proved
themselves their peers.

Clinton Scollard [1860–

BREATH ON THE OAT

Free are the Muses, and where freedom is
They follow, as the thrushes follow spring,
Leaving the old lands songless there behind;
Parnassus disenchanted suns its woods,
Empty of every nymph; wide have they flown;
And now on new sierras think to set
Their wandering court, and thrill the world anew,
Where the Republic babbling waits its speech;
For but the prelude of its mighty song
As yet has sounded. Therefore, would I woo
Apollo to the land I love, 'tis vain;
Unknown he spies on us; and if my verse
Ring not the empyrean round and round,
'Tis that the feeble oat is few of stops.

The noble theme awaits the nobler bard.
Then how all air will quire to it, and all
The great dead listen, America!—For lo,
Diana of the nations hath she lived
Remote, and hoarding her own happiness
In her own land, the land that seemed her first
An exile, where her bark was cast away,
Till maiden grew the backward-hearted child,
And on that sea whose waves were memories
Turned her young shoulder, looked with steadfast eyes
Upon her wilderness, her woods, her streams;
Inland she ran, and gathering virgin joy
Followed her shafts afar from humankind.
And if sometimes her isolation drooped
And yearning woke in her, she put it forth
With a high boast and with a sick disdain;
Actæons fleeing, into antlers branched
The floating tresses of her fancy, and far
Her arrows smote them with a bleeding laugh.
O vain and virgin, O the fool of love!
Now children not her own are at her knee.
For stricken by her path lay one that vexed
Her maiden calm; she reached a petulant hand;
And the old nations drew sharp breath and looked.
The two-edged sword, how came it in her hand?
The sword that slays the holder if he withhold,
That none can take, or having taken drop,
The sword is in thy hand, America!
The wrath of God, that fillets thee with lightnings,
America! Strike then; the sword departs.
Ah God, once more may men crown drowsy days
With glorious death, upholding a great cause!
I deemed it fable; not of them am I.
Yet if they loved thee on the loud May-day
Who with unexultant thunder wreathed the flag,
With thunder and with victory, if they
Who on the third most famous of our Fourths
Along the seaboard mountains swept, a storm
Unleashed, whose tread spurned not the wrecks of Spain,
If these thy sons have loved thee, and have set

Santiago and Manila like new stars
Crowding thy field of blue, new terror perched
Like eagles on thy banners, oh, not less
I love thee, who but prattle in the prime
Of birds of passage over river and wood
Thine also, piping little charms to lure,
Uncaptured and unflying, the wings of song.

Joseph Russell Taylor [1868–

WHEN THE GREAT GRAY SHIPS COME IN

[NEW YORK HARBOR, AUGUST 20, 1898]

To eastward ringing, to westward winging, o'er mapless miles of sea,
On winds and tides the gospel rides that the furthermost isles are free,
And the furthermost isles make answer, harbor, and height, and hill,
Breaker and beach cry each to each, "'Tis the Mother who calls! Be still!"
Mother! new-found, belovèd, and strong to hold from harm,
Stretching to these across the seas the shield of her sovereign arm,
Who summoned the guns of her sailor sons, who bade her navies roam,
Who calls again to the leagues of main, and who calls them this time Home!

And the great gray ships are silent, and the weary watchers rest,
The black cloud dies in the August skies, and deep in the golden west
Invisible hands are limning a glory of crimson bars,
And far above is the wonder of a myriad wakened stars!
Peace! As the tidings silence the strenuous cannonade,
Peace at last! is the bugle blast the length of the long blockade,
And eyes of vigil weary are lit with the glad release,
From ship to ship and from lip to lip it is "Peace! Thank God for peace."

Ah, in the sweet hereafter Columbia still shall show
The sons of these who swept the seas how she bade them rise and go,—
How, when the stirring summons smote on her children's ear,
South and North at the call stood forth, and the whole land answered, "Here!"
For the soul of the soldier's story and the heart of the sailor's song
Are all of those who meet their foes as right should meet with wrong,
Who fight their guns till the foeman runs, and then, on the decks they trod,
Brave faces raise, and give the praise to the grace of their country's God!

Yes, it is good to battle, and good to be strong and free,
To carry the hearts of a people to the uttermost ends of the sea,
To see the day steal up the bay where the enemy lies in wait,
To run your ship to the harbor's lip and sink her across the strait:—
But better the golden evening when the ships round heads for home,
And the long gray miles slip swiftly past in a swirl of seething foam,
And the people wait at the haven's gate to greet the men who win!
Thank God for peace! Thank God for peace, when the great gray ships come in!

Guy Wetmore Carryl [1873–1904]

1914

I—Peace

Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour,
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping,
With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpened power,
To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary,
Leave the sick hearts that honor could not move,
And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
And all the little emptiness of love!

Oh! we, who have known shame, we have found release there,
Where there's no ill, no grief, but sleep has mending,
Naught broken save this body, lost but breath;
Nothing to shake the laughing heart's long peace there
But only agony, and that has ending;
And the worst friend and enemy is but Death.

II—Safety

Dear! of all happy in the hour, most blest
He who has found our hid security,
Assured in the dark tides of the world that rest,
And heard our word, "Who is so safe as we?"
We have found safety with all things undying,
The winds, and morning, tears of men and mirth,
The deep night, and birds singing, and clouds flying,
And sleep, and freedom, and the autumnal earth.
We have built a house that is not for Time's throwing.
We have gained a peace unshaken by pain for ever.
War knows no power. Safe shall be my going,
Secretly armed against all death's endeavor;
Safe though all safety's lost; safe where men fall;
And if these poor limbs die, safest of all.

III—The Dead

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
That men call age; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.
Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honor has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.

IV—The Dead

These hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.

The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colors of the earth.
These had seen movement, and heard music; known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;
Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. All this is ended.
There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,
Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

V—The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke [1887–1915]

THE FOURTH OF AUGUST

Now in thy splendor go before us,
Spirit of England, ardent-eyed,
Enkindle this dear earth that bore us,
In the hour of peril purified.

The cares we hugged drop out of vision,
Our hearts with deeper thoughts dilate.
We step from days of sour division
Into the grandeur of our fate.

For us the glorious dead have striven,
They battled that we might be free.
We to their living cause are given;
We arm for men that are to be.

Among the nations noblest chartered,
England recalls her heritage.
In her is that which is not bartered,
Which force can neither quell nor cage.

For her immortal stars are burning,
With her the hope that's never done,
The seed that's in the Spring's returning,
The very flower that seeks the sun.

She fights the fraud that feeds desire on
Lies, in a lust to enslave or kill,
The barren creed of blood and iron,
Vampire of Europe's wasted will . . .

Endure, O Earth! and thou, awaken,
Purged by this dreadful winnowing-fan,
O wronged, untameable, unshaken
Soul of divinely suffering man.

Laurence Binyon [1869–

AUGUST, 1914

How still this quiet cornfield is to-night!
By an intenser glow the evening falls,
Bringing, not darkness, but a deeper light;
Among the stooks a partridge covey calls.

The windows glitter on the distant hill;
Beyond the hedge the sheep-bells in the fold
Stumble on sudden music and are still;
The forlorn pinewoods droop above the wold.

An endless quiet valley reaches out
Past the blue hills into the evening sky;
Over the stubble, cawing, goes a rout
Of rooks from harvest, flagging as they fly.

So beautiful it is, I never saw
So great a beauty on these English fields,

Touched by the twilight's coming into awe,
Ripe to the soul and rich with summer's yields. . . .

These homes, this valley spread below me here,
The rooks, the tilted stacks, the beasts in pen,
Have been the heartfelt things, past-speaking dear
To unknown generations of dead men,

Who, century after century, held these farms,
And, looking out to watch the changing sky,
Heard, as we hear, the rumors and alarms
Of war at hand and danger pressing nigh.

And knew, as we know, that the message meant
The breaking off of ties, the loss of friends,
Death, like a miser getting in his rent,
And no new stones laid where the trackway ends.

The harvest not yet won, the empty bin,
The friendly horses taken from the stalls,
The fallow on the hill not yet brought in,
The cracks unplastered in the leaking walls.

Yet heard the news, and went discouraged home,
And brooded by the fire with heavy mind,
With such dumb loving of the Berkshire loam
As breaks the dumb hearts of the English kind,

Then sadly rose and left the well-loved Downs,
And so by ship to sea, and knew no more
The fields of home, the byres, the market towns,
Nor the dear outline of the English shore,

But knew the misery of the soaking trench,
The freezing in the rigging, the despair
In the revolting second of the wrench
When the blind soul is flung upon the air,

And died (uncouthly, most) in foreign lands
For some idea but dimly understood
Of an English city never built by hands
Which love of England prompted and made good. . . .

If there be any life beyond the grave,
It must be near the men and things we love,

Some power of quick suggestion how to save,
  Touching the living soul as from above.

An influence from the Earth from those dead hearts
  So passionate once, so deep, so truly kind,
That in the living child the spirit starts,
  Feeling companioned still, not left behind.

Surely above these fields a spirit broods,
  A sense of many watchers muttering near
Of the lone Downland with the forlorn woods
  Loved to the death, inestimably dear.

A muttering from beyond the veils of Death
  From long-dead men, to whom this quiet scene
Came among blinding tears with the last breath,
  The dying soldier's vision of his queen.

All the unspoken worship of those lives
  Spent in forgotten wars at other calls
Glimmers upon these fields where evening drives
  Beauty like breath, so gently darkness falls.

Darkness that makes the meadows holier still,
  The elm-trees sadden in the hedge, a sigh
Moves in the beech-clump on the haunted hill,
  The rising planets deepen in the sky,

And silence broods like spirit on the brae,
  A glimmering moon begins, the moonlight runs
Over the grasses of the ancient way
  Rutted this morning by the passing guns.

John Masefield [1874–

A CHANT OF HATE AGAINST ENGLAND *

French and Russian they matter not,
A blow for a blow and a shot for a shot,
We love them not,
We hate them not,
We hold the Weichsel and Vosges gate,

* For the original of this poem see page 3846.

We have but one and only hate,
We love as one, we hate as one,
We have one foe and one alone:—

He is known to you all, he is known to you all,
He crouches behind the dark gray flood,
Full of envy, of rage, of craft, of gall,
Cut off by waves that are thicker than blood.
Come let us stand at the Judgment place
An oath to swear to, face to face.
An oath of bronze no wind can shake,
An oath for our sons and their sons to take,
Come hear the word, repeat the word,
Throughout the Fatherland make it heard:
We will never forego our hate,
We have all but a single hate,
We love as one, we hate as one,
We have one foe and one alone,
England!

At the Captain's mess, in the Banquet-hall,
Sat feasting the officers, one and all,—
Like a sabre-blow, like the swing of a sail,
One raised his glass, held high to hail;
Sharp-snapped like the stroke of a rudder's play,
Spoke three words only: "To the day!"

Whose glass this fate?
They had all but a single hate.
Who was thus known?
They had one foe and one alone,
England!

Take you the folk of the earth in pay,
With bars of gold your ramparts lay,
Bedeck the ocean with bow on bow,
Ye reckon well, but not well enough now.
French and Russian they matter not.
A blow for a blow, a shot for a shot,
We fight the battle with bronze and steel,
And the time that is coming, Peace will seal.

You will we hate with a lasting hate,
We will never forego our hate.
Hate by water and hate by land,
Hate of the head and hate of the hand,
Hate of the hammer and hate of the Crown.
Hate of seventy *millions* choking down.
We love as one, we hate as one,
We have one foe and one alone:
England!

From the German of Ernst Lissauer by Barbara Henderson [18

A CHANT OF LOVE FOR ENGLAND

A SONG of hate is a song of Hell;
Some there be that sing it well.
Let them sing it loud and long,
We lift our hearts in a loftier song:
We lift our hearts to Heaven above,
Singing the glory of her we love,—
England!

Glory of thought and glory of deed,
Glory of Hampden and Runnymede;
Glory of ships that sought far goals,
Glory of swords and glory of souls!
Glory of songs mounting as birds,
Glory immortal of magical words;
Glory of Milton, glory of Nelson,
Tragical glory of Gordon and Scott;
Glory of Shelley, glory of Sidney,
Glory transcendent that perishes not,—
Hers is the story, hers be the glory,
England!

Shatter her beauteous breast ye may;
The Spirit of England none can slay!
Dash the bomb on the dome of Paul's,—
Deem ye the fame of the Admiral falls?
Pry the stone from the chancel floor,—
Dream ye that Shakespeare shall live no more?
Where is the giant shot that kills

Wordsworth walking the old green hills?
Trample the red rose on the ground,—
Keats is Beauty while earth spins round!
Bind her, grind her, burn her with fire,
Cast her ashes into the sea,—
She shall escape, she shall aspire,
She shall arise to make men free:
She shall arise in a sacred scorn,
Lighting the lives that are yet unborn;
Spirit supernal, Splendor eternal,
ENGLAND!

Helen Gray Cone [1859–

SONNETS WRITTEN IN THE FALL OF 1914

AWAKE, ye nations, slumbering supine,
Who round enring the European fray!
Heard ye the trumpet sound? "The Day! the Day!
The last that shall on England's empire shine!
The Parliament that broke the Right Divine
Shall see her realm of reason swept away,
And lesser nations shall the sword obey—
The sword o'er all carve the great world's design!"
So on the English Channel boasts the foe
On whose imperial brow death's helmet nods.
Look where his hosts o'er bloody Belgium go,
And mix a nation's past with blazing sods!
A kingdom's waste! a people's homeless woe!
Man's broken Word, and violated gods!

Far fall the day when England's realm shall see
The sunset of dominion! Her increase
Abolishes the man-dividing seas,
And frames the brotherhood on earth to be!
She, in free peoples planting sovereignty,
Orbs half the civil world in British peace;
And though time dispossess her, and she cease,
Rome-like she greatens in man's memory.
Oh, many a crown shall sink in war's turmoil,
And many a new republic light the sky,

Fleets sweep the ocean, nations till the soil,
Genius be born and generations die,
Orient and Occident together toil,
Ere such a mighty work man rears on high!

Hearken, the feet of the Destroyer tread
The wine-press of the nations; fast the blood
Pours from the side of Europe; in full flood
On the Septentrional watershed
The rivers of fair France are running red!
England, the mother-eyrie of our brood,
That on the summit of dominion stood,
Shakes in the blast: heaven battles overhead!
Lift up thy head, O Rheims, of ages heir
That treasured up in thee their glorious sum;
Upon whose brow, prophetically fair,
Flamed the great morrow of the world to come;
Haunt with thy beauty this volcanic air
Ere yet thou close, O Flower of Christendom!

As when the shadow of the sun's eclipse
Sweeps on the earth, and spreads a spectral air,
As if the universe were dying there,
On continent and isle the darkness dips,
Unwonted gloom, and on the Atlantic slips;
So in the night the Belgian cities flare
Horizon-wide; the wandering people fare
Along the roads, and load the fleeing ships.
And westward borne that planetary sweep,
Darkening o'er England and her times to be,
Already steps upon the ocean-deep!
Watch well, my country, that unearthly sea,
Lest when thou thinkest not, and in thy sleep,
Unapt for war, that gloom enshadow thee!

I pray for peace; yet peace is but a prayer.
How many wars have been in my brief years!
All races and all faiths, both hemispheres,
My eyes have seen embattled everywhere
The wide earth through; yet do I not despair
Of peace, that slowly through far ages nears,

Though not to me the golden morn appears;
My faith is perfect in time's issue fair.
For man doth build on an eternal scale,
And his ideals are framed of hope deferred;
And millennium came not; yet Christ did not fail,
Though ever unaccomplished is His word;
Him Prince of Peace, though unenthroned, we hail,
Supreme when in all bosoms He be heard.

This is my faith, and my mind's heritage,
Wherein I toil, though in a lonely place,
Who yet world-wide survey the human race
Unequal from wild nature disengage
Body and soul, and life's old strife assuage;
Still must abide, till heaven perfect its grace,
And love grown wisdom sweeten in man's face,
Alike the Christian and the heathen rage.
The tutelary genius of mankind
Ripens by slow degrees the final State,
That in the soul shall its foundations find
And only in victorious love grow great;
Patient the heart must be, humble the mind,
That doth the greater births of time await!

Whence not unmoved I see the nations form
From Dover to the fountains of the Rhine,
A hundred leagues, the scarlet battle-line,
And by the Vistula great armies swarm,
A vaster flood; rather my breast grows warm,
Seeing all peoples of the earth combine
Under one standard, with one countersign,
Grown brothers in the universal storm.
And never through the wide world yet there rang
A mightier summons! O Thou who from the side
Of Athens and the loins of Cæsar sprang,
Strike, Europe, with half the coming world allied,
For those ideals for which, since Homer sang,
The hosts of thirty centuries have died.

George Edward Woodberry [1855–

YOUTH IN ARMS

Happy boy, happy boy,
David the immortal-willed,
Youth a thousand thousand times
Slain, but not once killed,
Swaggering again today
In the old contemptuous way;

Leaning backward from your thigh
Up against the tinselled bar—
Dust and ashes! is it you?
Laughing, boasting, there you are!
First we hardly recognized you
In your modern avatar.

Soldier, rifle, brown khaki—
Is your blood as happy so?
Where's your sling, or painted shield,
Helmet, pike, or bow?
Well, you're going to the wars—
That is all you need to know.

Graybeards plotted. They were sad.
Death was in their wrinkled eyes.
At their tables—with their maps,
Plans and calculations—wise
They all seemed; for well they knew
How ungrudgingly Youth dies.

At their green official baize
They debated all the night
Plans for your adventurous days
Which you followed with delight,
Youth in all your wanderings,
David of a thousand slings.

Harold Monro [1879–

MAGPIES IN PICARDY

THE magpies in Picardy
  Are more than I can tell.
They flicker down the dusty roads
  And cast a magic spell
On the men who march through Picardy,
  Through Picardy to hell.

(The blackbird flies with panic,
  The swallow goes like light,
The finches move like ladies,
  The owl floats by at night;
But the great and flashing magpie
  He flies as artists might.)

A magpie in Picardy
  Told me secret things—
Of the music in white feathers,
  And the sunlight that sings
And dances in deep shadows—
  He told me with his wings.

(The hawk is cruel and rigid,
  He watches from a height;
The rook is slow and somber,
  The robin loves to fight;
But the great and flashing magpie
  He flies as lovers might.)

He told me that in Picardy,
  An age ago or more,
While all his fathers still were eggs,
  These dusty highways bore
Brown, singing soldiers marching out
  Through Picardy to war.

He said that still through chaos
  Works on the ancient plan,
And two things have altered not
  Since first the world began—
The beauty of the wild green earth
  And the bravery of man.

(For the sparrow flies unthinking
And quarrels in his flight,
The heron trails his legs behind,
The lark goes out of sight;
But the great and flashing magpie
He flies as poets might.)

Unknown

SONGS FROM AN EVIL WOOD

I

THERE is no wrath in the stars,
They do not rage in the sky;
I look from the evil wood
And find myself wondering why.

Why do they not scream out
And grapple star against star,
Seeking for blood in the wood
As all things round me are?

They do not glare like the sky
Or flash like the deeps of the wood;
But they shine softly on
In their sacred solitude.

To their high, happy haunts
Silence from us has flown,
She whom we loved of old
And know it now she is gone.

When will she come again,
Though for one second only?
She whom we loved is gone
And the whole world is lonely.

II

Somewhere lost in the haze
The sun goes down in the cold,
And birds in this evil wood
Chirrup home as of old;

Chirrup, stir, and are still
On the high twigs frozen and thin.
There is no more noise of them now,
And the long night sets in.

Of all the wonderful things
That I have seen in the wood,
I marvel most at the birds
And their wonderful quietude.

For a giant smites with his club
All day the tops of the hill,
Sometimes he rests at night,
Oftener he beats them still.

And a dwarf with a grim black mane
Raps with repeated rage
All night in the valley below,
On the wooden walls of his cage.

And the elder giants come
Sometimes, tramping from far
Through the weird and flickering light
Made by an earthly star.

And the giant with his club,
And the dwarf with rage in his breath,
And the elder giants from far,
They are all the children of Death.

They are all abroad to-night
And are breaking the hills with their brood,
And the birds are all asleep
Even in Plug Street Wood!

III

The great guns of England, they listen mile on mile
To the boasts of a broken War-Lord; they lift their throats and smile;
But the old woods are fallen
For a while.

The old woods are fallen; yet will they come again,
They will come back some springtime with the warm winds and the rain,
For Nature guardeth her children
Never in vain.

They will come back some season; it may be a hundred years;
It is all one to Nature with the centuries that are hers;
She shall bring back her children
And dry all their tears.

But the tears of a would-be War-Lord shall never cease to flow,
He shall weep for the poisoned armies whenever the gas-winds blow,
He shall always weep for his widows,
And all Hell shall know.

The tears of a pitiless Kaiser shallow they'll flow and wide,
Wide as the desolation made by his silly pride
When he slaughtered a little people
To stab France in her side.

Over the ragged cinders they shall flow on and on
With the listless falling of streams that find not Oblivion,
For ages and ages of years
Till the last star is gone.

IV

I met with Death in his country,
With his scythe and his hollow eye,
Walking the roads of Belgium.
I looked and he passed me by.

Since he passed me by in Plug Street,
In the wood of the evil name,
I shall not now lie with the heroes,
I shall not share their fame,

I shall never be as they are,
A name in the lands of the Free,
Since I looked on Death in Flanders
And he did not look at me.

Edward J. M. D. Plunkett [1878–

"I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH"

I HAVE a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger [1888–1916]

THE SPIRES OF OXFORD

(AS SEEN FROM THE TRAIN)

I SAW the spires of Oxford
As I was passing by,
The gray spires of Oxford
Against a pearl-gray sky.
My heart was with the Oxford men
Who went abroad to die.

The years go fast in Oxford,
The golden years and gay,
The hoary Colleges look down
On careless boys at play.
But when the bugles sounded war
They put their games away.

They left the peaceful river,
The cricket-field, the quad,
The shaven lawns of Oxford
To seek a bloody sod—
They gave their merry youth away
For country and for God.

God rest you, happy gentlemen,
Who laid your good lives down,
Who took the khaki and the gun
Instead of cap and gown.
God bring you to a fairer place
Than even Oxford town.

Winifred M. Letts [18

ALL'S WELL

WATCHMAN, watchman, what of the night,
What of the night to tell?
There are widows weeping, and babes affright,
And a ceaseless burial bell.
But the hand that holds the gun
Still shakes not;
And the line drops one by one,
Yet breaks not.
Of the blood so nobly poured
There shall surely be reward.
In the name of the Lord,
All's Well!

Francis William Bourdillon [1852–

REVEILLÉ

[APRIL 6, 1917]

WHAT sudden bugle calls us in the night
And wakes us from a dream that we had shaped;
Flinging us sharply up against a fight
We thought we had escaped?

It is no easy waking, and we win
No final peace; our victories are few.
But still imperative forces pull us in
And sweep us somehow through.

Summoned by a supreme and confident power
That wakes our sleeping courage like a blow,
We rise, half-shaken, to the challenging hour,
And answer it—and go. . . .

Louis Untermeyer [1885–

TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BROTHERS in blood! They who this wrong began
To wreck our commonwealth, will rue the day
When first they challenged freemen to the fray,
And with the Briton dared the American.
Now are we pledged to win the Rights of man;
Labor and Justice now shall have their way,
And in a League of Peace—God grant we may—
Transform the earth, not patch up the old plan.

Sure is our hope since he who led your nation
Spake for mankind, and ye arose in awe
Of that high call to work the world's salvation;
Clearing your minds of all estranging blindness
In the vision of Beauty and the Spirit's law,
Freedom and Honor and sweet Loving kindness.

Robert Bridges [1844–

YOUR LAD, AND MY LAD

Down toward the deep-blue water, marching to throb of drum,
From city street and country lane the lines of khaki come;
The rumbling guns, the sturdy tread, are full of grim appeal,
While rays of western sunshine flash back from burnished steel.
With eager eyes and cheeks aflame the serried ranks advancé;
And your dear lad, and my dear lad, are on their way to France.

A sob clings choking in the throat, as file on file sweep by,
Between those cheering multitudes, to where the great ships lie;
The batteries halt, the columns wheel, to clear-toned bugle-call,
With shoulders squared and faces front they stand a khaki wall.
Tears shine on every watcher's cheek, love speaks in every glance;
For your dear lad, and my dear lad, are on their way to France.

Before them, through a mist of years, in soldier buff or blue,
Brave comrades from a thousand fields watch now in proud review;
The same old Flag, the same old Faith—the Freedom of the World—
Spells Duty in those flapping folds above long ranks unfurled.
Strong are the hearts which bear along Democracy's advance,
As your dear lad, and my dear lad, go on their way to France.

The word rings out; a million feet tramp forward on the road,
Along that path of sacrifice o'er which their fathers strode.

With eager eyes and cheeks aflame, with cheers on smiling lips,
These fighting men of '17 move onward to their ships.
Nor even love may hold them back, or halt that stern advance,
As your dear lad, and my dear lad, go on their way to France.

Randall Parrish [1858–

A POET ENLISTS

And all the songs that I might sing—
Madness to risk them so, you say?
How is it such a certain thing
That I can sing them if I stay?

The winds of God are past control,
They answer to no human call,
And if I lose my living soul
That is—for me—the end of all.

Better to shout one last great song,
Dying myself, to dying men,
Than crawl the bitter years along
And never sing again.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878–

POEMS OF PLACES

ON THE PROSPECT OF PLANTING ARTS AND LEARNING IN AMERICA

The Muse, disgusted at an age and clime
  Barren of every glorious theme,
In distant lands now waits a better time,
  Producing subjects worthy fame:

In happy climes, where from the genial sun
  And virgin earth such scenes ensue,
The force of Art by Nature seems outdone,
  And fancied beauties by the true:

In happy climes, the seat of Innocence,
  Where Nature guides and Virtue rules,
Where men shall not impose, for truth and sense,
  The pedantry of courts and schools:

There shall be sung another golden age,
  The rise of empire and of arts,
The good and great inspiring epic rage,
  The wisest heads and noblest hearts.

Not such as Europe breeds in her decay:
  Such as she bred when fresh and young,
When heavenly flame did animate her clay,
  By future poets shall be sung.

Westward the course of empire takes its way;
  The first four acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
  Time's noblest offspring is the last.

George Berkeley [1685–1753]

BERMUDAS

WHERE the remote Bermudas ride
In the ocean's bosom unespied,
From a small boat that rowed along
The listening winds received this song:

"What should we do but sing His praise
That led us through the watery maze
Unto an isle so long unknown,
And yet far kinder than our own?
Where He the huge sea-monsters wracks,
That lift the deep upon their backs,
He lands us on a grassy stage,
Safe from the storms' and prelates' rage:
He gave us this eternal Spring
Which here enamels everything,
And sends the fowls to us in care
On daily visits through the air:
He hangs in shades the orange bright
Like golden lamps in a green night,
And does in the pomegranates close
Jewels more rich than Ormus shows:
He makes the figs our mouths to meet
And throws the melons at our feet;
But apples plants of such a price,
No tree could ever bear them twice.
With cedars chosen by His hand
From Lebanon He stores the land;
And makes the hollow seas that roar
Proclaim the ambergris on shore.
He cast (of which we rather boast)
The Gospel's pearl upon our coast;
And in these rocks for us did frame
A temple where to sound His name.
O, let our voice His praise exalt
Till it arrive at Heaven's vault,
Which thence (perhaps) rebounding may
Echo beyond the Mexique bay!"

Thus sung they in the English boat
A holy and a cheerful note:
And all the way, to guide their chime,
With falling oars they kept the time.

Andrew Marvell [1621–1678]

INDIAN NAMES

Ye say, they all have passed away,
That noble race and brave;
That their light canoes have vanished
From off the crested wave;
That, 'mid the forests where they roamed,
There rings no hunter's shout;
But their name is on your waters,—
Ye may not wash it out.

'Tis where Ontario's billow
Like Ocean's surge is curled;
Where strong Niagara's thunders wake
The echo of the world;
Where red Missouri bringeth
Rich tribute from the West,
And Rappahannock sweetly sleeps
On green Virginia's breast.

Ye say, their cone-like cabins,
That clustered o'er the vale,
Have fled away, like withered leaves
Before the Autumn gale;
But their memory liveth on your hills,
Their baptism on your shore,
Your everlasting rivers speak
Their dialect of yore.

Old Massachusetts wears it
Within her lordly crown,
And broad Ohio bears it
Amid his young renown;

Connecticut hath wreathed it
Where her quiet foliage waves,
And bold Kentucky breathes it hoarse
Through all her ancient caves.

Wachuset hides its lingering voice
Within its rocky heart.
And Alleghany graves its tone
Throughout his lofty chart;
Monadnock, on his forehead hoar,
Doth seal the sacred trust;
Your mountains build their monument,
Though ye destroy their dust.

Lydia Huntly Sigourney [1791–1865]

MANNAHATTA

I WAS asking for something specific and perfect for my city,
Whereupon lo! upsprang the aboriginal name.

Now I see what there is in a name, a word, liquid, sane, unruly, musical, self-sufficient,
I see that the word of my city is that word from of old,
Because I see that word nested in nests of water-bays, superb,
Rich, hemmed thick all around with sail-ships and steamships, an island sixteen miles long, solid-founded,
Numberless crowded streets, high growths of iron, slender, strong, light, splendidly uprising toward clear skies,
Tides swift and ample, well-loved by me, toward sundown,
The flowing sea-currents, the little islands, larger adjoining islands, the heights, the villas,
The countless masts, the white shore-steamers, the lighters, the ferry-boats, the black sea-steamers well-modelled,
The down-town streets, the jobbers' houses of business, the houses of business of the ship-merchants and money-brokers, the river-streets,
Immigrants arriving, fifteen or twenty thousand in a week,
The carts hauling goods, the manly race of drivers of horses, the brown-faced sailors,

The summer air, the bright sun shining, and the sailing clouds aloft,
The winter snows, the sleigh-bells, the broken ice in the river, passing along up or down with the flood-tide or ebb-tide,
The mechanics of the city, the masters, well-formed, beautiful-faced, looking you straight in the eyes,
Trottoirs thronged, vehicles, Broadway, the women, the shops and shows,
A million people—manners free and superb—open voices—hospitality—the most courageous and friendly young men,
City of hurried and sparkling waters! city of spires and masts!
City nested in bays! my city!

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

GLOUCESTER MOORS

A MILE behind is Gloucester town
Where the fishing fleets put in,
A mile ahead the land dips down
And the woods and farms begin.
Here, where the moors stretch free
In the high blue afternoon,
Are the marching sun and talking sea,
And the racing winds that wheel and flee
On the flying heels of June.

Jill-o'er-the-ground is purple blue,
Blue is the quaker-maid,
The wild geranium holds its dew
Long in the boulder's shade.
Wax-red hangs the cup
From the huckleberry boughs,
In barberry bells the gray moths sup,
Or where the choke-cherry lifts high up
Sweet bowls for their carouse.

Over the shelf of the sandy cove
Beach-peas blossom late.
By copse and cliff the swallows rove
Each calling to his mate.

Seaward the sea-gulls go,
And the land-birds all are here;
That green-gold flash was a vireo,
And yonder flame where the marsh-flags grow
Was a scarlet tanager.

This earth is not the steadfast place
We landsmen build upon;
From deep to deep she varies pace,
And while she comes is gone.
Beneath my feet I feel
Her smooth bulk heave and dip;
With velvet plunge and soft upreel
She swings and steadies to her keel
Like a gallant, gallant ship.

These summer clouds she sets for sail,
The sun is her masthead light,
She tows the moon like a pinnace frail
Where her phosphor wake churns bright.
Now hid, now looming clear,
On the face of the dangerous blue
The star fleets tack and wheel and veer,
But on, but on does the old earth steer
As if her port she knew.

God, dear God! Does she know her port,
Though she goes so far about?
Or blind astray, does she make her sport
To brazen and chance it out?
I watched when her captains passed:
She were better captainless.
Men in the cabin, before the mast,
But some were reckless and some aghast,
And some sat gorged at mess.

By her battened hatch I leaned and caught
Sounds from the noisome hold,—
Cursing and sighing of souls distraught
And cries too sad to be told.
Then I strove to go down and see;
But they said, "Thou art not of us!"

I turned to those on the deck with me:
And cried, "Give help!" But they said, "Let be:
Our ship sails faster thus."

Jill-o'er-the-ground is purple blue,
Blue is the quaker-maid,
The alder-clump where the brook comes through
Breeds cresses in its shade.
To be out of the moiling street
With its swelter and its sin!
Who has given to me this sweet,
And given my brother dust to eat?
And when will his wage come in?

Scattering wide or blown in ranks,
Yellow and white and brown,
Boats and boats from the fishing banks
Come home to Gloucester town.
There is cash to purse and spend,
There are wives to be embraced,
Hearts to borrow and hearts to lend,
And hearts to take and keep to the end,—
O little sails, make haste!

But thou, vast outbound ship of souls,
What harbor town for thee?
What shapes, when thy arriving tolls,
Shall crowd the banks to see?
Shall all the happy shipmates then
Stand singing brotherly?
Or shall a haggard ruthless few
Warp her over and bring her to,
While the many broken souls of men
Fester down in the slaver's pen,
And nothing to say or do?

William Vaughn Moody [1869–1910]

THE SONG OF THE COLORADO

From the heart of the mighty mountains strong-souled for my fate I came,
My far-drawn track to a nameless sea through a land without a name;

And the earth rose up to hold me, to bid me linger and stay;
And the brawn and bone of my mother's race were set to bar my way.

Yet I stayed not, I could not linger; my soul was tense to the call
The wet winds sing when the long waves leap and beat on the far sea wall.
I stayed not, I could not linger; patient, resistless, alone,
I hewed the trail of my destiny deep in the hindering stone.

How narrow that first dim pathway—yet deepening hour by hour!
Years, ages, eons, spent and forgot, while I gathered me might and power
To answer the call that led me, to carve my road to the sea,
Till my flood swept out with that greater tide as tireless and tameless and free.

From the far, wild land that bore me, I drew my blood as wild—
I, born of the glacier's glory, born of the uplands piled
Like stairs to the door of heaven, that the Maker of all might go
Down from his place with honor, to look on the world and know

That the sun and the wind and the waters, and the white ice cold and still,
Were moving aright in the plan he had made, shaping his wish and will.
When the spirit of worship was on me, turning alone, apart,
I stayed and carved me temples deep in the mountain's heart,

Wide-domed and vast and silent, meet for the God I knew,
With shrines that were shadowed and solemn and altars of richest hue;
And out of my ceaseless striving I wrought a victor's hymn,
Flung up to the stars in greeting from my far track deep and dim.

For the earth was put behind me; I reckoned no more with
them
That come or go at her bidding, and cling to her garment's
hem.
Apart in my rock-hewn pathway, where the great cliffs shut
me in,
The storm-swept clouds were my brethren, and the stars
were my kind and kin.

Tireless, alone, unstaying, I went as one who goes
On some high and strong adventure that only his own heart
knows.
Tireless, alone, unstaying, I went in my chosen road—
I trafficked with no man's burden—I bent me to no man's
load.

On my tawny, sinuous shoulders no salt-gray ships swung in;
I washed no feet of cities, like a slave whipped out and in;
My will was the law of my moving in the land that my strife
had made—
As a man in the house he has builded, master and unafraid.

O ye that would hedge and bind me—remembering whence I
came!
I, that was, and was mighty, ere your race had breath or
name!
Play with your dreams in the sunshine—delve and toil and
plot—
Yet I keep the way of my will to the sea, when ye and your
race are not!

Sharlot M. Hall [1870-

NOW

YOSEMITE VALLEY

It is creation's morning—
Freshly the rivers run;
The cliffs, white brows adorning,
Sing to the shining sun.

The forest, plumed and crested,
Scales the steep granite wall.

The ranged peaks, glacier-breasted,
March to the festival.

The mountains dance together,
Lifting their domed heads high.
The cataract's foamy feather
Flaunts in the streaming sky.

Somewhere a babe is borning,
Somewhere a maid is won.
It is creation's morning—
Now is the world begun.

Harriet Monroe [1860–

OUT WHERE THE WEST BEGINS

Out where the handclasp's a little stronger,
Out where the smile dwells a little longer,
That's where the West begins;
Out where the sun is a little brighter,
Where the snows that fall are a trifle whiter,
Where the bonds of home are a wee bit tighter,
That's where the West begins.

Out where the skies are a trifle bluer,
Out where friendship's a little truer,
That's where the West begins;
Out where a fresher breeze is blowing,
Where there's laughter in every streamlet flowing,
Where there's more of reaping and less of sowing,
That's where the West begins.

Out where the world is in the making,
Where fewer hearts in despair are aching,
That's where the West begins;
Where there's more of singing and less of sighing,
Where there's more of giving and less of buying,
And a man makes friends without half trying—
That's where the West begins.

Arthur Chapman [1873–

THE LAW OF THE YUKON

THIS is the law of the Yukon, and ever she makes it plain:
"Send not your foolish and feeble; send me your strong and
your sane—
Strong for the red rage of battle; sane, for I harry them sore;
Send me men girt for the combat, men who are grit to the
core;
Swift as the panther in triumph, fierce as the bear in defeat,
Sired of a bulldog parent, steeled in the furnace heat.
Send me the best of your breeding, lend me your chosen ones;
Them will I take to my bosom, them will I call my sons;
Them will I gild with my treasure, them will I glut with
my meat;
But the others—the misfits, the failures—I trample under
my feet.
Dissolute, damned and despairful, crippled and palsied and
slain,
Ye would send me the spawn of your gutters—Go! take
back your spawn again.

"Wild and wide are my borders, stern as death is my sway;
From my ruthless throne I have ruled alone for a million
years and a day;
Hugging my mighty treasure, waiting for man to come,
Till he swept like a turbid torrent, and after him swept—
the scum.
The pallid pimp of the dead-line, the enervate of the pen,
One by one I weeded them out, for all that I sought was—
Men.
One by one I dismayed them, frighting them sore with my
glooms;
One by one I betrayed them unto my manifold dooms.
Drowned them like rats in my rivers, starved them like curs
on my plains,
Rotted the flesh that was left them, poisoned the blood in
their veins;
Burst with my winter upon them, searing forever their sight,
Lashed them with fungus-white faces, whimpering wild in
the night;

Staggering blind through the storm-whirl, stumbling mad through the snow,
Frozen stiff in the ice-pack, brittle and bent like a bow;
Featureless, formless, forsaken, scented by wolves in their flight,
Left for the wind to make music through ribs that are glittering white;
Gnawing the black crust of failure, searching the pit of despair,
Crooking the toe in the trigger, trying to patter a prayer;
Going outside with an escort, raving with lips all afoam,
Writing a cheque for a million, driveling feebly of home;
Lost like a louse in the burning . . . or else in the tented town
Seeking a drunkard's solace, sinking and sinking down;
Steeped in the slime at the bottom, dead to a decent world,
Lost 'mid the human flotsam, far on the frontier hurled;
In the camp at the bend of the river, with its dozen saloons aglare,
Its gambling dens ariot, its gramophones all ablare;
Crimped with the crimes of a city, sin-ridden and bridled with lies,
In the hush of my mountained vastness, in the flush of my midnight skies.
Plague-spots, yet tools of my purpose, so natheless I suffer them thrive,
Crushing my Weak in their clutches, that only my Strong may survive.

"But the others, the men of my mettle, the men who would 'stablish my fame
Unto its ultimate issue, winning me honor, not shame;
Searching my uttermost valleys, fighting each step as they go,
Shooting the wrath of my rapids, scaling my ramparts of snow;
Ripping the guts of my mountains, looting the beds of my creeks,
Them will I take to my bosom, and speak as a mother speaks.
I am the land that listens, I am the land that broods;
Steeped in eternal beauty, crystalline waters and woods.

Long have I waited lonely, shunned as a thing accurst,
Monstrous, moody, pathetic, the last of the lands and the first;
Visioning camp-fires at twilight, sad with a longing forlorn,
Feeling my womb o'er-pregnant with the seed of cities unborn.
Wild and wide are my borders, stern as death is my sway,
And I wait for the men who will win me—and I will not be won in a day;
And I will not be won by weaklings, subtle, suave and mild,
But by men with the hearts of vikings, and the simple faith of a child;
Desperate, strong and resistless, unthrottled by fear or defeat,
Them will I gild with my treasure, them will I glut with my meat.

"Lofty I stand from each sister land, patient and wearily wise,
With the weight of a world of sadness in my quiet, passionless eyes;
Dreaming alone of a people, dreaming alone of a day,
When men shall not rape my riches, and curse me and go away;
Making a bawd of my bounty, fouling the hand that gave—
Till I rise in my wrath and I sweep on their path and I stamp them into a grave.
Dreaming of men who will bless me, of women esteeming me good,
Of children born in my borders of radiant motherhood.
Of cities leaping to stature, of fame like a flag unfurled,
As I pour the tide of my riches in the eager lap of the world."

This is the Law of the Yukon, that only the Strong shall thrive;
That surely the Weak shall perish, and only the Fit survive.
Dissolute, damned and despairful, crippled and palsied and slain,
This is the Will of the Yukon.—Lo, how she makes it plain!

Robert W. Service [1874–

LINES COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE, DURING A TOUR, JULY 13, 1798

Five years have passed; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
Which on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.
These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence

On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessèd mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and blessèd mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.
If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever Nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one

Who sought the thing he loved. For Nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In Nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here, upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasure in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance—
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream

We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE

Within the mind strong fancies work.
A deep delight the bosom thrills
Oft as I pass along the fork
Of these fraternal hills:
Where, save the rugged road, we find
No appanage of human kind,
Nor hint of man; if stone or rock
Seem not his handiwork to mock
By something cognizably shaped;
Mockery—or model roughly hewn,
And left as if by earthquake strewn,
Or from the Flood escaped:
Altars for Druid service fit;
(But where no fire was ever lit,
Unless the glow-worm to the skies
Thence offer nightly sacrifice)
Wrinkled Egyptian monument;
Green moss-grown tower; or hoary tent;
Tents of a camp that never shall be razed—
On which four thousand years have gazed!

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the slopes!
Ye snow-white lambs that trip
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props
Of restless ownership!
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall
To feed the insatiate Prodigal!

Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and fields,
All that the fertile valley shields;
Wages of folly—baits of crime,
Of life's uneasy game the stake,
Playthings that keep the eyes awake
Of drowsy, dotard Time;—
O care! O guilt!—O vales and plains,
Here, 'mid his own unvexed domains,
A Genius dwells, that can subdue
At once all memory of You,—
Most potent when mists veil the sky,
Mists that distort and magnify;
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,
Sigh forth their ancient melodies!

List to those shriller notes!—*that* march
Perchance was on the blast,
When, through this Height's inverted arch,
Rome's earliest legion passed!
—They saw, adventurously impelled,
And older eyes than theirs beheld,
This block—and yon, whose churchlike frame
Gives to this savage Pass its name.
Aspiring Road! that lov'st to hide
Thy darling in a vapory bourn,
Not seldom may the hour return
When thou shalt be my guide:
And I (as all men may find cause,
When life is at a weary pause,
And they have panted up the hill
Of duty with reluctant will)
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,
For the rich bounties of constraint;
Whence oft invigorating transports flow
That choice lacked courage to bestow!

My Soul was grateful for delight
That wore a threatening brow;
A veil is lifted—can she slight
The scene that opens now?

Though habitation none appear,
The greenness tells, man must be there;
The shelter—that the perspective
Is of the clime in which we live;
Where Toil pursues his daily round;
Where Pity sheds sweet tears—and Love,
In woodbine bower or birchen grove,
Inflicts his tender wound.
—Who comes not hither ne'er shall know
How beautiful the world below;
Nor can he guess how lightly leaps
The brook adown the rocky steeps.
Farewell, thou desolate Domain!
Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,
Carols like a shepherd-boy;
And who is she?—Can that be Joy!
Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,
Smoothly skims the meadows wide;
While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,
To hill and vale proclaims aloud,
"Whate'er the weak may dread, the wicked dare,
Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion, fair!"

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

YARROW UNVISITED

From Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled,
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my "winsome Marrow,"
"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, frae Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own,
Each maiden to her dwelling!

On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow;
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us;
And Dryburgh, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus;
There's pleasant Tiviotdale, a land
Made blithe with plow and harrow:
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare
That glides the dark hills under?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder."
—Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn;
My True-love sighed for sorrow,
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow!

"O green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing!
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,
But we will leave it growing.
O'er hilly path, and open strath
We'll wander Scotland thorough;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;
The swan on still Saint Mary's Lake
Float double, swan and shadow!
We will not see them; will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!
It must, or we shall rue it:
We have a vision of our own,
Ah! why should we undo it?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow!
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow!

"If Care with freezing years should come
And wandering seem but folly,—
Should we be loth to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy;
Should life be dull, and spirits low,
'Twill soothe us in our sorrow
That earth has something yet to show,
The bonny Holms of Yarrow!"

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

YARROW VISITED

And is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream
Of which my fancy cherished
So faithfully, a waking dream?
An image that hath perished!
O that some minstrel's harp were near
To utter notes of gladness
And chase this silence from the air,
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows
With uncontrolled meanderings;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
Is visibly delighted;
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
Save where that pearly whiteness
Is round the rising sun diffused,
A tender hazy brightness;
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
All profitless dejection;
Though not unwilling here to admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
On which the herd is feeding:
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The water-wraith ascended thrice,
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the lay that sings
The haunts of happy lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers:
And pity sanctifies the verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation:
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy:
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature;

And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary,
The shattered front of Newark's towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in,
For manhood to enjoy his strength,
And age to wear away in!
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts that nestle there—
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,
The wildwood fruits to gather,
And on my True-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather!
And what if I enwreathed my own?
'Twere no offence to reason;
The sober hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see,—but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;
A ray of fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee!
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe
Accordant to the measure.

The vapors linger round the heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought, which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!
Will dwell with me,—to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the watery glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way:

Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood strayed,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green
The paths of pleasure trace;
Who foremost now delight to cleave,
With pliant arm, thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthral?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some on earnest business bent
Their murmuring labors ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty:

Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry:
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay Hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possessed;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom Health, of rosy hue,
Wild Wit, Invention ever new,
And lively Cheer, of Vigor born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light
That fly the approach of morn.

Alas! regardless of their doom
The little victims play;
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see, how all around them wait
The ministers of human fate
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murderous band!
Ah, tell them they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that sculks behind;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
  Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
  And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try
And hard Unkindness' altered eye,
  That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
  Amid severest woe.

Lo! in the Vale of Years beneath
  A grisly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
  More hideous than their Queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every laboring sinew strains,
  Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo! Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
  And slow-consuming Age.

To each his sufferings: all are men,
  Condemned alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
  The unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
  And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise!
No more;—where ignorance is bliss,
  'Tis folly to be wise.

Thomas Gray [1716–1771]

A SONG OF SHERWOOD

Sherwood in the twilight, is Robin Hood awake?
Gray and ghostly shadows are gliding through the brake;
Shadows of the dappled deer, dreaming of the morn,
Dreaming of a shadowy man that winds a shadowy horn.

Robin Hood is here again: all his merry thieves
Hear a ghostly bugle-note shivering through the leaves,
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Merry, merry England has kissed the lips of June:
All the wings of fairyland were here beneath the moon
Like a flight of rose-leaves fluttering in a mist
Of opal and ruby and pearl and amethyst.

Merry, merry England is waking as of old,
With eyes of blither hazel and hair of brighter gold:
For Robin Hood is here again beneath the bursting spray
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Love is in the greenwood building him a house
Of wild rose and hawthorn and honeysuckle boughs:
Love is in the greenwood: dawn is in the skies;
And Marian is waiting with a glory in her eyes.

Hark! The dazzled laverock climbs the golden steep:
Marian is waiting: is Robin Hood asleep?
Round the fairy grass-rings frolic elf and fay,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Oberon, Oberon, rake away the gold,
Rake away the red leaves, roll away the mould,
Rake away the gold leaves, roll away the red,
And wake Will Scarlett from his leafy forest bed.

Friar Tuck and Little John are riding down together
With quarter-staff and drinking-can and gray goose-feather;
The dead are coming back again; the years are rolled away
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Softly over Sherwood the south wind blows;
All the heart of England hid in every rose
Hears across the greenwood the sunny whisper leap,
Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?

Hark, the voice of England wakes him as of old
And, shattering the silence with a cry of brighter gold,
Bugles in the greenwood echo from the steep,
Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?

Where the deer are gliding down the shadowy glen
All across the glades of fern he calls his merry men;
Doublets of the Lincoln green glancing through the May
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day;

Calls them and they answer: from aisles of oak and ash
Rings the *Follow! Follow!* and the boughs begin to crash;
The ferns begin to flutter and the flowers begin to fly;
And through the crimson dawning the robber band goes by.

Robin! Robin! Robin! All his merry thieves
Answer as the bugle-note shivers through the leaves:
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Alfred Noyes [1880–

GODIVA

I waited for the train at Coventry:
I hung with grooms and porters on the bridge,
To watch the three tall spires; and there I shaped
The city's ancient legend into this:—
Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the people well,
And loathed to see them overtaxed; but she
Did more, and underwent, and overcame,
The woman of a thousand summers back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled
In Coventry; for when he laid a tax
Upon his town, and all the mothers brought
Their children, clamoring, "If we pay, we starve!"
She sought her lord, and found him, where he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his hair
A yard behind. She told him of their tears,
And prayed him, "If they pay this tax, they starve."
Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,
"You would not let your little finger ache
For such as *these?*"—"But I would die," said she.
He laughed, and swore by Peter and by Paul:
Then filliped at the diamond in her ear:
"O, ay, ay, ay, you talk!"—"Alas!" she said,
"But prove me what it is I would not do."
And from a heart as rough as Esau's hand,
He answered, "Ride you naked through the town,
And I repeal it"; and, nodding, as in scorn,
He parted, with great strides among his dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As winds from all the compass shift and blow,
Made war upon each other for an hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
And bade him cry, with sound of trumpet, all
The hard condition, but that she would loose
The people; therefore, as they loved her well,
From then till noon no foot should pace the street,
No eye look down, she passing, but that all
Should keep within, door shut, and window barred.

Then fled she to her inmost bower, and there
Unclasped the wedded eagles of her belt,
The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a breath
She lingered, looking like a summer moon
Half-dipped in cloud. Anon she shook her head,
And showered the rippled ringlets to her knee;
Unclad herself in haste; adown the stair
Stole on; and, like a creeping sunbeam, slid
From pillar unto pillar, until she reached
The gateway; there she found her palfrey trapped
In purple blazoned with armorial gold.

Then she rode forth, clothed on with chastity:
The deep air listened round her as she rode,
And all the low wind hardly breathed for fear.
The little wide-mouthed heads upon the spout

Had cunning eyes to see: the barking cur
Made her cheek flame: her palfrey's footfall shot
Light horrors through her pulses: the blind walls
Were full of chinks and holes; and overhead
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared: but she
Not less through all bore up, till, last, she saw
The white-flowered elder-thicket from the field
Gleam through the Gothic archway in the wall.
Then she rode back, clothed on with chastity:
And one low churl, compact of thankless earth,
The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,
Peeped—but his eyes, before they had their will,
Were shrivelled into darkness in his head,
And dropped before him. So the Powers, who wait
On noble deeds, cancelled a sense misused;
And she, that knew not, passed; and all at once,
With twelve great shocks of sound, the shameless noon
Was clashed and hammered from a hundred towers,
One after one; but even then she gained
Her bower; whence reissuing, robed and crowned,
To meet her lord, she took the tax away
And built herself an everlasting name.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT

St. Michael's Mount, the tidal isle,
In May with daffodils and lilies
Is kirtled gorgeously a while
As ne'er another English hill is:
About the precipices cling
The rich renascence robes of Spring.

Her gold and silver, nature's gifts,
The prodigal with both hands showers;
O not in patches, not in drifts
But round and round a mount of flowers—

Of lilies and of daffodils,
The envy of all other hills.

And on the lofty summit looms
The castle: None could build or plan it.
The four-square foliage springs and blooms,
The piled elaborate flower of granite,
That not the sun can wither; no,
Nor any tempest overthrow.

John Davidson [1857–1909]

SONNET

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theaters, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

A SONG OF FLEET STREET

Fleet Street! Fleet Street! Fleet Street in the morning,
With the old sun laughing out behind the dome of Paul's,
Heavy wains a-driving, merry winds a-striving,
White clouds and blue sky above the smoke-stained walls.

Fleet Street! Fleet Street! Fleet Street in the noontide,
East and west the streets packed close, and roaring like the sea;
With laughter and with sobbing we feel the world's heart throbbing,
And know that what is throbbing is the heart of you and me.

Fleet Street! Fleet Street! Fleet Street in the evening,
Darkness set with golden lamps down Ludgate Hill a-row:
Oh! hark the voice o' th' city that breaks our hearts with pity,
That crazes us with shame and wrath, and makes us love her so.

Fleet Street! Fleet Street! morning, noon, and starlight,
Through the never-ceasing roar come the great chimes clear and slow;
"Good are life and laughter, though we look before and after,
And good to love the race of men a little ere we go."

Alice Werner [1859–

SONG

Closes and courts and lanes,
Devious, clustered thick,
The thoroughfare, mains and drains,
People and mortar and brick,
Wood, metal, machinery, brains,
Pen and composing stick:
Fleet Street, but exquisite flame
In the nebula once ere day and night
Began their travail, or earth became,
And all was passionate light.

Networks of wire overland,
Conduits under the sea,
Aerial message from strand to strand
By lightning that travels free,
Hither in haste to hand
Tidings of destiny,

These tingling nerves of the world's affairs
Deliver remorseless, rendering still
The fall of empires, the price of shares,
The record of good and ill.

Tidal the traffic goes
Citywards out of the town;
Townwards the evening ebb o'erflows
This highway of old renown,
When the fog-woven curtains close,
And the urban night comes down,
Where souls are spilt and intellects spent
O'er news vociferant near and far,
From Hesperus hard to the Orient,
From dawn to the evening star.

This is the royal refrain
That burdens the boom and the thud
Of omnibus, mobus, wain,
And the hoofs on the beaten mud,
From the Griffin at Chancery Lane
To the portal of old King Lud—
Fleet Street, diligent night and day,
Of news of the mart and the burnished hearth,
Seven hundred paces of narrow way,
A notable bit of the earth.

John Davidson [1857–1909]

ST. JAMES'S STREET

St. James's Street, of classic fame,
For Fashion still is seen there:
St. James's Street? I know the name,
I almost think I've been there!
Why, that's where Sacharissa sighed
When Waller read his ditty;
Where Byron lived, and Gibbon died,
And Alvanley was witty.

A famous Street! To yonder Park
Young Churchill stole in class-time;
Come, gaze on fifty men of mark,
And then recall the past time.
The *plats* at White's, the play at Crock's,
The bumpers to Miss Gunning;
The *bonhomie* of Charley Fox,
And Selwyn's ghastly funning.

The dear old Street of clubs and cribs,
As north and south it stretches,
Still seems to smack of Rolliad squibs,
And Gillray's fiercer sketches;
The quaint old dress, the grand old style,
The *mots*, the racy stories;
The wine, the dice, the wit, the bile—
The hate of Whigs and Tories.

At dusk, when I am strolling there,
Dim forms will rise around me;
Lepel flits past me in her chair,
And Congreve's airs astound me!
And once Nell Gwynne, a frail young Sprite,
Looked kindly when I met her;
I shook my head, perhaps,—but quite
Forgot to quite forget her.

The Street is still a lively tomb
For rich, and gay, and clever;
The crops of dandies bud and bloom,
And die as fast as ever.
Now gilded youth loves cutty pipes,
And slang that's rather scaring;
It can't approach its prototypes
In taste, or tone, or bearing.

In Brummell's day of buckle shoes,
Lawn cravats, and roll collars,
They'd fight, and woo, and bet—and lose,
Like gentlemen and scholars:

I'm glad young men should go the pace,
I half forgive Old Rapid!
These louts disgrace their name and race—
So vicious and so vapid!

Worse times may come. *Bon ton*, indeed,
Will then be quite forgotten,
And all we much revere will speed
From ripe to worse than rotten:
Let grass then sprout between yon stones,
And owls then roost at Boodle's,
For Echo will hurl back the tones
Of screaming Yankee Doodles.

I love the haunts of old Cockaigne,
Where wit and wealth were squandered;
The halls that tell of hoop and train,
Where grace and rank have wandered;
Those halls where ladies fair and leal
First ventured to adore me!
Something of that old love I feel
For this old Street before me.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

THE SOUTH COUNTRY

When I am living in the Midlands
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening:
My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea;
And it's there walking in the high woods
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day:
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and gray;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the Rocks,
And the oldest kind of song.

But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our Sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there.
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend:
And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me
Or who will be my friend?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex Weald,
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plough the field

By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

Hilaire Belloc [1870–

EDINBURGH

City of mist and rain and blown gray spaces,
Dashed with wild wet color and gleam of tears,
Dreaming in Holyrood halls of the passionate faces
Lifted to one Queen's face that has conquered the years,
Are not the halls of thy memory haunted places?
Cometh there not as a moon (where the blood-rust sears
Floors a-flutter of old with silks and laces),
Gliding, a ghostly Queen, through a mist of tears?

Proudly here, with a loftier pinnacled splendor,
Throned in his northern Athens, what spells remain
Still on the marble lips of the Wizard, and render
Silent the gazer on glory without a stain!
Here and here, do we whisper, with hearts more tender,
Tusitala wandered through mist and rain;
Rainbow-eyed and frail and gallant and slender,
Dreaming of pirate-isles in a jewelled main.

Up the Cannongate climbeth, cleft asunder
Raggedly here, with a glimpse of the distant sea
Flashed through a crumbling alley, a glimpse of wonder,
Nay, for the City is throned on Eternity!

Hark! from the soaring castle a cannon's thunder
Closes an hour for the world and an æon for me,
Gazing at last from the martial heights whereunder
Deathless memories roll to an ageless sea.

Alfred Noyes [1880–

CORRYMEELA

Over here in England I'm helpin' wi' the hay,
An' I wisht I was in Ireland the livelong day;
Weary on the English hay, an' sorra take the wheat!
Och! Corrymeela an' the blue sky over it.

There's a deep dumb river flowin' by beyont the heavy trees,
This livin' air is moithered wi' the hummin' o' the bees;
I wisht I'd hear the Claddagh burn go runnin' through the heat
Past Corrymeela, wi' the blue sky over it.

The people that's in England is richer nor the Jews,
There's not the smallest young gosoon but thravels in his shoes!
I'd give the pipe between me teeth to see a barefut child,
Och! Corrymeela an' the low south wind.

Here's hands so full o' money an' hearts so full o' care,
By the luck o' love! I'd still go light for all I did go bare.
"God save ye, *colleen dhas*," I said: the girl she thought me wild.
Far Corrymeela, an' the low south wind.

D'ye mind me now, the song at night is mortail hard to raise,
The girls are heavy goin' here, the boys are ill to plase;
When one'st I'm out this workin' hive, 'tis I'll be back again—
Ay, Corrymeela, in the same soft rain.

The puff o' smoke from one ould roof before an English town!
For a *shaugh* wid Andy Feelan here I'd give a silver crown,
For a curl o' hair like Mollie's ye'll ask the like in vain.
Sweet Corrymeela, an' the same soft rain.

Moira O'Neill [18

THE LITTLE WAVES OF BREFFNY

THE grand road from the mountain goes shining to the sea,
And there is traffic in it, and many a horse and cart;
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me,
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through my heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the hill,
And there is glory in it, and terror on the wind;
But the haunted air of twilight is very strange and still,
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my mind.

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on their way,
Shining green and silver with the hidden herring shoal;
But the little waves of Breffny have drenched my heart in spray,
And the little waves of Breffny go stumbling through my soul.

Eva Gore-Booth [18

A SONG OF GLENANN

OCH, when we lived in ould Glenann
Meself could lift a song!
An' ne'er an hour by day or dark
Would I be thinkin' long.

The weary wind might take the roof,
The rain might lay the corn;
We'd up an' look for betther luck
About the morrow's morn.

But since we come away from there
An' far across the say,
I still have wrought, an' still have thought
The way I'm doin' the day.

An' now we're quarely betther fixed,
In troth! there's nothin' wrong:
But me an' mine, by rain an' shine
We do be thinkin' long.

Moira O'Neill [18

THE MAIDEN CITY

WHERE Foyle his swelling waters rolls northward to the main,
Here, Queen of Erin's daughters, fair Derry fixed her reign.
A holy temple crowned her, and commerce graced her street,
A rampart wall was round her, the river at her feet;
And here she sat alone, boys, and looking from the hill
Vowed The Maiden on her throne, boys, would be a maiden still.

From Antrim crossing over in famous eighty-eight
A plumed and belted lover came to the Ferry gate:
She summoned to defend her our sires—a beardless race—
Who shouted NO SURRENDER! and slammed it in his face.
Then in a quiet tone, boys, they told him 'twas their will
That The Maiden on her throne, boys, should be a maiden still.

Next, crushing all before him, a kingly wooer came
(The royal banner o'er him blushed crimson deep for shame);
He showed the Pope's commission, nor dreamed to be refused.
She pitied his condition, but begged to stand excused.
In short, the fact is known, boys, she chased him from the hill,
For The Maiden on her throne, boys, would be a maiden still.

On our brave sires descending, 'twas then the tempest broke,
Their peaceful dwellings rending, 'mid blood and flame and smoke.
That hallowed graveyard yonder swells with the slaughtered dead—
Oh! brothers! pause and ponder, it was for us they bled;
And while their gift we own, boys—the fane that tops our hill,
Oh, The Maiden on her throne, boys, shall be a maiden still.

Nor wily tongue shall move us, nor tyrant arm affright,
We'll look to One above us Who ne'er forsook the right;
Who will, may crouch and tender the birthright of the free,
But, brothers, NO SURRENDER, no compromise for me!

We want no barrier stone, boys, no gates to guard the hill,
Yet The Maiden on her throne, boys, shall be a maiden still.

Charlotte Elizabeth Tonna [1790–1846]

THE DEAD AT CLONMACNOIS

In a quiet watered land, a land of roses,
Stands Saint Kieran's city fair;
And the warriors of Erin in their famous generations
Slumber there.

There beneath the dewy hillside sleep the noblest
Of the clan of Conn,
Each below his stone with name in branching Ogham
And the sacred knot thereon.

There they laid to rest the seven Kings of Tara,
There the sons of Cairbré sleep—
Battle-banners of the Gael that in Kieran's plain of crosses
Now their final hosting keep.

And in Clonmacnois they laid the men of Teffia,
And right many a lord of Breagh;
Deep the sod above Clan Creidé and Clan Conaill,
Kind in hall and fierce in fray.

Many and many a son of Conn the Hundred-Fighter
In the red earth lies at rest;
Many a blue eye of Clan Colman the turf covers,
Many a swan-white breast.

Thomas William Rolleston [1857–

SWEET INNISFALLEN

Sweet Innisfallen, fare thee well,
May calm and sunshine long be thine!
How fair thou art let others tell,—
To *feel* how fair shall long be mine.

Sweet Innisfallen, long shall dwell
In memory's dream that sunny smile,
Which o'er thee on that evening fell,
When first I saw thy fairy isle.

'Twas light, indeed, too blest for one,
Who had to turn to paths of care—
Through crowded haunts again to run,
And leave thee bright and silent there;

No more unto thy shores to come,
But, on the world's rude ocean tossed,
Dream of thee sometimes, as a home
Of sunshine he had seen and lost.

Far better in thy weeping hours
To part from thee, as I do now,
When mist is o'er thy blooming bowers,
Like sorrow's veil on beauty's brow.

For, though unrivalled still thy grace,
Thou dost not look, as then, *too* blest,
But thus in shadow seem'st a place
Where erring man might hope to rest.—

Might hope to rest, and find in thee
A gloom like Eden's, on the day
He left its shade, when every tree,
Like thine, hung weeping o'er his way.

Weeping or smiling, lovely isle!
And all the lovelier for thy tears,
For though but rare thy sunny smile,
'Tis heaven's own glance when it appears.

Like feeling hearts, whose joys are few,
But, when indeed they come, divine—
The brightest light the sun e'er threw
Is lifeless to one gleam of thine!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"AH, SWEET IS TIPPERARY"

Ah, sweet is Tipperary in the springtime of the year,
When the hawthorn's whiter than the snow,
When the feathered folk assemble and the air is all a-tremble
With their singing and their winging to and fro;

When queenly Slievenamon puts her verdant vesture on,
And smiles to hear the news the breezes bring;
When the sun begins to glance on the rivulets that dance—
Ah, sweet is Tipperary in the spring!

Ah, sweet is Tipperary in the springtime of the year,
When the mists are rising from the lea,
When the Golden Vale is smiling with a beauty all beguiling,
And the Suir goes crooning to the sea;
When the shadows and the showers only multiply the flowers
That the lavish hand of May will fling;
When in unfrequented ways, fairy music softly plays—
Ah, sweet is Tipperary in the spring!

Ah, sweet is Tipperary in the springtime of the year,
When life like the year is young,
When the soul is just awaking like a lily blossom breaking,
And love words linger on the tongue;
When the blue of Irish skies is the hue of Irish eyes,
And love-dreams cluster and cling
Round the heart and round the brain, half of pleasure, half of pain—
Ah, sweet is Tipperary in the spring!

Denis Aloysius McCarthy [1871–

THE GROVES OF BLARNEY

The groves of Blarney they look so charming,
Down by the purling of sweet, silent brooks,
All decked with posies, that spontaneous grow there
Planted in order in the rocky nooks.
'Tis there the daisy, and the sweet carnation,
The blooming pink, and the rose so fair;
Likewise the lily, and the daffodilly—
All flowers that scent the sweet, fragrant air.

'Tis Lady Jeffers owns this plantation,
Like Alexander, or like Helen fair;
There's no commander in all the nation
For regulation can with her compare.

Such walls surround her, that no nine-pounder
Could ever plunder her place of strength;
But Oliver Cromwell, he did her pommel,
And made a breach in her battlement.

There's gravel walks there for speculation
And conversation, in sweet solitude;
'Tis there the lover may hear the dove, or
The gentle plover, in the afternoon.
And if a lady should be so engaging
As to walk alone in those shady bowers,
'Tis there her courtier, he may transport her
Into some fort, or all under ground.

For 'tis there's a cave where no daylight enters,
But cats and badgers are forever bred;
Being mossed by nature which makes it sweeter
Than a coach-and-six, or a feather bed.
'Tis there the lake is, well-stored with perches,
And comely eels in the verdant mud;
Besides the leeches, and the groves of beeches,
All standing in order for to guard the flood.

There's statues gracing this noble place in,
All heathen gods and nymphs so fair:
Bold Neptune, Plutarch, and Nicodemus,
All standing naked in the open air.
So now to finish this brave narration,
Which my poor genii could not entwine;
But were I Homer or Nebuchadnezzar,
'Tis in every feature I would make it shine.

Richard Alfred Millikin [1767–1815]

THE BELLS OF SHANDON

Sabbata pango;
Funera plango;
Solemnia clango.

INSCRIPTION ON AN OLD BELL

With deep affection and recollection
I often think of the Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would, in the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle their magic spells.

On this I ponder where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder, Sweet Cork, of thee,—
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters of the river Lee.

I've heard bells chiming full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in cathedral shrine,
While at a glib rate brass tongues would vibrate;
But all their music spoke naught to thine.
For memory, dwelling on each proud swelling
Of thy belfry, knelling its bold notes free,
Made the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters of the river Lee.

I've heard bells tolling "Old Adrian's Mole" in,
Their thunder rolling from the Vatican,—
And cymbals glorious, swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets of Notre Dame;
But thy sounds were sweeter than the dome of Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber, pealing solemnly.
O, the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters of the river Lee.

There's a bell in Moscow, while on tower and Kiosko
In St. Sophia the Turkman gets,
And loud in air, calls men to prayer,
From the tapering summit of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom I freely grant them;
But there's an anthem more dear to me,—
'Tis the bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters of the river Lee.

Francis Sylvester Mahony [1804–1866]

"DE GUSTIBUS—"

Your ghost will walk, you lover of trees,
(If our loves remain)
In an English lane,

By a cornfield-side a-flutter with poppies.
Hark, those two in the hazel coppice—
A boy and a girl, if the good fates please,
Making love, say,—
The happier they!
Draw yourself up from the light of the moon
And let them pass, as they will too soon,
With the beanflowers' boon,
And the blackbird's tune,
And May, and June!

What I love best in all the world
Is a castle, precipice-encurled,
In a gash of the wind-grieved Apennine.
Or look for me, old fellow of mine,
(If I get my head from out the mouth
O' the grave, and loose my spirit's bands,
And come again to the land of lands)—
In a sea-side house to the farther South,
Where the baked cicala dies of drouth,
And one sharp tree—'tis a cypress—stands,
By the many hundred years red-rusted,
Rough iron-spiked, ripe fruit-o'ercrusted,
My sentinel to guard the sands
To the water's edge. For, what expands
Before the house, but the great opaque
Blue breadth of sea without a break?
While, in the house, forever crumbles
Some fragment of the frescoed walls,
From blisters where a scorpion sprawls.
A girl bare-footed brings, and tumbles
Down on the pavement, green-flesh melons,
And says there's news to-day—the king
Was shot at, touched in the liver-wing,
Goes with his Bourbon arm in a sling:
—She hopes they have not caught the felons
Italy, my Italy!
Queen Mary's saying serves for me—
(When fortune's malice
Lost her Calais)

Open my heart and you will see
Graved inside of it, "Italy."
Such lovers old are I and she:
So it always was, so shall ever be!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

ITALIAN RHAPSODY

Dear Italy! The sound of thy soft name
  Soothes me with balm of Memory and Hope.
  Mine, for the moment, height and sweep and slope
That once were mine. Supreme is still the aim
    To flee the cold and gray
    Of our December day,
And rest where thy clear spirit burns with unconsuming flame.

There are who deem remembered beauty best,
  And thine, imagined, fairer is than sight
Of all the charms of other realms confessed,
  Thou miracle of sea and land and light.
    Was it lest, envying thee,
    The world unhappy be,
Benignant Heaven gave to all the all-consoling Night?

Remembered beauty best? Who reason so?
  Not lovers, yearning to the same dumb star
  That doth disdain their passion—who, afar,
Seek touch and voice in velvet winds and low.
    No, storied Italy,
    Not thine that heresy,
Thou who thyself art fairer far than Fancy e'er can show.

To me thou art an ever-brooding spell;
  An old enchantment, exorcised of wrong;
  A beacon, where-against the wings of Song
Are bruisèd so, they cannot fly to tell;
    A mistress, at whose feet
    A myriad singers meet,
To find thy beauty the despair of measures full and sweet.

Of old, ere caste or custom froze the heart,
What tales of thine did Chaucer re-indite,—
Of Constance, and Griselda, and the plight
Of pure Cecilia,—all with joyous art!
Oh, to have journeyed down
To Canterbury town,
And known, from lips that touched thy robe, that triad of renown!

Fount of Romance whereat our Shakespeare drank!
Through him the loves of all are linked to thee
By Romeo's ardor, Juliet's constancy.
He sets the peasant in the royal rank;
Shows under mask and paint
Kinship of knave and saint,
And plays on stolid man with Prospero's wand and Ariel's prank.

Another English foster-child hadst thou
When Milton from the breast of thy delight
Drew inspiration. With a vestal's vow
He fed the flame caught from thy sacred light.
And when upon him lay
The long eclipse of day,
Thou wert the memory-hoarded treasure of his doomèd sight.

Name me a poet who has trod thy soil:
He is thy lover, ever hastening back,
With thee forgetting weariness and toil,
The nightly sorrow for the daily lack.
How oft our lyric race
Looked last upon thy face!
Oh, would that I were worthy thus to die in thine embrace!

Oh, to be kin to Keats as urn with urn
Shares the same Roman earth!—to sleep, apart,
Near to the bloom that once was Shelley's heart,
Where bees, like lingering lovers, re-return;
Where the proud pyramid,
To brighter glory bid,
Gives Cestius his longed-for fame, marking immortal Art.

Or, in loved Florence, to repose beside
Our trinity of singers! Fame enough
To neighbor lordly Landor, noble Clough,
And her, our later sibyl, sorrow-eyed.
Oh, tell me—not their arts,
But their Italian hearts
Won for their dust that narrow oval, than the world more wide!

So might I lie where Browning should have lain,
My "Italy" for all the world to read,
Like his on the palazzo. For thy pain
In losing from thy rosary that bead,
England accords thee room
Around his minster tomb—
A province conquered of thy soul, and not an Arab slain!

Then take these lines, and add to them the lay,
All inarticulate, I to thee indite:
The sudden longing on the sunniest day,
The happy sighing in the stormiest night,
The tears of love that creep
From eyes unwont to weep,
Full with remembrance, blind with joy, and with devotion deep.

Absence from thee is such as men endure
Between the glad betrothal and the bride;
Or like the years that Youth, intense and sure,
From his ambition to his goal must bide.
And if no more I may
Mount to Fiesole . . .
Oh, then were Memory meant for those to whom is Hope denied.

Show me a lover who hath drunk by night
Thy beauty-potion, as the grape the dew:
'Twere little wonder he were poet too,
With wine of song in unexpected might,
While moonlit cloister calls
With plashy fountain-falls,
Or darkened Arno moves to music with its mirrored light.

Who can withstand thee? What distress or care
But yields to Naples, or that long day-dream
We know as Venice, where alone more fair
Noon is than night; where every lapping stream
Wooes with a soft caress
Our new-world weariness,
And every ripple smiles with joy at sight of scene so rare.

The mystery of thy charm—ah, who hath guessed?
'Twas ne'er divined by day or shown in sleep;
Yet sometimes Music, floating from her steep,
Holds to our lips a chalice brimmed and blest:
Then know we that thou art
Of the Ideal part—
Of Man's one thirst that is not quenched, drink he howe'er so deep.

Thou human-hearted land, whose revels hold
Man in communion with the antique days,
And summon him from prosy greed to ways
Where Youth is beckoning to the Age of Gold;
How thou dost hold him near
And whisper in his ear
Of the lost Paradise that lies beyond the alluring haze!

In tears I tossed my coin from Trevi's edge,—
A coin unsordid as a bond of love,—
And, with the instinct of the homing dove,
I gave to Rome my rendezvous and pledge.
And when imperious Death
Has quenched my flame of breath,
Oh, let me join the faithful shades that throng that fount above.

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853–

ABOVE SALERNO

Silvery the olives on Ravello's steeps,
Terraced the verdure of her nurtured hills;
Far, far below the blue Salerno sweeps,
And on the shore her emerald largesse spills.

Lost in the haze of melting hills and skies
Sad Pæstum's plain in shadowy distance lies.

How the Spring flings her tribute to the breeze
  Through every slit in these long, winding walls!
Shunning the screen of flowery tapestries,
  The slim gray lizard, turquoise-vested, crawls—
Blind worshipper of the unconscious sun,
His pagan shrine, his splendid eidolon.

Here Scala lifts upon her furrowed breast
  Twin cities of the living and the dead,
Where toil the quick and where the buried rest,
  With Roman tombs low vaulted overhead:
In these strange dwellings life must surely seem
To hold the secret of its final dream.

The nectarine, peach and almond trees in flower,
  Play on the hues from deep to palest rose.
Shy druid birches guard a secret bower
  Where many a home-like English blossom blows;
With daisy, primrose, and narcissus shine
The lavish stars of Wordsworth's celandine.

On rocky, wave-girt slopes, where buds the vine,
  Golden and green the trellised orchards grow.
Beyond the beach's pale, receding line
  Roam dusky herds of sullen buffalo.
The distant Apennines' dark ranges wear
Halos of snow and amethystine air.

Can this be Italy, or but a dream
  Emerging from the broken waves of sleep?
Since even the rudest works of peasants seem
  Some spell of ancient miracles to keep:
As when against old Barbarossa's power
The Romans threw the grim rock of this tower.

More exquisite than our imagining,
  In silent hours how often shall arise—
From the dim waters of that mystic spring
  Where the soul keeps her anchored memories—

This world of beauty, color, and perfume;
Hoary with age, yet of unaging bloom.

Ada Foster Murray [18 –

VENICE

From "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"

I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs,
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand;
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Looked to the wingèd Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
And such she was; her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Poured in her lap all gems in sparkling showers:
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deemed their dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear:
Those days are gone, but Beauty still is here;
States fall, arts fade, but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name is story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the Dogeless city's vanished sway:

Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away,—
The keystones of the arch!—though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

VENICE

Venice, thou Siren of sea-cities, wrought
By mirage, built on water, stair o'er stair,
Of sunbeams and cloud-shadows, phantom-fair,
With naught of earth to mar thy sea-born thought!
Thou floating film upon the wonder-fraught
Ocean of dreams! Thou hast no dream so rare
As are thy sons and daughters, they who wear
Foam-flakes of charm from thine enchantment caught!
O dark brown eyes! O tangles of dark hair!
O heaven-blue eyes, blonde tresses where the breeze
Plays over sun-burned cheeks in sea-blown air!
Firm limbs of moulded bronze! frank debonair
Smiles of deep-bosomed women! Loves that seize
Man's soul, and waft her on storm-melodies!

John Addington Symonds [1840–1893]

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And, when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;

Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great, is passed away.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL

A PICTURE AT FANO

DEAR and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave
That child, when thou hast done with him, for me!
Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
Shall find performed thy special ministry,
And time come for departure, thou, suspending
Thy flight, may'st see another child for tending,
Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
From where thou standest now, to where I gaze,
—And suddenly my head is covered o'er
With those wings, white above the child who prays
Now on that tomb—and I shall feel thee guarding
Me, out of all the world; for me, discarding
Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes its door.

I would not look up thither past thy head
Because the door opes, like that child, I know,
For I should have thy gracious face instead,
Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend me low
Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether
Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest
My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands
Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
Pressing the brain, which too much thought expands,
Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!
I think how I should view the earth and skies
And sea, when once again my brow was bared
After thy healing, with such different eyes.
O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:
And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
What further may be sought for or declared?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach
(Alfred, dear friend!)—that little child to pray,
Holding the little hands up, each to each
Pressed gently,—with his own head turned away
Over the earth where so much lay before him
Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er him,
And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went
To sit and see him in his chapel there,
And drink his beauty to our souls' content
—My angel with me too: and since I care
For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power
And glory comes this picture for a dower,
Fraught with a pathos so magnificent)—

And since he did not work thus earnestly
At all times, and has else endured some wrong—
I took one thought his picture struck from me,
And spread it out, translating it to song.
My love is here. Where are you, dear old friend?
How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end?
This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

PERUGIA

For the sake of a weathered gray city set high on a hill
To the northward I go,
Where Umbria's valley lies mile upon emerald mile
Outspread like a chart.
The wind in her steep narrow streets is eternally chill
From the neighboring snow,

But linger who will in the lure of a southerly smile,
Here is my heart.

Wrought to a mutual blueness are mountains and sky;
Intermingling they meet.
Little gray breathings of olive arise from the plain
Like sighs that are seen,
For man and his maker harmonious toil, and the sigh
Of such labor is sweet,
And the fruits of their patience are vistas of vineyards and grain
In a glory of green.

No wind from the valley that passes the casement but flings
Invisible flowers.
The carol of birds is a gossamer tissue of gold
On a background of bells.
Sweetest of all in the silence the nightingale sings
Through the silver-pure hours,
Till the stars disappear like a dream that may never be told,
That the dawning dispels.

Never so darkling an alley but opens at last
On unlimited space,
Each gate is the frame of a vision that stretches away
To the rims of the sky.
Never a scar that was left by the pitiless past
But has taken a grace
Like the mark of a smile that was turned upon children at play
In a summer gone by.

Many the tyrants, my city, that held thee in thrall.
What remains of them now?
Names whispered back from the dark through a portal ajar—
They come not again.
By men thou wert made and wert marred, but outlasting them all
Is the soul that is thou—
A soul that shall speak to my soul till I too pass afar,
And perchance, even then.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878–

"THERE IS A POOL ON GARDA"

THERE is a pool on Garda,
'Tis fashioned by the moon
That climbs above the mountain's crest
What time the night birds croon;
The pool is paved with silver
Inwrought with burnished gold,
And in its deeps a treasure sleeps
The goblins stored of old.

There is a pool on Garda,
It will elude you still
Ply you the oar from shore to shore
With howe'er strong a will;
'Twill flee you like a phantom,
'Twill lead you on and on;
A luring light, 'twill fade from sight
What time the moon is gone.

There is a pool on Garda,
You'll see it in your dreams;
'Tis shaped of silvery glamor,
'Tis fused of golden beams.
Once you have caught the vision,
The fair elusive ray,
'Twill haunt your brain like some sweet strain
Forever and a day!

Clinton Scollard [1860–

CHORUS

From "Hellas"

THE world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn:

Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam,
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning-star;
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies;
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

O write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be!
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free,
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendor of its prime;
And leave, if naught so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued:
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

O cease! must hate and death return?
Cease! must men kill and die?
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy!

The world is weary of the past—
O might it die or rest at last!

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

THE ISLES OF GREECE

From "Don Juan"

The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set,

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse:
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations;—all were his!
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set, where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though linked among a fettered race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?
Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ!

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no;—the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, "Let one living head,
But one, arise,—we come, we come!"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain: strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
Hark! rising to the ignoble call—
How answers each bold Bacchanal!

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet;
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served—but served Polycrates—
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
O that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
They have a king who buys and sells;
In native swords and native ranks
The only hope of courage dwells:
But Turkish force and Latin fraud
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But, gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

THE BELFRY OF BRUGES

CARILLON

In the ancient town of Bruges,
In the quaint old Flemish city,
As the evening shades descended,
Low and loud and sweetly blended,

Low at times and loud at times,
And changing like a poet's rhymes,
Rang the beautiful wild chimes
From the Belfry in the market
Of the ancient town of Bruges.

Then, with deep sonorous clangor
Calmly answering their sweet anger,
When the wrangling bells had ended,
Slowly struck the clock eleven,
And, from out the silent heaven,
Silence on the town descended.
Silence, silence everywhere,
On the earth and in the air,
Save that footsteps here and there
Of some burgher home returning,
By the street lamps faintly burning,
For a moment woke the echoes
Of the ancient town of Bruges.

But amid my broken slumbers
Still I heard those magic numbers,
As they loud proclaimed the flight
And stolen marches of the night;
Till their chimes in sweet collision
Mingled with each wandering vision,
Mingled with the fortune-telling
Gypsy-bands of dreams and fancies,
Which amid the waste expanses
Of the silent land of trances
Have their solitary dwelling;
All else seemed asleep in Bruges,
In the quaint old Flemish city.

And I thought how like these chimes
Are the poet's airy rhymes,
All his rhymes and roundelays,
His conceits, and songs, and ditties,
From the belfry of his brain,
Scattered downward, though in vain,

On the roofs and stones of cities!
For by night the drowsy ear
Under its curtains cannot hear,
And by day men go their ways,
Hearing the music as they pass,
But deeming it no more, alas!
Than the hollow sound of brass.

Yet perchance a sleepless wight,
Lodging at some humble inn
In the narrow lanes of life,
When the dusk and hush of night
Shut out the incessant din
Of daylight and its toil and strife,
May listen with a calm delight
To the poet's melodies,
Till he hears, or dreams he hears,
Intermingled with the song,
Thoughts that he has cherished long;
Hears amid the chime and singing
The bells of his own village ringing,
And wakes, and finds his slumberous eyes
Wet with most delicious tears.

Thus dreamed I, as by night I lay
In Bruges, at the Fleur-de-Blé,
Listening with a wild delight
To the chimes that, through the night,
Rang their changes from the Belfry
Of that quaint old Flemish city.

THE BELFRY OF BRUGES

In the market-place of Bruges stands the belfry old and brown;
Thrice consumed and thrice rebuilded, still it watches o'er the town.

As the summer morn was breaking, on that lofty tower I stood,
And the world threw off its darkness, like the weeds of widowhood.

Thick with towns and hamlets studded, and with streams and vapors gray,
Like a shield embossed with silver, round and vast the landscape lay.

At my feet the city slumbered. From its chimneys, here and there,
Wreaths of snow-white smoke, ascending, vanished, ghost-like, into air.

Not a sound rose from the city at that early morning hour,
But I heard a heart of iron beating in the ancient tower.

From their nests beneath the rafters sang the swallows wild and high
And the world, beneath me sleeping, seemed more distant than the sky.

Then most musical and solemn, bringing back the olden times,
With their strange, unearthly changes, rang the melancholy chimes.

Like the psalms from some old cloister, when the nuns sing in the choir;
And the great bell tolled among them, like the chanting of a friar.

Visions of the days departed, shadowy phantoms filled my brain;
They who live in history only seemed to walk the earth again;

All the Foresters of Flanders,—mighty Baldwin Bras de Fer,
Lyderick du Bucq and Cressy, Philip, Guy de Dampierre.

I beheld the pageants splendid that adorned those days of old;
Stately dames, like queens attended, knights who bore the Fleece of Gold;

Lombard and Venetian merchants with deep-laden argosies;
Ministers from twenty nations; more than royal pomp and ease.

I beheld proud Maximilian, kneeling humbly on the ground;
I beheld the gentle Mary, hunting with her hawk and hound;

And her lighted bridal-chamber, where a duke slept with the queen,
And the armèd guard around them, and the sword unsheathed between.

I beheld the Flemish weavers, with Namur and Juliers bold,
Marching homeward from the bloody battle of the Spurs of Gold;

Saw the fight at Minnewater, saw the White Hoods moving west,
Saw great Artevelde victorious scale the Golden Dragon's nest.

And again the whiskered Spaniard all the land with terror smote;
And again the wild alarum sounded from the tocsin's throat;

Till the bell of Ghent responded o'er lagoon and dike of sand,
"I am Roland! I am Roland! there is victory in the land!"

Then the sound of drums aroused me. The awakened city's roar
Chased the phantoms I had summoned back into their graves once more.

Hours had passed away like minutes; and, before I was aware,
Lo! the shadow of the belfry crossed the sun-illumined square.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

NUREMBERG

In the valley of the Pegnitz, where across broad meadow-lands
Rise the blue Franconian mountains, Nuremberg, the ancient, stands.

Quaint old town of toil and traffic, quaint old town of art and song,
Memories haunt thy pointed gables, like the rooks that round them throng:

Memories of the Middle Ages, when the emperors, rough and bold,
Had their dwelling in thy castle, time-defying, centuries old;

And thy brave and thrifty burghers boasted, in their uncouth rhyme,
That their great imperial city stretched its hand through every clime.

In the court-yard of the castle, bound with many an iron band,
Stands the mighty linden planted by Queen Cunigunde's hand;

On the square, the oriel window, where in old heroic days
Sat the poet Melchior singing Kaiser Maximilian's praise.

Everywhere I see around me rise the wondrous world of Art:
Fountains wrought with richest sculpture standing in the common mart;

And above cathedral doorways saints and bishops carved in stone,
By a former age commissioned as apostles to our own.

In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps enshrined his holy dust,
And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard from age to age their trust;

In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a pix of sculpture rare,
Like the foamy sheaf of fountains, rising through the painted air.

Here, when Art was still religion, with a simple, reverent heart,
Lived and labored Albrecht Dürer, the Evangelist of Art;

Hence in silence and in sorrow, toiling still with busy hand,
Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for the Better Land.

Emigravit is the inscription on the tombstone where he lies;
Dead he is not, but departed,—for the artist never dies.

Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sunshine seems more fair
That he once has trod its pavement, that he once has breathed its air!

Through these streets so broad and stately, these obscure and dismal lanes,
Walked of yore the Mastersingers, chanting rude poetic strains.

From remote and sunless suburbs came they to the friendly guild,
Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in spouts the swallows build.

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme,
And the smith his iron measures hammered to the anvil's chime;

Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy bloom
In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom.

Here Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet, laureate of the gentle craft,
Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters, in huge folios sang and laughed.

But his house is now an alehouse, with a nicely sanded floor,
And a garland in the window, and his face above the door,

Painted by some humble artist, as in Adam Puschman's song,
As the old man gray and dovelike, with his great beard white and long.

And at night the swart mechanic comes to drown his cark and care,
Quaffing ale from pewter tankards, in the master's antique chair.

Vanished is the ancient splendor, and before my dreamy eye
Wave these mingled shapes and figures, like a faded tapestry.

Not thy Councils, not thy Kaisers, win for thee the world's regard,
But thy painter, Albrecht Dürer, and Hans Sachs, thy cobbler-bard.

Thus, O Nuremberg, a wanderer from a region far away,
As he paced thy streets and court-yards, sang in thought his careless lay:

Gathering from the pavement's crevice, as a floweret of the soil,
The nobility of labor,—the long pedigree of toil.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

BINGEN ON THE RHINE

A SOLDIER of the Legion lay dying in Algiers,
There was lack of woman's nursing, there was dearth of woman's tears;
But a comrade stood beside him, while his life-blood ebbed away,
And bent, with pitying glances, to hear what he might say.
The dying soldier faltered, as he took that comrade's hand,
And he said, "I nevermore shall see my own, my native land;

Take a message, and a token, to some distant friends of mine,
For I was born at Bingen,—at Bingen on the Rhine.

"Tell my brothers and companions, when they meet and crowd around,
To hear my mournful story, in the pleasant vineyard ground,
That we fought the battle bravely, and when the day was done,
Full many a corse lay ghastly pale beneath the setting sun:
And, 'mid the dead and dying, were some grown old in wars,—
The death-wound on their gallant breasts, the last of many scars;
And some were young, and suddenly beheld life's morn decline,—
And one had come from Bingen,—fair Bingen on the Rhine.

"Tell my mother that her other sons shall comfort her old age;
For I was aye a truant bird, that thought his home a cage;
For my father was a soldier, and even as a child
My heart leaped forth to hear him tell of struggles fierce and wild;
And when he died, and left us to divide his scanty hoard,
I let them take whate'er they would,—but kept my father's sword;
And with boyish love I hung it where the bright light used to shine,
On the cottage wall at Bingen,—calm Bingen on the Rhine.

"Tell my sister not to weep for me, and sob with drooping head,
When the troops come marching home again with glad and gallant tread,
But to look upon them proudly, with a calm and steadfast eye,
For her brother was a soldier too, and not afraid to die;
And if a comrade seek her love, I ask her in my name
To listen to him kindly, without regret or shame,

And to hang the old sword in its place (my father's sword
and mine),
For the honor of old Bingen—dear Bingen on the Rhine.

"There's another,—not a sister; in the happy days gone by
You'd have known her by the merriment that sparkled in
her eye;
Too innocent for coquetry,—too fond for idle scorning,—
O friend! I fear the lightest heart makes sometimes heaviest
mourning!
Tell her the last night of my life (for, ere the moon be risen,
My body will be out of pain, my soul be out of prison),—
I dreamed I stood with *her*, and saw the yellow sunlight shine
On the vine-clad hills of Bingen,—fair Bingen on the Rhine.

"I saw the blue Rhine sweep along,—I heard, or seemed to
hear,
The German songs we used to sing, in chorus sweet and clear;
And down the pleasant river, and up the slanting hill,
The echoing chorus sounded, through the evening calm and
still;
And her glad blue eyes were on me, as we passed, with
friendly talk,
Down many a path beloved of yore, and well-remembered
walk,
And her little hand lay lightly, confidingly in mine,—
But we'll meet no more at Bingen,—loved Bingen on the
Rhine."

His trembling voice grew faint and hoarse,—his grasp was
childish weak,—
His eyes put on a dying look,—he sighed and ceased to speak;
His comrade bent to lift him, but the spark of life had fled,—
The soldier of the Legion in a foreign land was dead!
And the soft moon rose up slowly, and calmly she looked
down
On the red sand of the battle-field, with bloody corses strown;
Yes, calmly on that dreadful scene her pale light seemed to
shine,
As it shone on distant Bingen,—fair Bingen on the Rhine.

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808–1877]

"AS I CAME DOWN FROM LEBANON"

As I came down from Lebanon,
Came winding, wandering slowly down
Through mountain-passes bleak and brown,
The cloudless day was well-nigh done.
The city, like an opal, set
In emerald, showed each minaret
Afire with radiant beams of sun,
And glistened orange, fig, and lime,
Where song-birds made melodious chime,
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
Like lava in the dying glow,
Through olive orchards far below
I saw the murmuring river run;
And 'neath the wall upon the sand
Swart sheiks from distant Samarcand,
With precious spices they had won,
Lay long and languidly in wait
Till they might pass the guarded gate,
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
I saw strange men from lands afar,
In mosque and square and gay bazar,
The Magi that the Moslem shun,
And grave Effendi from Stamboul,
Who sherbet sipped in corners cool;
And, from the balconies o'errun
With roses, gleamed the eyes of those
Who dwell in still seraglios,
As I came down from Lebanon.

As I came down from Lebanon,
The flaming flower of daytime died,
And Night, arrayed as is a bride
Of some great king, in garments spun

Of purple and the finest gold,
Outbloomed in glories manifold!
Until the moon, above the dun
And darkening desert, void of shade,
Shone like a keen Damascus blade,
As I came down from Lebanon.

Clinton Scollard [1860–

CEYLON

I HEAR a whisper in the heated air—
"Rest! Rest! give over care!"
Long level breakers on the golden beach
Murmur in silver speech—
"Sleep in the palm-tree shadows on the shore—
Work, work no more!
Rest here and work no more."

Where half unburied cities of dead kings
Breed poisonous creeping things
I learn the poor mortality of man—
Seek vainly for some plan—
Know that great empires pass as I must pass
Like withered blades of grass—
Dead blades of Patna grass.

"Breathe—breathe the odorous sweetness that is ours,"
Cry Frangipani flowers.
"Forget! Forget! and know no more distress,
But languorous idleness:
Dream where dead leaves fall ever from green trees
To float on sapphire seas—
Dream! and be one with these."

A. Hugh Fisher [1867–

MANDALAY

BY the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', an' I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm trees, an' the temple bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!"

Come you back to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?
Oh, the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

'Er petticut was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat—jes' the same as Theebaw's Queen,
An' I seed her fust a-smokin' of a whackin' white cheroot,
An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot:
Bloomin' idol made o' mud—
Wot they called the Great Gawd Budd—
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er where she stud!
On the road to Mandalay—

When the mist was on the rice-fields an' the sun was droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing "*Kulla-lo-lo !*"
With 'er arm upon my shoulder, an' 'er cheek agin my cheek,
We useter watch the steamers an' the *hathis* pilin' teak.
Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy, squdgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid to speak!
On the road to Mandalay—

But that's all shove be'ind me—long ago an' fur away,
An' there ain't no 'buses runnin' from the Benk to Mandalay;
An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year sodger tells:
"If you've 'eard the East a-callin', why, you won't 'eed nothin' else."
No! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells
An' the sunshine an' the palm trees an' the tinkly temple bells!
On the road to Mandalay—

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gutty pavin'-stones,
An' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones;
Though I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,
An' they talks a lot o' lovin', but wot do they understand?
Beefy face an' grubby'and—
Law! wot *do* they understand?
I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner, greener land!
On the road to Mandalay—

Ship me somewheres east of Suez where the best is like the worst,
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can raise a thirst;
For the temple bells are callin', an' it's there that I would be—
By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' lazy at the sea—
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnings when we went to Mandalay!
Oh, the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China crost the Bay!

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

NUBIA

A LAND of Dreams and Sleep,—a poppied land!
With skies of endless calm above her head,
The drowsy warmth of summer noonday shed
Upon her hills, and silence stern and grand
Throughout her Desert's temple-burying sand.
Before her threshold, in their ancient place,
With closéd lips, and fixed, majestic face,
Noteless of Time, her dumb colossi stand.
Oh, pass them not with light, irreverent tread;
Respect the dream that builds her fallen throne,
And soothes her to oblivion of her woes.
Hush! for she does but sleep; she is not dead:
Action and Toil have made the world their own,
But she hath built an altar to Repose.

Bayard Taylor [1825–1878]

THOMAS THE RHYMER

True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank;
A ferlie he spied wi' his e'e;
And there he saw a lady bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her skirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fine;
At ilka tett o' her horse's mane
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas he pu'd aff his cap,
And louted low down on his knee:
"Hail to thee, Mary, Queen of Heaven!
For thy peer on earth could never be."

"O no, O no, Thomas!" she said,
"That name does not belang to me;
I'm but the Queen o' fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee.

"Harp and carp, Thomas!" she said,
"Harp and carp along wi' me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your body I will be."

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never daunten me."
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

"Now, ye maun go wi' me," she said;
"True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Through weal or woe as may chance to be."

She's mounted on her milk-white steed;
She's ta'en true Thomas up behind;
And aye, whene'er her bridle rang,
The steed gaed swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on,
The steed gaed swifter than the wind;
Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

"Light down, light down now, true Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee;
Abide ye there a little space,
And I will show you ferlies three.

"O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset wi' thorns and briers?
That is the Path of Righteousness,
Though after it but few inquires.

"And see ye not yon braid, braid road,
That lies across the lily leven?
That is the Path of Wickedness,
Though some call it the Road to Heaven.

"And see yet not yon bonny road,
That winds about the fernie brae?
That is the Road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

"But, Thomas, ye sall haud your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see;
For speak ye word in Elfyn-land,
Ye'll ne'er win back to your ain countrie."

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded rivers abune the knee;
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk, mirk night, there was nae starlight,
They waded through red blude to the knee;
For a' the blude that's shed on earth
Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came to a garden green,
And she pu'd an apple frae a tree:
"Take this for thy wages, true Thomas;
It will give thee tongue that can never lee."

"My tongue is mine ain," true Thomas he said;
"A gudely gift ye wad gie to me!
I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst where I might be.

"I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair lady!"
"Now haud thy peace!" the lady said,
"For as I say, so must it be."

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair o' shoon of the velvet green;
And till seven years were gane and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

Unknown

EARL MAR'S DAUGHTER

It was intill a pleasant time,
Upon a simmer's day,
The noble Earl Mar's daughter
Went forth to sport and play.

And as she played and sported
Below a green aik tree,
There she saw a sprightly doo
Set on a branch sae hie.

"O Coo-my-doo, my love sae true,
If ye'll come doun to me,
Ye'se hae a cage o' gude red gowd
Instead o' simple tree.

"I'll tak' ye hame and pet ye weel,
Within my bower and ha';
I'll gar ye shine as fair a bird
As ony o' them a'!"

And she had nae these words weel spoke,
Nor yet these words weel said,
Till Coo-my-doo flew frae the branch,
And lighted on her head.

Then she has brought this pretty bird
Hame to her bower and ha',
And made him shine as fair a bird
As ony o' them a'.

When day was gane, and night was come,
About the evening-tide,
This lady spied a bonny youth
Stand straight up by her side.

"Now whence come ye, young man," she said,
"To put me into fear?
My door was bolted right secure,
And what way cam' ye here?"

"O haud your tongue, my lady fair,
Lat a' your folly be;
Mind ye not o' your turtle-doo
Ye wiled from aff the tree?"

"O wha are ye, young man?" she said,
"What country come ye frae?"
"I flew across the sea," he said,
"'Twas but this verra day.

"My mither is a queen," he says,
"Likewise of magic skill;
'Twas she that turned me in a doo,
To fly where'er I will.

"And it was but this verra day
That I cam' owre the sea:
I loved you at a single look;
With you I'll live and dee."

"O Coo-my-doo, my love sae true,
Nae mair frae me ye'se gae."
"That's never my intent, my love;
As ye said, it sall be sae."

There he has lived in bower wi' her,
For six lang years and ane;
Till sax young sons to him she bare,
And the seventh she's brought hame.

But aye, as soon's a child was barn,
He carried them away,
And brought them to his mither's care,
As fast as he could fly.

When he had stayed in bower wi' her
For seven lang years an' mair;
There cam' a lord o' hie renown
To court that lady fair.

But still his proffer she refused,
And a' his presents too;
Says, "I'm content to live alane
Wi' my bird Coo-my-doo!"

Her father sware a michty oath,
He sware it wi' ill-will:
"To-morrow, ere I eat or drink,
That bird I'll surely kill."

The bird was sitting in his cage,
And heard what he did say;
He jumped upon the window-sill:
"'Tis time I was away."

Then Coo-my-doo took flight and flew
Beyond the raging sea,
And lichted at his mither's castle,
Upon a tower sae hie.

The Queen his mither was walking out,
To see what she could see,
And there she saw her darling son
Set on the tower sae hie.

"Get dancers here to dance," she said,
"And minstrels for to play;
For here's my dear son Florentine
Come back wi' me to stay."

"Get nae dancers to dance, mither,
Nor minstrels for to play;
For the mither o' my seven sons,
The morn's her wedding day."

"Now tell me, dear son Florentine,
O tell, and tell me true;
Tell me this day, without delay,
What sall I do for you?"

"Instead of dancers to dance, mither,
Or minstrels for to play,
Turn four-and-twenty well-wight men,
Like storks, in feathers gray;

"My seven sons in seven swans,
Aboon their heads to flee;
And I mysel' a gay gos-hawk,
A bird o' high degree."

Then, sighing, said the Queen to hersel',
"That thing's too high for me!"
But she applied to an auld woman,
Wha had mair skill than she.

Instead o' dancers to dance a dance,
Or minstrels for to play,
Were four-and-twenty well-wight men
Turned birds o' feathers gray;

Her seven sons in seven swans,
Aboon their heads to flee;
And he himsel' a gay gos-hawk,
A bird o' high degree.

This flock o' birds took flight and flew
Beyond the raging sea;
They landed near the Earl Mar's castle,
And took shelter in every tree.

They were a flock o' pretty birds,
Right wondrous to be seen;
The weddin'eers they looked at them
Whilst walking on the green.

These birds flew out frae bush and tree,
And lichted on the ha';
And, when the wedding-train cam' forth,
Flew down amang them a'.

The storks they seized the boldest men,
That they could not fight or flee;
The swans they bound the bridegroom fast
Unto a green aik tree.

They flew around the bride-maidens,
Around the bride's own head;
And, wi' the twinkling o' an ee,
The bride and they were fled.

There's ancient men at weddings been
For eighty years or more;
But siccan a curious wedding-day
They never saw before.

For naething could the company do,
Nor naething could they say;
But they saw a flock o' pretty birds
That took their bride away.

Unknown

THE TWA SISTERS

THERE was twa sisters in a bower,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
There was twa sisters in a bower,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
There was twa sisters in a bower,
There came a knight to be their wooer,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He courted the eldest wi' glove and ring,
But he lo'ed the youngest abune a' thing;

He courted the eldest wi' brooch and knife,
But he lo'ed the youngest abune his life;

The eldest she is vexèd sair,
And much envied her sister fair.

Into her bower she couldna rest,
Wi' grief and spite she almost brast.

Upon a morning fair and clear,
She cried upon her sister dear:

"O sister, come to yon sea-strand,
And see our father's ships come to land."

She's ta'en her by the lily hand,
And led her down to yon sea-strand;

The youngest stude upon a stane,
The eldest came and pushed her in;

She took her by the middle sma',
And dashed her bonny back to the jaw.

"O sister, sister, reach your hand,
And ye shall be heir of half my land."

"O sister, I'll not reach my hand,
And I'll be heir of a' your land;

"Shame fa' the hand that I should take,
It's twinèd me and my world's mate."

"O sister, reach me but your glove,
And sweet William shall be your love."

"Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove!
And sweet William shall be my love.

"Your cherry cheeks and your yellow hair,
Garred me gang maiden evermair."

Sometimes she sunk, and sometimes she swam,
Until she cam to the miller's dam.

O, out it cam the miller's son,
And saw the fair maid swimmin' in.

"O father, father, draw your dam!
Here's either a mermaid, or a milk-white swan."

The miller hasted and drew his dam,
And there he found a drowned woman;

You couldna see her yellow hair,
For gowd and pearls that were so rare;

You couldna see her middle sma',
Her gowden girdle was sae bra';

You couldna see her fingers white,
For gowden rings that were sae gryte.

A famous harper passing by,
The sweet pale face he chanced to spy;

And when he looked that lady on,
He sighed and made a heavy moan;

He made a harp of her breast-bane,
Whose sounds would melt a heart of stane;

The strings he framed of her yellow hair,
Whose notes made sad the listening ear;

He brought it to her father's ha',
And there was the court assembled a';

He laid his harp upon a stane,
And straight it began to play alane:

"O yonder sits my father, the king,
And yonder sits my mother, the queen;

"And yonder stands my brother Hugh,
And by him my William, sweet and true."

But the last tune that the harp played then,
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
Was—"Wae to my sister, false Helen!"
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Unknown

THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

THERE lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o'er the sea.

They hadna been a week from her
A week but barely ane,
Whan word came to the carline wife,
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
Whan word came to the carline wife,
That her sons she'd never see.

"I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood!"

It fell about the Martinmas,
When nights are lang and mirk,
The carline wife's three sons came hame,
And their hats were o' the birk.

It neither grew in syke nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh;
But at the gates o' Paradise,
That birk grew fair eneugh.

"Blow up the fire, my maidens!
Bring water from the well!
For a' my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well."

And she had made to them a bed,
She's made it large and wide;
And she's ta'en her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bed-side.

Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said,
"'Tis time we were awa'."

The cock he hadna crawed but once,
And clapped his wings at a',
Whan the youngest to the eldest said,
"Brother, we must awa'.

"The cock doth craw, the day doth daw',
The channerin' worm doth chide;
Gin we be missed out o' our place,
A sair pain we maun bide."

"Lie still, lie still, a little wee while,
Lie still but if we may;
Gin my mother should miss us when she wakes,
She'll go mad ere it be day."

O they've ta'en up their mother's mantle,
And they've hinged it on the pin:
"O lang may ye hing, my mother's mantle,
Ere ye hap us again!

"Fare-ye-weel, my mother dear!
Fareweel to barn and byre!
And fare-ye-weel, the bonny lass
That kindles my mother's fire."

Unknown

A LYKE-WAKE DIRGE

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
—Every nighte and alle,
Fire and sleet and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

When thou from hence away art passed,
—Every nighte and alle,
To Whinny-muir thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
—Every nighte and alle,
Sit thee down and put them on;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane,
—Every nighte and alle,
The whinnes sall prick thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Whinny-muir when thou may'st pass,
—Every nighte and alle,
To Brig o' Dread thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Brig o' Dread when thou may'st pass,
—Every nighte and alle,
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest meat or drink,
—Every nighte and alle,
The fire sall never make thee shrink;
And Christe receive thy saule.

If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane,
—Every nighte and alle,
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thy saule.

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
—Every nighte and alle,
Fire and sleet and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

Unknown

THE DOUGLAS TRAGEDY

"Rise up, rise up, now, Lord Douglas," she says,
"And put on your armor so bright;
Let it never be said that a daughter of thine
Was married to a lord under night.

"Rise up, rise up, my seven bold sons,
And put on your armor so bright,
And take better care of your youngest sister,
For your eldest's awa the last night."

He's mounted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself on a dapple gray,
With a bugelet-horn hung down by his side,
And lightly they rode away.

Lord William lookit o'er his left shoulder,
To see what he could see,
And there he spied her seven brethren bold,
Come riding o'er the lea.

"Light down, light down, Lady Marg'ret," he said,
"And hold my steed in your hand,
Until that against your seven brethren bold,
And your father, I mak' a stand."

She held his steed in her milk-white hand,
And never did shed one tear,
Until that she saw her seven brethren fa',
And her father hard fighting, who loved her so dear.

"O haud your hand, Lord William!" she said,
"For your strokes they are wondrous sair;
True lovers I can get many an ane,
But a father I can never get mair."

O she's ta'en out her handkerchief,
It was o' the Holland sae fine,
And aye she dighted her father's wounds,
That were redder than the wine.

"O chuse, O chuse, Lady Marg'ret," he said,
"O whether will ye gang or bide?"
"I'll gang, I'll gang, Lord William," she said,
"For ye've left me no other guide."

He's lifted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself on a dapple gray,
With a bugelet-horn hung down by his side,
And slowly they baith rade away.

O they rade on, and on they rade,
And a' by the light of the moon,
Until they cam' to yon wan water,
And there they lighted doun.

They lighted doun to tak' a drink
Of the spring that ran sae clear;
And doun the stream ran his gude heart's blood,
And sair she gan to fear.

"Haud up, haud up, Lord William," she says,
"For I fear that you are slain!"
"'Tis naething but the shadow of my scarlet cloak,
That shines in the water sae plain."

O they rade on, and on they rade,
And a' by the light of the moon,
Until they cam' to his mother's ha' door,
And there they lighted doun.

"Get up, get up, lady mother," he says,
"Get up and let me in!—
Get up, get up, lady mother," he says,
"For this night my fair lady I've win.

"O mak my bed, lady mother," he says,
"O mak it braid and deep!
And lay Lady Marg'ret close at my back,
And the sounder I will sleep."

Lord William was dead lang ere midnight,
Lady Marg'ret lang ere day;
And all true lovers that go thegither,
May they have mair luck than they!

Lord William was buried in St. Mary's kirk,
Lady Marg'ret in Mary's quire;
Out o' the lady's grave grew a bonny red rose,
And out o' the knight's a brier.

And they twa met, and they twa plat,
And fain they wad be near;
And a' the warld might ken right weel
They were twa lovers dear.

But by and rade the Black Douglas,
And wow but he was rough!
For he pu'ed up the bonny brier,
And flang't in St. Mary's Lough.

Unknown

FAIR ANNIE

THE reivers they stole Fair Annie,
As she walked by the sea;
But a noble knight was her ransom soon,
Wi' gowd and white monie.

She bided in strangers' land wi' him,
And none knew whence she cam;
She lived in the castle wi' her love,
But never told her name.

"It's narrow, narrow, mak your bed,
And learn to lie your lane;
For I'm gaun owre the sea, Fair Annie,
A braw Bride to bring hame.
Wi' her I will get gowd and gear,
Wi' you I ne'er gat nane.

"But wha will bake my bridal bread,
Or brew my bridal ale?
And wha will welcome my bright Bride,
That I bring owre the dale?"

"It's I will bake your bridal bread,
And brew your bridal ale;
And I will welcome your bright Bride,
That you bring owre the dale."

"But she that welcomes my bright Bride
Maun gang like maiden fair;
She maun lace on her robe sae jimp,
And comely braid her hair.

"Bind up, bind up your yellow hair,
And tie it on your neck;
And see you look as maiden-like
As the day that first we met."

"O how can I gang maiden-like,
When maiden I am nane?
Have I not borne six sons to thee,
And am wi' child again?"

"I'll put cooks into my kitchen,
And stewards in my hall,
And I'll have bakers for my bread,
And brewers for my ale;
But you're to welcome my bright Bride,
That I bring owre the dale."

Three months and a day were gane and past,
Fair Annie she gat word
That her love's ship was come at last,
Wi' his bright young Bride aboard.

She's ta'en her young son in her arms,
Anither in her hand;
And she's gane up to the highest tower,
Looks owre sea and land.

"Come doun, come doun, my mother dear,
Come aff the castle wa'!
I fear if langer ye stand there,
Ye'll let yoursell doun fa'."

She's ta'en a cake o' the best bread,
A stoup o' the best wine,
And a' the keys upon her arm,
And to the yett is gane.

"O ye're welcome hame, my ain gude lord,
To your castles and your towers;
Ye're welcome hame, my ain gude lord,
To your ha's, but and your bowers.
And welcome to your hame, fair lady!
For a' that's here is yours."

"O whatna lady's that, my lord,
That welcomes you and me?
Gin I be lang about this place,
Her friend I mean to be."

Fair Annie served the lang tables
Wi' the white bread and the wine;
But ay she drank the wan water
To keep her color fine.

And she gaed by the first table,
And smiled upon them a';
But ere she reached the second table,
The tears began to fa'.

She took a napkin lang and white,
And hung it on a pin;
It was to wipe away the tears,
As she gaed out and in.

When bells were rung and mass was sung,
And a' men bound for bed,
The bridegroom and the bonny Bride
In ae chamber were laid.

Fair Annie's ta'en a harp in her hand,
To harp thir twa asleep;
But ay, as she harpit and she sang,
Fu' sairly did she weep.

"O gin my sons were seven rats,
Rinnin' on the castle wa'.
And I mysell a great gray cat,
I soon wad worry them a'!

"O gin my sons were seven hares,
Rinnin' owre yon lily lea,
And I mysell a good greyhound,
Soon worried they a' should be!"

Then out and spak the bonny young Bride,
In bride-bed where she lay:
"That's like my sister Annie," she says;
"Wha is it doth sing and play?

"I'll put on my gown," said the new-come Bride,
"And my shoes upon my feet;
I will see wha doth sae sadly sing,
And what is it gars her greet.

"What ails you, what ails you, my housekeeper,
That ye mak sic a mane?
Has ony wine-barrel cast its girds,
Or is a' your white bread gane?"

"It isna because my wine is spilt,
Or that my white bread's gane;
But because I've lost my true love's love,
And he's wed to anither ane."

"Noo tell me wha was your father?" she says,
"Noo tell me wha was your mither?
And had ye ony sister?" she says,
"And had ye ever a brither?"

"The Earl of Wemyss was my father,
The Countess of Wemyss my mither,
Young Elinor she was my sister dear,
And Lord John he was my brither."

"If the Earl of Wemyss was your father,
I wot sae was he mine;
And it's O my sister Annie!
Your love ye sallna tyne.

"Tak your husband, my sister dear;
You ne'er were wranged for me,
Beyond a kiss o' his merry mouth
As we cam owre the sea.

"Seven ships, loaded weel,
Cam owre the sea wi' me;
Ane o' them will tak me hame,
And six I'll gie to thee."

Unknown

THE LASS OF LOCHROYAN

"O WHA will shoe my bonny foot?
And wha will glove my hand?
And wha will bind my middle jimp
Wi' a lang, lang linen band?

"O wha will kame my yellow hair,
With a haw bayberry kame?
And wha will be my babe's father
Till Gregory come hame?"

"Thy father, he will shoe thy foot,
Thy brother will glove thy hand,
Thy mither will bind thy middle jimp
Wi' a lang, lang linen band.

"Thy sister will kame thy yellow hair,
Wi' a haw bayberry kame;
The Almighty will be thy babe's father
Till Gregory come hame."

"And wha will build a bonny ship,
And set it on the sea?
For I will go to seek my love,
My ain love Gregory."

Up then spak her father dear,
A wafu' man was he:
"And I will build a bonny ship,
And set her on the sea.

"And I will build a bonny ship,
And set her on the sea,
And ye sal gae and seek your love,
Your ain love Gregory."

Then he's gart build a bonny ship,
And set it on the sea,
Wi' four-and-twenty mariners,
To bear her company.

O he's gart build a bonny ship,
To sail on the salt sea;
The mast was o' the beaten gold,
The sails o' cramoisie.

The sides were o' the gude stout aik,
The deck o' mountain pine,
The anchor o' the silver shene,
The ropes o' silken twine.

She hadna sailed but twenty leagues,
But twenty leagues and three,
When she met wi' a rank reiver,
And a' his companie.

"Now are ye Queen of Heaven hie,
Come to pardon a' our sin?
Or are ye Mary Magdalane,
Was born in Bethlehem?"

"I'm no the Queen of Heaven hie,
Come to pardon ye your sin,
Nor am I Mary Magdalane,
Was born in Bethlehem.

"But I'm the lass of Lochroyan,
That's sailing on the sea
To see if I can find my love,
My ain love Gregory."

"O see na ye yon bonny bower?
It's a' covered owre wi' tin;
When thou hast sailed it round about,
Lord Gregory is within."

And when she saw the stately tower,
Shining both clear and bright,
Whilk stood aboon the jawing wave,
Built on a rock of height,

Says, "Row the boat, my mariners,
And bring me to the land,
For yonder I see my love's castle,
Close by the salt sea strand."

She sailed it round, and sailed it round,
And loud and loud cried she,
"Now break, now break your fairy charms,
And set my true-love free."

She's ta'en her young son in her arms,
And to the door she's gane,
And long she knocked, and sair she ca'd,
But answer got she nane.

"O open, open, Gregory!
O open! if ye be within;
For here's the lass of Lochroyan,
Come far frae kith and kin.

"O open the door, Lord Gregory!
O open and let me in!
The wind blows loud and cauld, Gregory,
The rain drops frae my chin.

"The shoe is frozen to my foot,
The glove unto my hand,
The wet drops frae my yellow hair,
Na langer dow I stand."

O up then spak his ill mither,
—An ill death may she dee!
"Ye're no the lass of Lochroyan,
She's far out-owre the sea.

"Awa', awa', ye ill woman,
Ye're no come here for gude;
Ye're but some witch or wil' warlock,
Or mermaid o' the flood."

"I am neither witch nor wil' warlock,
Nor mermaid o' the sea,
But I am Annie of Lochroyan,
O open the door to me!"

"Gin ye be Annie of Lochroyan,
As I trow thou binna she,
Now tell me of some love-tokens
That passed 'tween thee and me."

"O dinna ye mind, love Gregory,
As we sat at the wine,
We changed the rings frae our fingers?
And I can shew thee thine.

"O yours was gude, and gude enough,
But ay the best was mine,
For yours was o' the gude red gowd,
But mine o' the diamond fine.

"Yours was o' the gude red gowd,
Mine o' the diamond fine;
Mine was o' the purest troth,
But thine was false within."

"If ye be the lass of Lochroyan,
As I kenna thou be,
Tell me some mair o' the love-tokens
Passed between thee and me."

"And dinna ye mind, love Gregory!
As we sat on the hill,
Thou twined me o' my maidenheid,
Right sair against my will?

"Now open the door, love Gregory!
Open the door! I pray;
For thy young son is in my arms,
And will be dead ere day."

"Ye lee, ye lee, ye ill woman,
So loud I hear ye lee;
For Annie of the Lochroyan
Is far out-owre the sea."

Fair Annie turned her round about:
"Weel, syne that it be sae,
May ne'er woman that has borne a son
Hae a heart sae fu' o' wae!

"Tak down, tak down that mast o' gowd,
Set up a mast o' tree;
It disna become a forsaken lady
To sail sae royallie."

When the cock had crawn, and the day did dawn,
And the sun began to peep,
Up then raise Lord Gregory,
And sair, sair did he weep.

"O I hae dreamed a dream, mither,
I wish it may bring good!
That the bonny lass of Lochroyan
At my bower window stood.

"O I hae dreamed a dream, mither,
The thought o't gars me greet!
That fair Annie of Lochroyan
Lay dead at my bed-feet."

"Gin it be for Annie of Lochroyan
That ye mak a' this mane,
She stood last night at your bower-door,
But I hae sent her hame."

"O wae betide ye, ill woman,
An ill death may ye dee!
That wadna open the door yoursell
Nor yet wad waken me."

O he's gane down to yon shore-side,
As fast as he could dree,
And there he saw fair Annie's bark
A rowing owre the sea.

"O Annie, Annie," loud he cried,
"O Annie, O Annie, bide!"
But ay the mair he cried "Annie,"
The braider grew the tide.

"O Annie, Annie, dear Annie,
Dear Annie, speak to me!"
But ay the louder he gan call,
The louder roared the sea.

The wind blew loud, the waves rose hie
And dashed the boat on shore;
Fair Annie's corse was in the faem,
The babe rose never more.

Lord Gregory tore his gowden locks
And made a wafu' mane;
Fair Annie's corpse lay at his feet,
His bonny son was gane.

"O cherry, cherry was her cheek,
And gowden was her hair,
And coral, coral was her lips,
Nane might with her compare."

Then first he kissed her pale, pale cheek,
And syne he kissed her chin,
And syne he kissed her wane, wane lips,
There was na breath within.

"O wae betide my ill mither,
An ill death may she dee!
She turned my true-love frae my door,
Wha cam so far to me.

"O wae betide my ill mither,
An ill death may she dee!
She has no been the deid o' ane,
But she's been the deid o' three."

Then he's ta'en out a little dart,
Hung low down by his gore,
He thrust it through and through his heart,
And word spak never more.

Unknown

YOUNG BEICHAN AND SUSIE PYE

In London was young Beichan born,
He longed strange countries for to see;
But he was ta'en by a savage Moor,
Who handled him right cruellie;

For he viewed the fashions of that land:
Their way of worship viewèd he;
But to Mahound, or Termagant,
Would Beichan never bend a knee.

So in every shoulder they've putten a bore,
In every bore they've putten a tree,
And they have made him trail the wine
And spices on his fair bodie.

They've casten him in a dungeon deep,
Where he could neither hear nor see;
And fed him on naught but bread and water,
Till he for hunger's like to dee.

This Moor he had but ae daughter,
Her name was callèd Susie Pye;
And every day as she took the air,
Near Beichan's prison she passed by.

And so it fell upon a day,
  About the middle time of Spring,
As she was passing by that way,
  She heard young Beichan sadly sing:

"My hounds they all run masterless,
  My hawks they fly frae tree to tree;
My youngest brother will heir my lands;
  Fair England again I'll never see.

"Oh were I free as I hae been,
  And my ship swimming once more on sea,
I'd turn my face to fair England,
  And sail no more to a strange countrie!"

All night long no rest she got,
  Young Beichan's song for thinking on;
She's stown the keys from her father's head,
  And to the prison strang is gone.

And she has opened the prison doors,
  I wot she opened two or three,
Ere she could come young Beichan at,
  He was locked up so curiouslie.

But when she cam' young Beichan till,
  Sore wondered he that may to see;
He took her for some fair captive:
  "Fair lady, I pray, of what countrie?"

"O have ye any lands," she said,
  "Or castles in your ain countrie,
That ye could give a lady fair,
  From prison strang to set you free?"

"Near London town I have a hall,
  And other castles two or three;
I'll give them all to the lady fair
  That out of prison will set me free."

"Give me the truth of your right hand,
The truth of it give unto me,
That for seven years ye'll no lady wed,
Unless it be alang wi' me."

"I'll give thee the truth of my right hand,
The truth of it I'll freely gie,
That for seven years I'll stay unwed,
For the kindness thou dost show to me."

And she has bribed the proud warder
Wi' mickle gold and white monie;
She's gotten the keys of the prison strang,
And she has set young Beichan free.

She's gi'en him to eat the good spice-cake;
She's gi'en him to drink the blude-red wine;
She's bidden him sometimes think on her
That sae kindly freed him out o' pine.

And she has broken her finger ring,
And to Beichan half of it gave she;
"Keep it to mind you of that love
The lady bore that set you free.

"And set your foot on good ship-board,
And haste ye back to your ain countrie;
And before that seven years have an end,
Come back again, love, and marry me."

But lang ere seven years had an end,
She longed full sore her love to see;
So she's set her foot on good ship-board.
And turned her back to her ain countrie.

She sailèd east, she sailèd west,
Till to fair England's shore she came;
Where a bonny shepherd she espied,
Feeding his sheep upon the plain.

"What news, what news, thou bonny shepherd?
What news has thou to tell to me?"
"Such news I hear, ladie," he says,
"The like was never in this countrie.

"There is a wedding in yonder hall,
And ever the bells ring merrilie;
It is Lord Beichan's wedding-day
Wi' a lady fair o' high degree."

She's putten her hand in her pocket,
Gi'en him the gold and white monie;
"Here, take ye that, my bonny boy,
All for the news thou tell'st to me."

When she came to young Beichan's gate,
She tirlèd softly at the pin:
So ready was the proud porter
To open and let this lady in.

"Is this young Beichan's hall," she said,
"Or is that noble lord within?"
"Yea, he's in the hall among them all,
And this is the day o' his weddin'."

"And has he wed anither love?
And has he clean forgotten me?"
And, sighin', said that ladie gay,
"I wish I were in my ain countrie."

And she has ta'en her gay gold ring,
That with her love she brake sae free;
Says, "Gie him that, ye proud porter,
And bid the bridegroom speak wi' me."

When the porter came his lord before,
He kneelèd low upon his knee—
"What aileth thee, my proud porter,
Thou art so full of courtesie?"

"I've been porter at your gates,
It's now for thirty years and three;
But there stands a lady at them now,
The like o' her did I never see;

"For on every finger she has a ring,
And on her mid-finger she has three;
And meikle gold aboon her brow.
Sae fair a may did I never see."

It's out then spak the bride's mother,
Aye and an angry woman was she:
"Ye might have excepted our bonny bride,
And twa or three of our companie."

"O haud your tongue, thou bride's mother,
Of all your folly let me be;
She's ten times fairer nor the bride,
And all that's in your companie.

"And this golden ring that's broken in twa,
This half o' a golden ring sends she:
'Ye'll carry that to Lord Beichan,' she says,
'And bid him come an' spak wi' me.'

"She begs one sheave of your white bread,
But and a cup of your red wine;
And to remember the lady's love,
That last relieved you out of pine."

"O well-a-day!" said Beichan then,
"That I so soon have married me!
For it can be none but Susie Pye,
That for my love has sailed the sea."

And quickly hied he down the stair;
Of fifteen steps he made but three;
He's ta'en his bonny love in his arms,
And kist, and kist her tenderlie.

"O hae ye ta'en anither bride?
And hae ye quite forgotten me?
And hae ye quite forgotten her,
That gave you life and libertie?"

She lookit o'er her left shoulder,
To hide the tears stood in her e'e;
"Now fare thee well, young Beichan," she says,
"I'll try to think no more on thee."

"O never, never, Susie Pye,
For surely this can never be;
Nor ever shall I wed but her
That's done and dreed so much for me."

Then out and spak the forenoon bride:
"My lord, your love it changeth soon;
This morning I was made your bride,
And another's chose ere it be noon."

"O haud thy tongue, thou forenoon bride;
Ye're ne'er a whit the worse for me;
And whan ye return to your own land,
A double dower I'll send wi' thee."

He's ta'en Susie Pye by the white hand,
And gently led her up and down;
And ay, as he kist her red rosy lips,
"Ye're welcome, jewel, to your own."

He's ta'en her by her milk-white hand,
And led her to yon fountain stane;
He's changed her name from Susie Pye,
And called her his bonny love, Lady Jane.

Unknown

THE GAY GOS-HAWK

"O WELL is me, my gay gos-hawk,
That you can speak and flee;
For you can carry a love-letter
To my true love frae me."

"O how can I carry a letter to her,
Or how should I her know?
I bear a tongue ne'er wi' her spak',
And eyes that ne'er her saw."

"The white o' my love's skin is white
As down o' dove or maw;
The red o' my love's cheek is red
As blood that's spilt on snaw.

"When ye come to the castle,
Light on the tree of ash,
And sit ye there and sing our loves
As she comes frae the mass.

"Four and twenty fair ladies
Will to the mass repair;
And weel may ye my lady ken,
The fairest lady there."

When the gos-hawk flew to that castle,
He lighted on the ash;
And there he sat and sang their loves
As she came frae the mass.

"Stay where ye be, my maidens a',
And sip red wine anon,
Till I go to my west window
And hear a birdie's moan."

She's gane unto her west window,
The bolt she fainly drew;
And unto that lady's white, white neck
The bird a letter threw.

"Ye're bidden to send your love a send,
For he has sent you twa;
And tell him where he may see you soon,
Or he cannot live ava."

"I send him the ring from my finger,
The garland off my hair,
I send him the heart that's in my breast;
What would my love have mair?
And at the fourth kirk in fair Scotland,
Ye'll bid him wait for me there."

She hied her to her father dear
As fast as gang could she:
"I'm sick at the heart, my father dear;
An asking grant you me!"
"Ask ye na for that Scottish lord,
For him ye'll never see!"

"An asking, an asking, dear father!" she says,
"An asking grant you me;
That if I die in fair England,
In Scotland ye'll bury me.

"At the first kirk o' fair Scotland,
Ye cause the bells be rung;
At the second kirk o' fair Scotland,
Ye cause the mass be sung;

"At the third kirk o' fair Scotland,
Ye deal gold for my sake;
At the fourth kirk o' fair Scotland,
O there ye'll bury me at!

"This is all my asking, father,
I pray ye grant it me!"
"Your asking is but small," he said;
"Weel granted it shall be.
But why do ye talk o' suchlike things?
For ye arena going to dee."

The lady's gane to her chamber,
And a moanfu' woman was she,
As gin she had ta'en a sudden brash,
And were about to dee.

The lady's gane to her chamber
As fast as she could fare;
And she has drunk a sleepy draught,
She mixed wi' mickle care.

She's fallen into a heavy trance,
And pale and cold was she;
She seemed to be as surely dead
As any corpse could be.

Out and spak' an auld witch-wife,
At the fireside sat she:
"Gin she has killed herself for love,
I wot it weel may be:

"But drap the het lead on her cheek,
And drap it on her chin,
And drap it on her bosom white,
And she'll maybe speak again.
'Tis much that a young lady will do
To her true love to win."

They drapped the het lead on her cheek,
They drapped it on her chin,
They drapped it on her bosom white,
But she spake none again.

Her brothers they went to a room,
To make to her a bier;
The boards were a' o' the cedar wood,
The edges o' silver clear.

Her sisters they went to a room,
To make to her a sark;
The cloth was a' o' the satin fine,
And the stitching silken-wark.

"Now well is me, my gay gos-hawk,
That ye can speak and flee!
Come show me any love-tokens
That ye have brought to me."

"She sends ye her ring frae her finger white,
The garland frae her hair;
She sends ye the heart within her breast;
And what would ye have mair?
And at the fourth kirk o' fair Scotland,
She bids ye wait for her there."

"Come hither, all my merry young men!
And drink the good red wine;
For we must on towards fair England
To free my love frae pine."

The funeral came into fair Scotland,
And they gart the bells be rung;
And when it came to the second kirk,
They gart the mass be sung.

And when it came to the third kirk,
They dealt gold for her sake;
And when it came to the fourth kirk,
Her love was waiting thereat.

At the fourth kirk in fair Scotland
Stood spearmen in a row;
And up and started her ain true love,
The chieftain over them a'.

"Set down, set down the bier," he says,
"Till I look upon the dead;
The last time that I saw her face,
Its color was warm and red."

He stripped the sheet from off her face
A little below the chin;
The lady then she opened her eyes,
And looked full on him.

"O give me a shive o' your bread, love,
O give me a cup o' your wine!
Long have I fasted for your sake,
And now I fain would dine.

"Gae hame, gae hame, my seven brothers,
Gae hame and blow the horn!
And ye may say that ye sought my skaith,
And that I hae gi'en ye the scorn.

"I cam' na here to bonny Scotland
To lie down in the clay;
But I cam' here to bonny Scotland,
To wear the silks sae gay!

"I cam' na here to bonny Scotland,
Amang the dead to rest;
But I cam' here to bonny Scotland
To the man that I lo'e best!"

Unknown

SWEET WILLIAM AND MAY MARG'RET

THERE came a ghost to Marg'ret's door,
With many a grievous groan,
And aye he tirlèd at the pin,
But answer made she none.

"Is that my father Philip,
Or is't my brother John?
Or is't my true-love Willie,
From Scotland new come home?"

"'Tis not thy father Philip,
Nor yet thy brother John
But 'tis thy true-love Willie,
From Scotland new come home.

"O sweet Marg'ret, O dear Marg'ret,
I pray thee speak to me:
Give me my faith and troth, Marg'ret,
As I gave it to thee."

"Thy faith and troth thou'lt never get,
Of me shalt never win,
Till that thou come within my bower,
And kiss me cheek and chin."

"If I should come within thy bower,
I am no earthly man:
And should I kiss thy rosy lips
Thy days would not be lang.

"O sweet Marg'ret, O dear Mar'gret,
I pray thee speak to me:
Give me my faith and troth, Marg'ret,
As I gave it to thee."

"Thy faith and troth thou'lt never get,
Of me shalt never win,
Till you take me to yon kirk-yard,
And wed me with a ring."

"My bones are buried in yon kirk-yard
Afar beyond the sea,
And it is but my spirit, Marg'ret,
That's now speaking to thee."

She stretched out her lily-white hand,
And for to do her best:
"Ha'e there your faith and troth, Willie,
God send your soul good rest."

Now she has kilted her robe o' green
A piece below her knee,
And a' the live-lang winter night
The dead corp followed she.

"Is there any room at your head, Willie,
Or any room at your feet?
Or any room at your side, Willie,
Wherein that I may creep?"

"There's nae room at my head, Marg'ret,
There's nae room at my feet;
There's nae room at my side, Marg'ret,
My coffin's made so meet."

Then up and crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray;
"'Tis time, 'tis time, my dear Marg'ret,
That you were gane awa'."

Unknown

WILLY REILLY

"Oh! rise up, Willy Reilly, and come along with me,
I mean for to go with you and leave this counterie,
To leave my father's dwelling, his houses and free land;"
And away goes Willy Reilly and his dear Coolen Ban.

They go by hills and mountains, and by yon lonesome plain,
Through shady groves and valleys, all dangers to refrain;
But her father followed after with a well-armed band,
And taken was poor Reilly and his dear Coolen Ban.

It's home then she was taken, and in her closet bound;
Poor Reilly all in Sligo jail lay on the stony ground,
Till at the bar of justice, before the Judge he'd stand,
For nothing but the stealing of his dear Coolen Ban.

"Now in the cold, cold iron my hands and feet are bound,
I'm handcuffed like a murderer, and tied unto the ground.
But all the toil and slavery I'm willing for to stand,
Still hoping to be succoured by my dear Coolen Ban."

The jailer's son to Reilly goes, and thus to him did say:
"Oh! get up, Willy Reilly, you must appear this day,
For great Squire Foillard's anger you never can withstand:
I'm afeered you'll suffer sorely for your dear Coolen Ban.

"This is the news, young Reilly, last night that I did hear:
The lady's oath will hang you or else will set you clear."
"If that be so," says Reilly, "her pleasure I will stand,
Still hoping to be succoured by my dear Coolen Ban."

Now Willy's dressed from top to toe all in a suit of green,
His hair hangs o'er his shoulders most glorious to be seen;
He's tall and straight, and comely as any could be found;
He's fit for Foillard's daughter, was she heiress to a crown.

The Judge he said: "This lady being in her tender youth,
If Reilly has deluded her she will declare the truth."
Then, like a moving beauty bright, before him she did stand,
"You're welcome there, my heart's delight and dear Coolen Ban."

"Oh, gentlemen," Squire Foillard said, "with pity look on me,
This villain came amongst us to disgrace our family,
And by his base contrivances this villainy was planned;
If I don't get satisfaction I'll quit this Irish land."

The lady with a tear began, and thus replied she:
"The fault is none of Reilly's, the blame lies all on me,
I forced him for to leave this place and come along with me;
I loved him out of measure, which wrought our destiny."

Out bespoke the noble Fox, at the table he stood by:
"Oh, gentlemen, consider on this extremity;
To hang a man for love is a murder, you may see:
So spare the life of Reilly, let him leave this counterie."

"Good my lord, he stole from her her diamonds and her rings,
Gold watch and silver buckles, and many precious things,
Which cost me in bright guineas more than five hundred pounds,
I'll have the life of Reilly should I lose ten thousand pounds."

"Good my lord, I gave them him as tokens of true love,
And when we are a-parting I will them all remove;
If you have got them, Reilly, pray send them home to me."
"I will, my loving lady, with many thanks to thee."

"There is a ring among them I allow yourself to wear,
With thirty locket diamonds well set in silver fair,
And as a true-love token wear it on your right hand,
That you'll think on my poor broken heart when you're in foreign land."

Then out spoke noble Fox: "You may let the prisoner go;
The lady's oath has cleared him, as the Jury all may know.
She has released her own true love, she has renewed his name;
May her honor bright gain high estate, and her offspring rise to fame!"

Unknown

THE TWA CORBIES

As I was walking all alane
I heard twa corbies making a mane;
The tane unto the t'other did say,
"Where sall we gang and dine to-day?"

"—In behint yon auld fail dyke
I wot there lies a new-slain Knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

"His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
His lady's ta'en another mate,
So we may mak our dinner sweet.

"Ye'll set on his white hause-bane,
And I'll pick out his bonnie blue een:
Wi' ae lock o' his gowden hair
We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.

"Mony a one for him make mane,
But nane sall ken whar he is gane;
O'er his white banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair."

Unknown

THE THREE RAVENS

THERE were three ravens sat on a tree,
They were as black as they might be.

The one of them said to his mate,
"Where shall we our breakfast take?"

"Down in yonder greenè field
There lies a knight slain under his shield;

"His hounds they lie down at his feet,
So well do they their master keep;

"His hawks they fly so eagerly,
There's no fowl dare come him nigh.

"Down there comes a fallow doe
As great with young as she might goe.

"She lifted up his bloudy head
And kist his wounds that were so red.

"She gat him up upon her back
And carried him to earthen lake.

"She buried him before the prime,
She was dead herself ere evensong time.

"God send every gentleman
Such hounds, such hawks, and such a leman."

Unknown

LORD RANDAL

"O WHERE hae ye been, Lord Randal, my son?
O where hae ye been, my handsome young man?"
"I hae been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie doun."

"Where gat ye your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
Where gat ye your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I dined wi' my true-love; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie doun."

"What gat ye to your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
What gat ye to your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I gat eels boiled in broo; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie doun."

"What became of your bloodhounds, Lord Randal, my son?
What became of your bloodhounds, my handsome young man?"
"O they swelled and they died; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie doun."

"O I fear ye are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son!
O I fear ye are poisoned, my handsome young man!"
"O yes! I am poisoned; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wald lie doun."

Unknown

EDWARD, EDWARD

"Why does your brand sae drop wi' blude,
Edward, Edward,
Why does your brand sae drop wi' blude,
And why sae sad gang ye, O?"
"O I hae killed my hawk sae gude,
Mither, mither;
O I hae killed my hawk sae gude,
And I had nae mair but he, O."

"Your hawk's blude was never sae red,
Edward, Edward;
Your hawk's blude was never sae red,
My dear son, I tell thee, O."
"O I hae killed my red-roan steed,
Mither, mither;
O I hae killed my red-roan steed,
That erst was sae fair and free, O."

"Your steed was auld, and ye hae got mair,
Edward, Edward;
Your steed was auld, and ye hae got mair;
Some other dule ye dree, O."
"O I hae killed my father dear,
Mither, mither;
O I hae killed my father dear,
Alas, and wae is me, O!"

"And whatten penance will ye dree for that,
Edward, Edward?
Whatten penance will ye dree for that?
My dear son, now tell me, O."
"I'll set my feet in yonder boat,
Mither, mither;
I'll set my feet in yonder boat,
And I'll fare over the sea, O."

"And what will ye do wi' your towers and your ha',
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye do wi' your towers and your ha',
That were sae fair to see, O?"
"I'll let them stand till they doun fa',
Mither, mither;
I'll let them stand till they doun fa',
For here never mair maun I be, O."

"And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife,
When ye gang owre the sea, O?"
"The warld's room: let them beg through life,
Mither, mither;
The warld's room: let them beg through life;
For them never mair will I see, O."

"And what will ye leave to your ain mither dear,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your ain mither dear,
My dear son, now tell me, O?"
"The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear,
Mither, mither;
The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear:
Sic counsels ye gave to me, O!"

Unknown

RIDDLES WISELY EXPOUNDED

THERE was a knicht riding frae the east,
Jennifer gentle an' rosemaree.
Who had been wooing at monie a place,
As the doo flies owre the mulberry tree.

He cam' unto a widow's door,
And speird whare her three dochters were.

"The auldest ane's to a washing gane,
The second's to a baking gane.

"The youngest ane's to a wedding gane,
And it will be nicht or she be hame."

He sat him doun upon a stane,
Till thir three lasses cam' tripping hame.

The auldest ane she let him in,
And pinned the door wi' a siller pin.

The second ane she made his bed,
And laid saft pillows unto his head.

The youngest ane was bauld and bricht,
And she tarried for words wi' this unco knicht.

"Gin ye will answer me questions ten,
The morn ye sall be made my ain.

"O what is higher nor the tree?
And what is deeper nor the sea?

"Or what is heavier nor the lead?
And what is better nor the breid?

"Or what is whiter nor the milk?
Or what is safter nor the silk?

"Or what is sharper nor a thorn?
Or what is louder nor a horn?

"Or what is greener nor the grass?
Or what is waur nor a woman was?"

"O heaven is higher nor the tree,
And hell is deeper nor the sea.

"O sin is heavier nor the lead,
The blessing's better nor the breid.

"The snaw is whiter nor the milk,
And the down is safter nor the silk.

"Hunger is sharper nor a thorn,
And shame is louder nor a horn.

"The pies are greener nor the grass,
And Clootie's waur nor a woman was."

As sune as she the fiend did name,
Jennifer gentle an' rosemaree,
He flew awa in a blazing flame,
As the doo flies owre the mulberry tree.

Unknown

SIR PATRICK SPENS

I.—THE SAILING

The King sits in Dunfermline toun,
Drinking the blude-red wine:
"O whaur will I get a skeely skipper
To sail this gude ship of mine?"

Then up an' spak an eldern knight,
Sat at the King's right knee:
"Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That ever sailed the sea."

The King has written a braid letter,
And sealed it wi' his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens
Was walking on the strand.

"To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway o'er the faem;
The King's daughter to Noroway,
'Tis thou maun tak' her hame!"

The first line that Sir Patrick read,
A loud laugh laughèd he;
The neist line that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blindit his e'e.

"O wha is this hae dune this deed,
And tauld the King o' me,
To send us out, at this time o' year,
To sail upon the sea?

"Be it wind or weet, be it hail or sleet,
Our ship maun sail the faem;
The King's daughter to Noroway,
'Tis we maun tak' her hame."

They hoysed their sails on Monday morn
Wi' a' the speed they may;
And they hae landed in Noroway
Upon the Wodensday.

II.—THE RETURN

"Mak ready, mak ready, my merry men a'!
Our gude ship sails the morn."
"Now, ever alack! my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm!

"I saw the new moon late yestreen,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And I fear, I fear, my master dear,
That we sall come to harm!"

They hadna sailed a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

The ropes they brak, and the topmast lap,
It was sic a deadly storm;
And the waves cam owre the broken ship
Till a' her sides were torn.

"O whaur will I get a gude sailor
To tak' the helm in hand,
Until I win to the tall topmast
And see if I spy the land?"

"It's here am I, a sailor gude,
To tak' the helm in hand,
Till ye win up to the tall topmast,
But I fear ye'll ne'er spy land."

He hadna gane a step, a step,
A step but barely ane,
When a bolt flew out of the gude ship's side,
And the saut sea it cam' in.

"Gae fetch a web o' the silken claith,
Anither o' the twine,
And wap them into the gude ship's side
And let na the sea come in."

They fetched a web o' the silken claith,
Anither o' the twine,
And they wapped them into that gude ship's side,
But aye the sea cam' in.

O laith, laith were our gude Scots lords
To weet their cock-heeled shoon!
But lang ere a' the play was played,
They wat their hats aboon.

And mony was the feather-bed
That floated on the faem;
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair cam hame.

O lang, lang, may the ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Or ever they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand!

And lang, lang may the maidens sit,
Wi' their gowd kaims in their hair,
A-waiting for their ain dear loves,
For them they'll see nae mair.

Half-owre, half-owre to Aberdour,
'Tis fifty fathoms deep,
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

Unknown

EDOM O' GORDON

It fell about the Martinmas,
When the wind blew shrill and cauld,
Said Edom o' Gordon to his men,
"We maun draw to a hauld.

"And what a hauld sall we draw to,
My merry men and me?
We will gae to the house o' the Rodes,
To see that fair ladye."

The lady stood on her castle wa',
Beheld baith dale and down;
There she was ware of a host of men
Cam riding towards the town.

"O see ye not, my merry men a',
O see ye not what I see?
Methinks I see a host of men;
I marvel wha they be."

She weened it had been her lovely lord,
As he cam riding hame;
It was the traitor, Edom o' Gordon,
Wha recked nae sin nor shame.

She had nae sooner buskit hersell,
And putten on her gown,
But Edom o' Gordon an' his men
Were round about the town.

They had nae sooner supper set,
Nae sooner said the grace,
But Edom o' Gordon an' his men
Were lighted about the place.

The lady ran up to her tower-head,
Sae fast as she could hie,
To see if by her fair speeches
She could wi' him agree.

"Come doun to me, ye lady gay,
Come doun, come doun to me;
This night sall ye lig within myne arms,
To-morrow my bride sall be."

"I winna come doun, ye fals Gordon,
I winna come doun to thee;
I winna forsake my ain dear lord,
That is sae far frae me."

"Gie owre your house, ye lady fair,
Gie owre your house to me;
Or I sall brenn yoursell therein,
But and your babies three."

"I winna gie owre, ye fals Gordon,
To nae sic traitor as ye;
And if ye brenn my ain dear babes,
My lord sall mak ye dree.

"Now reach my pistol, Glaud, my man,
And charge ye weel my gun;
For, but an I pierce that bluidy butcher,
My babes, we been undone!"

She stood upon her castle wa',
And let twa bullets flee:
She missed that bluidy butcher's heart,
And only razed his knee.

"Set fire to the house!" quo' fals Gordon,
All wud wi' dule and ire:
"Fals lady, ye sall rue this deid
As ye brenn in the fire!"

"Wae worth, wae worth ye, Jock, my man!
I paid ye weel your fee;
Why pu' ye out the grund-wa' stane,
Lets in the reek to me?

"And e'en wae worth ye, Jock, my man!
I paid ye weel your hire;
Why pu' ye out the grund-wa' stane,
To me lets in the fire?"

"Ye paid me weel my hire, ladye,
Ye paid me weel my fee:
But now I'm Edom o' Gordon's man—
Maun either do or dee."

O then bespake her little son,
Sat on the nurse's knee:
Says, "Mither dear, gie owre this house,
For the reek it smithers me."

"I wad gie a' my gowd, my bairn,
Sae wad I a' my fee,
For ae blast o' the western wind,
To blaw the reek frae thee."

O then bespake her dochter dear—
She was baith jimp and sma':
"O row me in a pair o' sheets,
And tow me owre the wa'!"

They rowed her in a pair o' sheets,
And towed her owre the wa';
But on the point o' Gordon's spear
She gat a deadly fa'.

O bonnie, bonnie was her mouth,
And cherry were her cheiks,
And clear, clear was her yellow hair,
Whereon the red blood dreips.

Then wi' his spear he turned her owre;
O gin her face was wane!
He said, "Ye are the first that e'er
I wished alive again."

He turned her owre and owre again;
O gin her skin was white!
"I might hae spared that bonnie face
To hae been some man's delight.

"Busk and boun, my merry men a',
For ill dooms I do guess;
I canna look in that bonnie face
As it lies on the grass."

"Wha looks to freits, my master dear,
It's freits will follow them;
Let it ne'er be said that Edom o' Gordon
Was daunted by a dame."

But when the lady saw the fire
Come flaming owre her head,
She wept, and kissed her children twain,
Says, "Bairns, we been but dead."

The Gordon then his bugle blew.
And said, "Awa', awa'!
This house o' the Rodes is a' in a flame;
I hauld it time to ga'."

And this way lookit her ain dear lord,
As he cam owre the lea;
He saw his castle a' in a lowe,
As far as he could see.

Then sair, O sair, his mind misgave,
And all his heart was wae:
"Put on, put on, my wighty men,
Sae fast as ye can gae.

"Put on, put on, my wighty men,
Sae fast as ye can drie!
For he that's hindmost o' the thrang
Sall ne'er get good o' me."

Then some they rade, and some they ran,
Out-owre the grass and bent;
But ere the foremost could win up,
Baith lady and babes were brent.

And after the Gordon he is gane,
Sae fast as he might drie;
And soon i' the Gordon's foul heart's blude
He's wroken his dear ladye.

Unknown

ROBIN HOOD AND ALLEN-A-DALE

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that love mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlaw.
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
All under the greenwood tree,
There was he aware of a brave young man,
As fine as fine might be.

The youngster was clad in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay;
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chanted a roundelay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he espy the same young man
Come drooping along the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before
It was clean cast away;
And at every step he fetched a sigh,
"Alas! and well-a-day!"

Then steppèd forth brave Little John,
And Midge, the miller's son;
Which made the young man bend his bow
When as he see them come.

"Stand off! stand off!" the young man said,
"What is your will with me?"
"You must come before our master straight,
Under yon greenwood tree."

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin asked him courteously,
"O, hast thou any money to spare,
For my merry men and me?"

"I have no money," the young man said,
"But five shillings and a ring;
And that I have kept these seven long years,
To have at my wedding.

"Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she was from me ta'en,
And chosen to be an old knight's delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain."

"What is thy name?" then said Robin Hood,
"Come tell me, without any fail."
"By the faith of my body," then said the young man,
"My name it is Allen-a-Dale."

"What wilt thou give me," said Robin Hood,
"In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true-love again,
And deliver her unto thee?"

"I have no money," then quoth the young man,
"No ready gold nor fee,
But I will swear upon a book
Thy true servant for to be."

"How many miles is it to thy true-love?
Come tell me without guile."
"By the faith of my body," then said the young man,
"It is but five little mile."

Then Robin he hasted over the plain;
He did neither stint nor lin,
Until he came unto the church
Where Allen should keep his weddin'.

"What dost thou here?" the bishop then said;
"I prithee now tell unto me."
"I am a bold harper," quoth Robin Hood,
"And the best in the north country."

"Oh welcome, oh welcome," the bishop he said;
"That music best pleaseth me."
"You shall have no music," quoth Robin Hood,
"Till the bride and the bridegroom I see."

With that came in a wealthy knight,
Which was both grave and old;
And after him a finikin lass,
Did shine like glistering gold.

"This is no fit match," quoth Robin Hood,
"That you do seem to make here;
For since we are come into the church,
The bride shall chuse her own dear."

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
And blew blasts two or three;
When four-and-twenty yeomen bold
Came leaping over the lea.

And when they came into the church-yard,
Marching all in a row,
The first man was Allen-a-Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

"This is thy true love," Robin he said.
"Young Allen, as I hear say:
And you shall be married at this same time,
Before we depart away."

"That shall not be," the bishop he cried,
"For thy word it shall not stand;
They shall be three times asked in the church,
As the law is of our land."

Robin Hood pulled off the bishop's coat,
And put it upon Little John;
"By the faith of my body," then Robin said,
"This cloth doth make thee a man."

When Little John went into the quire,
The people began to laugh;
He asked them seven times into church,
Lest three times should not be enough.

"Who gives me this maid?" then said Little John,
Quoth Robin Hood, "That do I;
And he that takes her from Allen-a-Dale,
Full dearly he shall her buy."

And then having ended this merry wedding,
The bride looked as fresh as a queen;
And so they returned to the merry greenwood,
Amongst the leaves so green.

Unknown

CHEVY-CHASE

God prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and safeties all;
A woful hunting once there did
In Chevy-Chase befall.

To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took his way;
The child may rue that is unborn
The hunting of that day.

The stout Earl of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
Three summer days to take;

The chiefest harts in Chevy-Chase
To kill and bear away.
These tidings to Earl Douglas came,
In Scotland where he lay;

Who sent Earl Percy present word
He would prevent his sport.
The English earl, not fearing that,
Did to the woods resort,

With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,
All chosen men of might,
Who knew full well in time of need
To aim their shafts aright.

The gallant greyhounds swiftly ran
To chase the fallow deer;
On Monday they began to hunt,
When daylight did appear;

And long before high noon they had
A hundred fat bucks slain;
Then, having dined, the drovers went
To rouse the deer again.

The bowmen mustered on the hills,
Well able to endure;
And all their rear, with special care,
That day was guarded sure.

The hounds ran swiftly through the woods
The nimble deer to take,
That with their cries the hills and dales
An echo shrill did make.

Lord Percy to the quarry went,
To view the slaughtered deer;
Quoth he, "Earl Douglas promisèd
This day to meet me here;

"But if I thought he would not come,
No longer would I stay;"
With that, a brave young gentleman
Thus to the earl did say:—

"Lo, yonder doth Earl Douglas come,—
His men in armor bright;
Full twenty hundred Scottish spears
All marching in our sight;

"All men of pleasant Teviotdale,
Fast by the river Tweed;"
"Then cease your sports," Earl Percy said,
"And take your bows with speed;

"And now with me, my countrymen,
Your courage forth advance;
For never was there champion yet,
In Scotland or in France,

"That ever did on horseback come,
But if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man,
With him to break a spear."

Earl Douglas on his milk-white steed,
Most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of his company,
Whose armor shone like gold.

"Show me," said he, "whose men you be,
That hunt so boldly here,
That, without my consent, do chase
And kill my fallow-deer."

The first man that did answer make,
Was noble Percy, he—
Who said, "We list not to declare,
Nor show whose men we be:

"Yet will we spend our dearest blood
Thy chiefest harts to slay."
Then Douglas swore a solemn oath,
And thus in rage did say:—

"Ere thus I will out-bravèd be,
One of us two shall die;
I know thee well, an earl thou art,—
Lord Percy, so am I.

"But trust me, Percy, pity it were,
And great offense, to kill
Any of these our guiltless men,
For they have done no ill.

"Let you and I the battle try,
And set our men aside."
"Accursed be he," Earl Percy said,
"By whom this is denied."

Then stepped a gallant squire forth,
Witherington was his name,
Who said, "I would not have it told
To Henry, our king, for shame,

"That e'er my captain fought on foot,
And I stood looking on.
You two be earls," said Witherington,
"And I a squire alone;

"I'll do the best that do I may,
While I have power to stand;
While I have power to wield my sword,
I'll fight with heart and hand."

Our English archers bent their bows,—
Their hearts were good and true;
At the first flight of arrows sent,
Full fourscore Scots they slew.

Yet stays Earl Douglas on the bent,
As chieftain stout and good;
As valiant captain, all unmoved,
The shock he firmly stood.

His host he parted had in three,
As leader ware and tried;
And soon his spearmen on their foes
Bore down on every side.

Throughout the English archery
They dealt full many a wound;
But still our valiant Englishmen
All firmly kept their ground.

And throwing straight their bows away,
They grasped their swords so bright;
And now sharp blows, a heavy shower,
On shields and helmets light.

They closed full fast on every side,
No slackness there was found;
And many a gallant gentleman
Lay gasping on the ground.

In truth, it was a grief to see
How each one chose his spear,
And how the blood out of their breasts
Did gush like water clear.

At last these two stout earls did meet;
  Like captains of great might,
Like lions wode, they laid on lode,
  And made a cruel fight.

They fought until they both did sweat,
  With swords of tempered steel,
Until the blood, like drops of rain,
  They trickling down did feel.

"Yield thee, Lord Percy," Douglas said,
  "In faith I will thee bring
Where thou shalt high advancèd be
  By James, our Scottish king.

"Thy ransom I will freely give.
  And this report of thee,—
Thou art the most courageous knight
  That ever I did see."

"No, Douglas," saith Earl Percy then,
  "Thy proffer I do scorn;
I will not yield to any Scot
  That ever yet was born."

With that there came an arrow keen
  Out of an English bow,
Which struck Earl Douglas to the heart,—
  A deep and deadly blow;

Who never spake more words than these:
  "Fight on, my merry men all;
For why, my life is at an end;
  Lord Percy sees my fall."

Then leaving life, Earl Percy took
  The dead man by the hand;
And said, "Earl Douglas, for thy life
  Would I had lost my hand.

"In truth, my very heart doth bleed
With sorrow for thy sake;
For sure a more redoubted knight
Mischance did never take."

A knight amongst the Scots there was
Who saw Earl Douglas die,
Who straight in wrath did vow revenge
Upon the Earl Percy.

Sir Hugh Mountgomery was he called,
Who, with a spear full bright,
Well-mounted on a gallant steed,
Ran fiercely through the fight;

And past the English archers all,
Without a dread or fear;
And through Earl Percy's body then
He thrust his hateful spear.

With such vehement force and might
He did his body gore,
The staff ran through the other side
A large cloth-yard and more.

So thus did both these nobles die,
Whose courage none could stain.
An English archer then perceived
The noble earl was slain;

He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a trusty tree;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long
To the hard head drew he.

Against Sir Hugh Mountgomery
So right the shaft he set,
The gray goose-wing that was thereon
In his heart's blood was wet.

This fight did last from break of day
Till setting of the sun;
For when they rung the evening-bell
The battle scarce was done.

With stout Earl Percy there were slain
Sir John of Egerton,
Sir Robert Ratcliff, and Sir John,
Sir James, that bold baròn.

And with Sir George and stout Sir James,
Both Knights of good account,
Good Sir Ralph Raby there was slain,
Whose prowess did surmount.

For Witherington my heart is woe
That ever he slain should be,
For when his legs were hewn in two,
He knelt and fought on his knee.

And with Earl Douglas there were slain
Sir Hugh Mountgomery,
Sir Charles Murray, that from the field
One foot would never flee;

Sir Charles Murray of Ratcliff, too,—
His sister's son was he;
Sir David Lamb, so well esteemed,
But saved he could not be.

And the Lord Maxwell in like case
Did with Earl Douglas die:
Of twenty hundred Scottish spears,
Scarce fifty-five did fly.

Of fifteen hundred Englishmen,
Went home but fifty-three;
The rest in Chevy-Chase were slain,
Under the greenwood tree.

Next day did many widows come,
Their husbands to bewail;
They washed their wounds in brinish tears,
But all would not prevail.

Their bodies, bathed in purple blood,
They bore with them away;
They kissed them dead a thousand times,
Ere they were clad in clay.

The news was brought to Edinburgh,
Where Scotland's king did reign,
That brave Earl Douglas suddenly
Was with an arrow slain:

"O heavy news," King James did say;
"Scotland can witness be
I have not any captain more
Of such account as he."

Like tidings to King Henry came
Within as short a space,
That Percy of Northumberland
Was slain in Chevy-Chase:

"Now God be with him," said our King,
"Since 'twill no better be;
I trust I have within my realm
Five hundred as good as he.

"Yet shall not Scots or Scotland say
But I will vengeance take;
I'll be revengèd on them all
For brave Earl Percy's sake."

This vow full well the king performed
After at Humbledown;
In one day fifty knights were slain
With lords of high renown;

And of the rest, of small account,
Did many hundreds die:
Thus endeth the hunting of Chevy-Chase,
Made by the Earl Percy.

God save the king, and bless this land,
With plenty, joy, and peace;
And grant, henceforth, that foul debate
'Twixt noblemen may cease.

Unknown

BARBARA ALLEN'S CRUELTY

In Scarlet town, where I was born,
There was a fair maid dwellin',
Made every youth cry *Well-a-way!*
Her name was Barbara Allen.

All in the merry month of May,
When green buds they were swellin',
Young Jemmy Grove on his death-bed lay,
For love of Barbara Allen.

He sent his man in to her then,
To the town where she was dwellin',
"O haste and come to my master dear,
If your name be Barbara Allen."

So slowly, slowly rase she up,
And slowly she came nigh him,
And when she drew the curtain by—
"Young man, I think you're dyin'."

"O it's I am sick and very very sick,
And it's all for Barbara Allen."
"O the better for me ye'se never be,
Though your heart's blood were a-spillin'!

"O dinna ye mind, young man," says she,
"When the red wine ye were fillin',
That ye made the healths go round and round,
And slighted Barbara Allen?"

He turned his face unto the wall,
And death was with him dealin':
"Adieu, adieu, my dear friends all,
And be kind to Barbara Allen!"

As she was walking o'er the fields,
She heard the dead-bell knellin';
And every jow the dead-bell gave
Cried "Woe to Barbara Allen."

"O mother, mother, make my bed,
O make it saft and narrow:
My love has died for me to-day,
I'll die for him to-morrow.

"Farewell," she said, "ye virgins all,
And shun the fault I fell in:
Henceforth take warning by the fall
Of cruel Barbara Allen."

Unknown

THE BAILIFF'S DAUGHTER OF ISLINGTON

THERE was a youth, a well-belovèd youth,
And he was a squire's son,
He loved the bailiff's daughter dear,
That lived in Islington.

Yet she was coy and would not believe
That he did love her so,
No, nor at any time would she
Any countenance to him show.

But when his friends did understand
His fond and foolish mind,
They sent him up to fair London
An apprentice for to bind.

And when he had been seven long years,
And never his love could see:
Many a tear have I shed for her sake,
When she little thought of me.

Then all the maids of Islington
Went forth to sport and play,
All but the bailiff's daughter dear;
She secretly stole away.

She pulled off her gown of green,
And put on ragged attire,
And to fair London she would go
Her true-love to enquire.

As she went along the high road,
The weather being hot and dry,
She sat her down upon a green bank,
And her true-love came riding by.

She started up, with a color so red,
Catching hold of his bridle-rein;
One penny, one penny, kind sir, she said,
Will ease me of much pain.

Before I give you one penny, sweet-heart,
Pray tell me where you were born.
At Islington, kind sir, said she,
Where I have had many a scorn.

I prithee, sweet-heart, then tell to me,
O tell me, whether you know,
The bailiff's daughter of Islington.
She is dead, sir, long ago.

If she be dead, then take my horse,
My saddle and bridle also;
For I will unto some far country,
Where no man shall me know.

O stay, O stay, thou goodly youth,
She standeth by thy side;
She is here, alive, she is not dead,
And ready to be thy bride.

O farewell grief, and welcome joy,
Ten thousand times therefor;
For now I have found mine own true-love,
Whom I thought I should never see more.

Unknown

KING JOHN AND THE ABBOT OF CANTERBURY

An ancient story I'll tell you anon
Of a notable prince that was called King John;
And he rulèd England with main and with might,
For he did great wrong, and maintained little right.

And I'll tell you a story, a story so merry,
Concerning the Abbot of Canterbury;
How for his house-keeping and high renown,
They rode post for him to fair London town.

An hundred men the king did hear say,
The abbot kept in his house every day;
And fifty gold chains without any doubt,
In velvet coats waited the abbot about.

"How now, father abbot, I hear it of thee,
Thou keepest a far better house than me;
And for thy house-keeping and high renown,
I fear thou work'st treason against my own crown."

"My liege," quo' the abbot, "I would it were known
I never spend nothing, but what is my own;
And I trust your grace will do me no deere,
For spending of my own true-gotten gear."

"Yes, yes, father abbot, thy fault it is high,
And now for the same thou needest must die;
For except thou canst answer me questions three,
Thy head shall be smitten from thy bodie.

"And first," quo' the king, "when I'm in this stead,
With my crown of gold so fair on my head,
Among all my liege-men so noble of birth,
Thou must tell me to one penny what I am worth.

"Secondly, tell me, without any doubt,
How soon I may ride the whole world about;
And at the third question thou must not shrink,
But tell me here truly what I do think."

"O these are hard questions for my shallow wit,
Nor I cannot answer your grace as yet:
But if you will give me but three weeks' space,
I'll do my endeavor to answer your grace."

"Now three weeks' space to thee will I give,
And that is the longest time thou hast to live;
For if thou dost not answer my questions three,
Thy lands and thy livings are forfeit to me."

Away rode the abbot all sad at that word,
And he rode to Cambridge, and Oxenford;
But never a doctor there was so wise,
That could with his learning an answer devise.

Then home rode the abbot of comfort so cold,
And he met his shepherd a-going to fold:
"How now, my lord abbot, you are welcome home;
What news do you bring us from good King John?"

"Sad news, sad news, shepherd, I must give,
That I have but three days more to live;
For if I do not answer him questions three,
My head will be smitten from my bodie.

"The first is to tell him, there in that stead,
With his crown of gold so fair on his head,
Among all his liege-men so noble of birth,
To within one penny of what he is worth.

"The second, to tell him without any doubt,
How soon he may ride this whole world about;
And at the third question I must not shrink,
But tell him there truly what he does think."

"Now cheer up, sire abbot, did you never hear yet,
That a fool he may learn a wise man wit?
Lend me horse, and serving-men, and your apparel,
And I'll ride to London to answer your quarrel.

"Nay, frown not, if it hath been told unto me,
I am like your lordship, as ever may be;
And if you will but lend me your gown,
There is none shall know us at fair London town."

"Now horses and serving-men thou shalt have,
With sumptuous array most gallant and brave,
With crozier, and mitre, and rochet, and cope,
Fit to appear 'fore our Father the Pope."

"Now welcome, sire abbot," the king he did say,
"'Tis well thou'rt come back to keep thy day:
For and if thou canst answer my questions three,
Thy life and thy living both saved shall be.

"And first, when thou seest me here in this stead,
With my crown of gold so fair on my head,
Among all my liege-men so noble of birth,
Tell me to one penny what I am worth."

"For thirty pence our Saviour was sold
Among the false Jews, as I have been told,
And twenty-nine is the worth of thee,
For I think thou art one penny worser than he."

The king he laughed, and swore by St. Bittel,
"I did not think I had been worth so little!
—Now secondly tell me, without any doubt,
How soon I may ride this whole world about."

"You must rise with the sun, and ride with the same
Until the next morning he riseth again;
And then your grace need not make any doubt
But in twenty-four hours you'll ride it about."

The king he laughed, and swore by St. Jone,
"I did not think it could be done so soon!
—Now from the third question thou must not shrink,
But tell me here truly what I do think."

"Yea, that shall I do, and make your grace merry;
You think I'm the Abbot of Canterbury;
But I'm his poor shepherd, as plain you may see,
That am come to beg pardon for him and for me."

The king he laughed, and swore by the Mass,
"I'll make thee lord abbot this day in his place!"
"Now nay, my liege, be not in such speed,
For alack I can neither write nor read."

"Four nobles a week, then, I will give thee,
For this merry jest thou hast shown unto me;
And tell the old abbot when thou comest home,
Thou hast brought him a pardon from good King John."

Unknown

THE FRIAR OF ORDERS GRAY

It was a friar of orders gray
Walked forth to tell his beads;
And he met with a lady fair
Clad in a pilgrim's weeds.

"Now Christ thee save, thou reverend friar;
I pray thee tell to me,
If ever at yon holy shrine
My true-love thou didst see."

"And how should I know your true-love
From many another one?"
"O, by his cockle hat, and staff,
And by his sandal shoon.

"But chiefly by his face and mien,
That were so fair to view;
His flaxen locks that sweetly curled,
And eyes of lovely blue."

"O lady, he is dead and gone!
Lady, he's dead and gone!
And at his head a green grass turf,
And at his heels a stone.

"Within these holy cloisters long
He languished, and he died,
Lamenting of a lady's love,
And 'plaining of her pride.

"Here bore him barefaced on his bier
Six proper youths and tall,
And many a tear bedewed his grave
Within yon kirkyard wall."

"And art thou dead, thou gentle youth?
And art thou dead and gone?
And didst thou die for love of me?
Break, cruel heart of stone!"

"O, weep not, lady, weep not so;
Some ghostly comfort seek;
Let not vain sorrow rive thy heart,
Nor tears bedew thy cheek."

"O, do not, do not, holy friar,
My sorrow now reprove;
For I have lost the sweetest youth
That e'er won lady's love.

"And now, alas! for thy sad loss
I'll evermore weep and sigh;
For thee I only wished to live,
For thee I wish to die."

"Weep no more, lady, weep no more,
Thy sorrow is in vain;
For violets plucked, the sweetest showers
Will ne'er make grow again.

"Our joys as wingèd dreams do fly;
Why then should sorrow last?
Since grief but aggravates thy loss,
Grieve not for what is past."

"O, say not so, thou holy friar;
I pray thee, say not so;
For since my true-love died for me,
'Tis meet my tears should flow.

"And will he never come again?
Will he ne'er come again?
Ah, no! he is dead, and laid in his grave,
Forever to remain.

"His cheek was redder than the rose;
The comeliest youth was he!
But he is dead and laid in his grave:
Alas, and woe is me!"

"Sigh no more, lady, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever:
One foot on sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.

"Hadst thou been fond, he had been false,
And left thee sad and heavy;
For young men ever were fickle found,
Since summer trees were leafy."

"Now say not so, thou holy friar,
I pray thee say not so;
My love he had the truest heart,
O, he was ever true!

"And art thou dead, thou much-loved youth,
And didst thou die for me?
Then farewell home; for evermore
A pilgrim I will be.

"But first upon my true-love's grave
My weary limbs I'll lay,
And thrice I'll kiss the green-grass turf
That wraps his breathless clay."

"Yet stay, fair lady; rest awhile
Beneath this cloister wall;
The cold wind through the hawthorn blows,
And drizzly rain doth fall."

"O, stay me not, thou holy friar,
O, stay me not, I pray;
No drizzly rain that falls on me
Can wash my fault away."

"Yet stay, fair lady, turn again,
And dry those pearly tears;
For see, beneath this gown of gray
Thy own true-love appears.

"Here forced by grief and hopeless love,
These holy weeds I sought;
And here, amid these lonely walls,
To end my days I thought.

"But haply, for my year of grace
Is not yet passed away,
Might I still hope to win thy love,
No longer would I stay."

"Now farewell grief, and welcome joy
Once more unto my heart;
For since I have found thee, lovely youth,
We nevermore will part."

Adapted from old ballads by Thomas Percy [1729-1811]

BONNIE GEORGE CAMPBELL

Hie upon Hielands,
And low upon Tay,
Bonnie George Campbell
Rade out on a day.
Saddled and bridled
And gallant rade he;
Hame cam his gude horse,
But never cam he!

Out cam his auld mither
Greeting fu' sair,
And out cam his bonnie bride
Rivin' her hair.
Saddled and bridled
And booted rade he;
Toom hame cam the saddle
But never cam he!

"My meadow lies green,
And my corn is unshorn,
My barn is to bigg,
And my babie's unborn."
Saddled and bridled
And booted rade he;
Toom hame cam the saddle,
But never cam he!

Unknown

ROSABELLE

From "The Lay of the Last Minstrel"

O LISTEN, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

"Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
And, gentle Lady, deign to stay!
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

"The blackening wave is edged with white;
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly:
The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

"Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round lady gay;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch;
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"

"'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my lady-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

"'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide
If 'tis not filled by Rosabelle."

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from caverned Hawthornden.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seemed all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmered all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair,—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high Saint Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;
Each one the holy vault doth hold,—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each Saint Clair was buried there
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle!

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

ALICE BRAND

From "The Lady of the Lake"

I

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

"O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

"O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

"Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

"And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,
To keep the cold away."

"O Richard! if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet gray,
As gay the forest green.

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand."

II

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's ax is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who woned within the hill,—
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

"Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?

"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban.

"Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die!"

III

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good greenwood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he crossed and blessed himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
"That is made with bloody hands."

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
"And if there's blood upon his hand,
'Tis but the blood of deer."

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
By Him whom Demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?"

IV

"'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy-land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by the monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing.

"And gaily shines the Fairy-land—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

"And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

"It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatched away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

"But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine."

She crossed him once—she crossed him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline gray,
When all the bells were ringing.

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

SONG

From "Rokeby"

O Brignall banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer-queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-Hall
Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle-wall
Was singing merrily:
"O Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen."

"O Maiden, wouldst thou wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
As blithe as Queen of May."
Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen.

"I read you, by your bugle-horn
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a Ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood."
"A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night."
Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there
To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnished brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum."
"I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And O! though Brignall banks be fair
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May!

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die;
The fiend, whose lantern lights the mead,
Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,—
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.
Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen."

Walter Scott [1771–1832]

GLENARA

Oh, heard ye yon pibroch sound sad in the gale,
Where a band cometh slowly with weeping and wail?
'Tis the Chief of Glenara laments for his dear,
And her sire, and her people, are called to her bier.

Glenara came first with the mourners and shroud;
His kinsmen they followed, but mourned not aloud:
Their plaids all their bosoms were folded around;
They marched all in silence,—they looked on the ground.

In silence they went, over mountain and moor,
To a heath, where the oak-tree grew lonely and hoar;
"Now here let us place the gray stone of her cairn:
Why speak ye no word?" said Glenara the stern.

"And tell me, I charge you, ye clan of my spouse,
Why fold ye your mantles, why cloud ye your brows?"
So spake the rude chieftain:—no answer is made,
But each mantle unfolding, a dagger displayed.

"I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her shroud,"
Cried a voice from the kinsmen, all wrathful and loud:
"And empty that shroud and that coffin did seem;
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!"

Oh, pale grew the cheek of that chieftain, I ween,
When the shroud was unclosed and no lady was seen;
When a voice from the kinsmen spoke louder in scorn,—
'Twas the youth who had loved the fair Ellen of Lorn,—

"I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her grief;
I dreamt that her lord was a barbarous chief;
On a rock of the ocean fair Ellen did seem!
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!"

In dust, low the traitor has knelt to the ground,
And the desert revealed where his lady was found;
From a rock of the ocean that beauty is borne,—
Now joy to the house of fair Ellen of Lorn!

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

A CHIEFTAIN, to the Highlands bound,
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound,
To row us o'er the ferry."

"Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?"
"O, I'm the chief of Ulva's Isle,
And this Lord Ullin's daughter.

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

"His horsemen hard behind us ride;
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?"

Outspoke the hardy Highland wight,
"I'll go, my chief,—I'm ready:—
It is not for your silver bright;
But for your winsome lady:

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry:
So, though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry."

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode armèd men,—
Their trampling sounded nearer.

"O, haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
"Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father."

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When, O, too strong for human hand,
The tempest gathered o'er her.

And still they rowed amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reached that fatal shore,—
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For sore dismayed, through storm and shade,
His child he did discover:
One lovely hand she stretched for aid,
And one was round her lover.

"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief,
"Across this stormy water:
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—O my daughter!"

'Twas vain;—the loud waves lashed the shore,
Return or aid preventing;—
The waters wild went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.

The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splintered spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favors fall!
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall:
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bowed in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair through faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board; no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.

A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the Holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Through dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odors haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armor that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touched, are turned to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And through the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.

Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the Holy Grail.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

LADY CLARE

It was the time when lilies blow,
And clouds are highest up in air,
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn:
Lovers long-betrothed were they:
They two will wed the morrow morn,—
God's blessing on the day!

"He does not love me for my birth,
Nor for my lands so broad and fair;
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, "Who was this that went from thee?"
"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare,
"To-morrow he weds with me."

"O God be thanked!" said Alice the nurse,
"That all comes round so just and fair:
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are *not* the Lady Clare."

"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse,"
Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"
"As God's above," said Alice the nurse,
"I speak the truth: you are my child.

"The old earl's daughter died at my breast;
I speak the truth, as I live by bread!
I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead."

"Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother," she said, "if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,
When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar born," she said,
"I will speak out, for I dare not lie.
Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret all you can."
She said, "Not so: but I will know
If there be any faith in man."

"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse,
"The man will cleave unto his right."
"And he shall have it," the lady replied,
"Though I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear
Alas, my child, I sinned for thee."
"O mother, mother, mother," she said,
"So strange it seems to me.

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,
And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,
  She was no longer Lady Clare:
She went by dale, and she went by down,
  With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought
  Leaped up from where she lay,
Dropped her head in the maiden's hand,
  And followed her all the way.

Down stepped Lord Ronald from his tower:
  "O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!
Why come you dressed like a village maid,
  That are the flower of the earth?"

"If I come dressed like a village maid,
  I am but as my fortunes are:
I am a beggar born," she said,
  "And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
  "For I am yours in word and in deed.
Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
  "Your riddle is hard to read."

O, and proudly stood she up!
  Her heart within her did not fail;
She looked into Lord Ronald's eyes,
  And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laughed a laugh of merry scorn:
  He turned and kissed her where she stood:
"If you are not the heiress born,
  And I," said he, "the next in blood—

"If you are not the heiress born,
  And I," said he, "the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
  And you shall still be Lady Clare."

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

GLENKINDIE

About Glenkindie and his man,
A false ballant hath long been writ;
Some bootless loon had written it,
Upon a bootless plan:
But I have found the true at last,
And here it is, so hold it fast!
'Twas made by a kind damosel
Who loved him and his man right well:

Glenkindie, best of harpers, came
Unbidden to our town;
And he was sad, and sad to see,
For love had worn him down.

It was love, as all men know,
The love that brought him down,
The hopeless love for the King's daughter,
The dove that heired a crown.

Now he wore not that collar of gold,
His dress was forest green,
His wondrous fair and rich mantle
Had lost its silvery sheen.

But still by his side walked Rafe, his boy,
In goodly cramoisie:
Of all the boys that ever I saw,
The goodliest boy was he.

O Rafe the page! O Rafe the page!
Ye stole the heart frae me:
O Rafe the page! O Rafe the page!
I wonder where ye be;
We ne'er may see Glenkindie more,
But may we never see thee?

Glenkindie came within the hall,
We set him on the dais,
And gave him bread, and gave him wine,
The best in all the place.

We set for him the guest's high chair,
And spread the naperie:
Our Dame herself would serve for him,
And I for Rafe, perdie!

But down he sat on a low, low stool,
And thrust his long legs out,
And leaned his back to the high chair,
And turned his harp about.

He turned it round, he stroked the strings,
He touched each tirling-pin,
He put his mouth to the sounding-board
And breathed his breath therein.

And Rafe sat over against his face,
And looked at him wistfullie:
I almost grat ere he began,
They were so sad to see.

The very first stroke he strack that day,
We all came crowding near;
And the second stroke he strack that day,
We all were smit with fear.

The third stroke that he strack that day,
Full fain we were to cry;
The fourth stroke that he strack that day,
We thought that we would die.

No tongue can tell how sweet it was,
How far, and yet how near,
We saw the saints in Paradise,
And bairnies on their bier.

And our sweet Dame saw her good lord—
She told me privilie—
She saw him as she saw him last,
On his ship upon the sea.

Anon he laid his little harp by,
He shut his wondrous eyes;
We stood a long time like dumb things,
Stood in a dumb surprise.

Then all at once we left that trance,
And shouted where we stood;
We clasped each other's hands and vowed
We would be wise and good.

Soon he rose up and Rafe rose too,
He drank wine and broke bread;
He clasped his hands with our trembling Dame,
But never a word he said.
They went,—Alack and lack-a-day!
They went the way they came.

I followed them all down the floor,
And oh but I had drouth
To touch his cheek, to touch his hand,
To kiss Rafe's velvet mouth!

But I knew such was not for me.
They went straight from the door;
We saw them fade within the mist,
And never saw them more.

William Bell Scott [1811–1890]

"HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX"

[16—]

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate-bolts undrew;
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place;
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;
At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-chime,
So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there is time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray:

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance!
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris "Stay spur!
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!

"How they'll greet us!"—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or
good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is,—friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from
Ghent.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE OLD SCOTTISH CAVALIER

Come listen to another song,
Should make your heart beat high,
Bring crimson to your forehead,
And the luster to your eye;—
It is the song of the olden time,
Of days long since gone by,
And of a Baron stout and bold
As e'er wore sword on thigh!
Like a brave old Scottish cavalier,
All of the olden time!

He kept his castle in the north,
Hard by the thundering Spey;
And a thousand vassals dwelt around,
All of his kindred they,

And not a man of all that clan
Had ever ceased to pray
For the Royal race they loved so well,
Though exiled far away
From the steadfast Scottish cavaliers,
All of the olden time!

His father drew the righteous sword
For Scotland and her claims,
Among the loyal gentlemen
And chiefs of ancient names,
Who swore to fight or fall beneath
The standard of King James,
And died at Killiecrankie Pass
With the glory of the Græmes;
Like a true old Scottish cavalier
All of the olden time!

He never owned the foreign rule,
No master he obeyed,
But kept his clan in peace at home,
From foray and from raid;
And when they asked him for his oath,
He touched his glittering blade,
And pointed to his bonnet blue,
That bore the white cockade:
Like a leal old Scottish cavalier,
All of the olden time!

At length the news ran through the land—
The Prince had come again!
That night the fiery cross was sped
O'er mountain and through glen;
And our old Baron rose in might,
Like a lion from his den,
And rode away across the hills
To Charlie and his men,
With the valiant Scottish cavaliers,
All of the olden time!

He was the first that bent the knee
When the STANDARD waved abroad,
He was the first that charged the foe
On Preston's bloody sod;
And ever, in the van of fight,
The foremost still he trod,
Until on bleak Culloden's heath,
He gave his soul to God,
Like a good old Scottish cavalier,
All of the olden time!

Oh, never shall we know again
A heart so stout and true—
The olden times have passed away,
And weary are the new:
The fair White Rose has faded
From the garden where it grew,
And no fond tears, save those of heaven,
The glorious bed bedew
Of the last old Scottish cavalier
All of the olden time!

William Edmondstoune Aytoun [1813–1865]

THE BALLAD OF KEITH OF RAVELSTON

From "A Nuptial Eve"

THE murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine,
"O Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line!"

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill,
And through the silver meads;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she!

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
  She sat beneath the thorn,
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
  Rode through the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
  His belted jewels shine;
O Keith of Ravelston,
  The sorrows of thy line!

Year after year, where Andrew came,
  Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
  Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
  She keeps the shadowy kine;
O Keith of Ravelston,
  The sorrows of thy line!

I lay my hand upon the stile,
  The stile is lone and cold,
The burnie that goes babbling by
  Says naught that can be told.

Yet, stranger! here, from year to year,
  She keeps her shadowy kine;
O Keith of Ravelston,
  The sorrows of thy line!

Step out three steps, where Andrew stood—
  Why blanch thy cheeks for fear?
The ancient stile is not alone,
  'Tis not the burn I hear!

She makes her immemorial moan,
  She keeps her shadowy kine;
O Keith of Ravelston,
  The sorrows of thy line!

Sydney Dobell [1824–1874]

THE MISTLETOE BOUGH

THE mistletoe hung in the castle hall,
The holly branch shone on the old oak wall;
And the baron's retainers were blithe and gay,
And keeping their Christmas holiday.
The baron beheld with a father's pride
His beautiful child, young Lovell's bride;
While she with her bright eyes seemed to be
The star of the goodly company.

"I'm weary of dancing now," she cried;
"Here tarry a moment,—I'll hide, I'll hide!
And, Lovell, be sure thou'rt first to trace
The clew to my secret lurking-place."
Away she ran,—and her friends began
Each tower to search, and each nook to scan;
And young Lovell cried, "O, where dost thou hide?
I'm lonesome without thee, my own dear bride."

They sought her that night, and they sought her next day,
And they sought her in vain while a week passed away;
In the highest, the lowest, the loneliest spot,
Young Lovell sought wildly,—but found her not.
And years flew by, and their grief at last
Was told as a sorrowful tale long past;
And when Lovell appeared, the children cried,
"See! the old man weeps for his fairy bride."

At length an oak chest, that had long lain hid,
Was found in the castle,—they raised the lid,
And a skeleton form lay moldering there
In the bridal wreath of that lady fair!
O, sad was her fate!—in sportive jest
She hid from her lord in the old oak chest.
It closed with a spring!—and, dreadful doom,
The bride lay clasped in her living tomb!

Thomas Haynes Bayly [1797–1839]

THE ABBOT OF INISFALEN

I

The Abbot of Inisfalen
Awoke ere dawn of day;
Under the dewy green leaves
Went he forth to pray.

The lake around his island
Lay smooth and dark and deep,
And, wrapped in a misty stillness,
The mountains were all asleep.

Low kneeled the Abbot Cormac,
When the dawn was dim and gray;
The prayers of his holy office
He faithfully 'gan say.

Low kneeled the Abbot Cormac,
When the dawn was waxing red,
And for his sins' forgiveness
A solemn prayer he said.

Low kneeled that holy Abbot
When the dawn was waxing clear;
And he prayed with loving-kindness
For his convent brethren dear.

Low kneeled that blessed Abbot,
When the dawn was waxing bright;
He prayed a great prayer for Ireland,
He prayed with all his might.

Low kneeled that good old father,
While the sun began to dart;
He prayed a prayer for all mankind,
He prayed it from his heart.

II

The Abbot of Inisfalen
Arose upon his feet;
He heard a small bird singing,
And, oh, but it sung sweet!

He heard a white bird singing well
Within a holly-tree;
A song so sweet and happy
Never before heard he.

It sung upon a hazel,
It sung upon a thorn;
He had never heard such music
Since the hour that he was born.

It sung upon a sycamore,
It sung upon a briar;
To follow the song and hearken
This Abbot could never tire.

Till at last he well bethought him
He might no longer stay;
So he blessed the little white singing-bird,
And gladly went his way.

III

But when he came to his Abbey walls,
He found a wondrous change;
He saw no friendly faces there,
For every face was strange.

The stranger spoke unto him;
And he heard from all and each
The foreign tone of the Sassenach,
Not wholesome Irish speech.

Then the oldest monk came forward,
In Irish tongue spake he:
"Thou wearest the holy Augustine's dress,
And who hath given it thee?"

"I wear the holy Augustine's dress,
And Cormac is my name,
The Abbot of this good Abbey
By grace of God I am.

"I went forth to pray, at the dawn of day;
And when my prayers were said,
I hearkened awhile to a little bird
That sung above my head."

The monks to him made answer,
"Two hundred years have gone o'er,
Since our Abbot Cormac went through the gate,
And never was heard of more.

"Matthias now is our Abbot,
And twenty have passed away.
The stranger is lord of Ireland;
We live in an evil day."

IV

"Now give me absolution;
For my time is come," said he.
And they gave him absolution
As speedily as might be.

Then, close outside the window,
The sweetest song they heard
That ever yet since the world began
Was uttered by any bird.

The monks looked out and saw the bird,
Its feathers all white and clean;
And there in a moment, beside it,
Another white bird was seen.

Those two they sang together,
Waved their white wings, and fled;
Flew aloft, and vanished;
But the good old man was dead.

They buried his blessed body
Where lake and greensward meet;
A carven cross above his head,
A holly-bush at his feet;

Where spreads the beautiful water
To gay or cloudy skies,
And the purple peaks of Killarney
From ancient woods arise.

William Allingham [1824–1889]

THE CAVALIER'S ESCAPE

TRAMPLE! trample! went the roan,
Trap! trap! went the gray;
But pad! *pad!* PAD! like a thing that was mad,
My chestnut broke away.
It was just five miles from Salisbury town,
And but one hour to day.

Thud! THUD! came on the heavy roan,
Rap! RAP! the mettled gray;
But my chestnut mare was of blood so rare,
That she showed them all the way.
Spur on! spur on!—I doffed my hat,
And wished them all good-day.

They splashed through miry rut and pool,—
Splintered through fence and rail;
But chestnut Kate switched over the gate,—
I saw them droop and trail.
To Salisbury town—but a mile of down,
Once over this brook and rail.

Trap! trap! I heard their echoing hoofs
Past the walls of mossy stone;
The roan flew on at a staggering pace,
But blood is better than bone.
I patted old Kate, and gave her the spur,
For I knew it was all my own.

But trample! trample! came their steeds,
And I saw their wolf's eyes burn;
I felt like a royal hart at bay,
And made me ready to turn.
I looked where highest grew the may,
And deepest arched the fern.

I flew at the first knave's sallow throat;
One blow, and he was down.
The second rogue fired twice, and missed;
I sliced the villain's crown,—
Clove through the rest, and flogged brave Kate,
Fast, fast to Salisbury town!

Pad! pad! they came on the level sward,
Thud! thud! upon the sand,—
With a gleam of swords and a burning match,
And a shaking of flag and hand;
But one long bound, and I passed the gate,
Safe from the canting band.

Walter Thornbury [1828–1876]

THE THREE TROOPERS

DURING THE PROTECTORATE

Into the Devil tavern
Three booted troopers strode,
From spur to feather spotted and splashed
With the mud of a winter road.
In each of their cups they dropped a crust,
And stared at the guests with a frown;
And drew their swords, and roared for a toast,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

A blue smoke rose from their pistol locks,
Their sword blades were still wet;
There were long red smears on their jerkins of buff,
As the table they overset.

Then into their cups they stirred the crusts,
And cursed old London town;
Then waved their swords, and drank with a stamp,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

The 'prentice dropped his can of beer,
The host turned pale as a clout;
The ruby nose of the toping squire
Grew white at the wild men's shout.
Then into their cups they flung the crusts,
And showed their teeth with a frown;
They flashed their swords as they gave the toast,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

The gambler dropped his dog's-eared cards,
The waiting-women screamed,
As the light of the fire, like stains of blood,
On the wild men's sabers gleamed.
Then into their cups they splashed the crusts,
And cursed the fool of a town,
And leaped on the table, and roared a toast,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

Till on a sudden fire-bells rang,
And the troopers sprang to horse;
The eldest muttered between his teeth,
Hot curses—deep and coarse.
In their stirrup cups they flung the crusts,
And cried as they spurred through the town,
With their keen swords drawn and their pistols cocked,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

Away they dashed through Temple Bar,
Their red cloaks flowing free,
Their scabbards clashed, each back-piece shone—
None liked to touch the three.
The silver cups that held the crusts
They flung to the startled town,
Shouting again, with a blaze of swords,
"God send this Crum-well-down!"

Walter Thornbury [1828–1876]

THE SALLY FROM COVENTRY

"Passion o' me!" cried Sir Richard Tyrone,
Spurning the sparks from the broad paving-stone,
"Better turn nurse and rock children to sleep,
Than yield to a rebel old Coventry Keep.
No, by my halidom, no one shall say,
Sir Richard Tyrone gave a city away!"

Passion o' me! how he pulled at his beard!
Fretting and chafing if any one sneered,
Clapping his breastplate and shaking his fist,
Giving his grizzly moustachios a twist,
Running the protocol through with his steel,
Grinding the letter to mud with his heel.

Then he roared out for a pottle of sack,
Clapped the old trumpeter twice on the back,
Leaped on his bay with a dash and a swing,
Bade all the bells in the city to ring,
And when the red flag from the steeple went down,
Open they flung every gate in the town.

To boot! and to horse! and away like a flood,
A fire in their eyes, and a sting in their blood;
Hurrying out with a flash and a flare,
A roar of hot guns, a loud trumpeter's blare,
And first, sitting proud as a king on his throne,
At the head of them all dashed Sir Richard Tyrone.

Crimson, and yellow, and purple, and dun,
Fluttering scarf, flowing bright in the sun,
Steel like a mirror on brow and on breast,
Scarlet and white on their feather and crest,
Banner that blew in a torrent of red,
Borne by Sir Richard, who rode at their head.

The "trumpet" went down—with a gash on his poll,
Struck by the parters of body and soul.
Forty saddles were empty; the horses ran red
With foul Puritan blood from the slashes that bled.

Curses and cries and a gnashing of teeth,
A grapple and stab on the slippery heath,
And Sir Richard leaped up on the fool that went down,
Proud as a conqueror donning his crown.

They broke them away through a flooding of fire,
Trampling the best blood of London to mire,
When suddenly rising a smoke and a blaze,
Made all "the dragon's sons" stare in amaze:
"O ho!" quoth Sir Richard, "my city grows hot:
I've left it rent-paid to the villainous Scot!"

Walter Thornbury [1828–1876]

SHAMEFUL DEATH

THERE were four of us about that bed;
The mass-priest knelt at the side,
I and his mother stood at the head,
Over his feet lay the bride;
We were quite sure that he was dead,
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,
He did not die in the day,
But in the morning twilight
His spirit passed away;
When neither sun nor moon was bright,
And the trees were merely gray.

He was not slain with the sword,
Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,
Yet spoke he never a word
After he came in here;
I cut away the cord
From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,
For the recreants came behind,
In a place where the hornbeams grow,
A path right hard to find,
For the hornbeam boughs swing so
That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,
When his arms were pinioned fast;
Sir John, the Knight of the Fen,
Sir Guy, of the Dolorous Blast,
With knights threescore and ten,
Hung brave Sir Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,
And my hair is all turned gray,
But I met Sir John of the Fen
Long ago on a summer day,
And am glad to think of the moment when
I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,
And my strength is mostly passed,
But long ago I and my men,
When the sky was overcast,
And the smoke rolled over the reeds of the fen,
Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, Knights, all of you,
I pray you, pray for Sir Hugh,
A good knight and a true,
And for Alice, his wife, pray too.

William Morris [1834–1896]

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

ARGUMENT

How a Ship, having passed the Line, was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

PART I

An ancient Mariner meeteth three gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropped he.

The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the Line.

"The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

"Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon——"
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship driven by a storm toward the South Pole.

"And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

"With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

"And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where no living thing was to be seen.

"And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men, nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

"The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

"At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

"It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And lo! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

"And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

"In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moonshine."

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner,
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?" "With my crossbow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II

"The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

"And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner for killing the bird of good luck.

"And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

"Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

"The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

"Down dropped the breeze, the sails dropped down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

"All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

"Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

"Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

"The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

"About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

"And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

"And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

The shipmates in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

"Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

"There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye!

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

"At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

"A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged, and tacked, and veered.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

"With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

"With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:

A flash of joy;

Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

"See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more
Hither to work us weal—
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

And horror follows. For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

"The western wave was all aflame,
The day was wellnigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad, bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

"And straight the Sun was flecked with bars
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!),
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

"Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

"Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that Woman's mate?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun. The Specter-Woman and her Death-mate, and no other, on board the skeleton ship. Like vessel, like crew!

"Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

"The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

"The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the specter-bark.

"We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
At the rising of the Moon,
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after another,

"One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His shipmates drop down dead.

"Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan),
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

"The souls did from their bodies fly—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by
Like the whizz of my crossbow!"

PART IV

The Wedding-Guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him.

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown."—
"Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropped not down.

"Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

"The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth that they should live, and so many be dead.

"I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

"I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gushed,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

"I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eyes of the dead men.

"The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

"An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

"The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide;
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

"Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmèd water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

"Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

"Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty and their happiness.

"O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,

He blesseth them in his heart.

And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The spell begins to break.

"The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

"O sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of the Holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

"The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

"My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

"I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

"And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

"The upper air burst into life;
And a hundred fire-flags sheen;
To and fro they were hurried about;
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

"And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

"The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side;
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on;

"The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

"They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

"The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up-blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

"The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said naught to me."

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"
"Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest:
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

But not by the souls of the men, nor by demons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

"For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

"Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

"Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

"And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the Heavens be mute.

"It ceased: yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

"Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

"Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The Spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The lonesome Spirit from the South Pole carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

"The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

"Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

"How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

"'Is it he?' quoth one, 'is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

"'The Spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

"The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

First Voice:

"'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the Ocean doing?'

Second Voice:

" 'Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

" 'If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

First Voice:

" 'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

Second Voice:

" 'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

" 'Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated."

"I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

"All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

"The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

"And now this spell was snapped: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

The curse is finally expiated.

"Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

"But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

"It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

"Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

"O dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

"We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

"The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

"The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies.

"And the bay was white with silent light
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colors came.

And appear in their own forms of light.

"A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were;
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
O Christ! what saw I there!

"Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but O, the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

"But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

"The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

"I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

The Hermit of the Wood

"This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

"He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

"The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

Approacheth the ship with wonder.

" 'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

" 'Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

" 'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared.'—'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

"The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

"Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

"Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

"Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

"I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

"I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see
The Devil knows how to row.'

"And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

"'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

"Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

"Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land;

"I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

"What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:

And hark, the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

"O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

"O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

"To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

"Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God, who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM

'Twas in the prime of summer time,
An evening calm and cool,
And four-and-twenty happy boys
Came bounding out of school:
There were some that ran and some that leaped,
Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds,
And souls untouched by sin;
To a level mead they came, and there
They drave the wickets in:
Pleasantly shone the setting sun
Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
And shouted as they ran,
Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can;
But the Usher sat remote from all,
A melancholy man!

His hat was off, his vest apart,
To catch heaven's blessed breeze;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease:
So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book between his knees.

Leaf after leaf, he turned it o'er,
Nor ever glanced aside,
For the peace of his soul he read that book
In the golden eventide:
Much study had made him very lean,
And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome,
With a fast and fervent grasp

He strained the dusky covers close,
And fixed the brazen hasp:
"Oh, God! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp!"

Then leaping on his feet upright,
Some moody turns he took,—
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
And past a shady nook,—
And, lo! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book.

"My gentle lad, what is't you read—
Romance or fairy fable?
Or is it some historic page,
Of kings and crowns unstable?"
The young boy gave an upward glance,—
"It is 'The Death of Abel.'"

The Usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain,
Six hasty strides beyond the place,
Then slowly back again;
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talked with him of Cain;

And, long since then, of bloody men,
Whose deeds tradition saves;
Of lonely folk cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves;
Of horrid stabs, in groves forlorn,
And murders done in caves;

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod;
Aye, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God!

He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain,
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain:
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain.

"And well," quoth he, "I know for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme,—
Woe, woe, unutterable woe,—
Who spill life's sacred stream!
For why? Methought, last night, I wrought
A murder, in a dream!

"One that had never done me wrong,
A feeble man and old:
I led him to a lonely field;
The moon shone clear and cold:
Now here, said I, this man shall die,
And I will have his gold!

"Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife,—
And then the deed was done;
There was nothing lying at my foot
But lifeless flesh and bone!

"Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill;
And yet I feared him all the more,
For lying there so still:
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill.

"And, lo! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame;
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame:
I took the dead man by his hand
And called upon his name!

"Oh, God! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain!
But when I touched the lifeless clay,
The blood gushed out amain!
For every clot, a burning spot
Was scorching in my brain!

"My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the Devil's price;
A dozen times I groaned: the dead
Had never groaned but twice!

"And now, from forth the frowning sky
From the Heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice—that awful voice
Of the blood-avenging sprite:
'Thou guilty man! take up thy dead
And hide it from my sight!'

"I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream,
A sluggish water, black as ink,
The depth was so extreme:—
My gentle Boy, remember this
Is nothing but a dream!

"Down went the corse with a hollow plunge
And vanished in the pool;
Anon I cleansed my bloody hands,
And washed my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young,
That evening in the school.

"Oh, Heaven! to think of their white souls
And mine so black and grim!
I could not share in childish prayer
Nor join in Evening Hymn:
Like a Devil of the Pit I seemed,
'Mid holy Cherubim!

"And peace went with them, one and all,
And each calm pillow spread:
But Guilt was my grim Chamberlain
That lighted me to bed,
And drew my midnight curtains round,
With fingers bloody red!

"All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep,
My fevered eyes I dared not close,
But stared aghast at Sleep:
For Sin had rendered unto her
The keys of hell to keep.

"All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime,
With one besetting horrid hint,
That racked me all the time;
A mighty yearning, like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime;

"One stern tyrannic thought, that made
All other thoughts its slave:
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave,
Still urging me to go and see
The Dead Man in his grave!

"Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursèd pool
With a wild misgiving eye:
And I saw the Dead in the river bed,
For the faithless stream was dry!

"Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dew-drop from its wing;
But I never marked its morning flight,
I never heard it sing,
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

"With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran;
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began:
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
I hid the murdered man.

"And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was otherwhere;
As soon as the mid-day task was done,
In secret I was there;
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare!

"Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep:
Or land or sea, though it should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"So wills the fierce avenging Sprite,
Till blood for blood atones!
Aye, though he's buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh,—
The world shall see his bones!

"Oh, God! that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake!
Again—again, with dizzy brain,
The human life I take;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmer's at the stake.

"And still no peace for the restless clay
Will wave or mold allow;
The horrid thing pursues my soul,—
It stands before me now!"
The fearful Boy looked up, and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist;
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL

I

He did not wear his scarlet coat,
For blood and wine are red,
And blood and wine were on his hands
When they found him with the dead,
The poor dead woman whom he loved,
And murdered in her bed.

He walked amongst the Trial Men
In a suit of shabby gray;
A cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay;
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every drifting cloud that went
With sails of silver by.

I walked, with other souls in pain,
Within another ring,
And was wondering if the man had done
A great or little thing,
When a voice behind me whispered low,
"*That fellow's got to swing.*"

Dear Christ! the very prison walls
Suddenly seemed to reel,
And the sky above my head became
Like a casque of scorching steel;
And, though I was a soul in pain,
My pain I could not feel.

I only knew what hunted thought
Quickened his step, and why
He looked upon the garish day
With such a wistful eye;
The man had killed the thing he loved,
And so he had to die.

Yet each man kills the thing he loves,
By each let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!

Some kill their love when they are young,
And some when they are old;
Some strangle with the hands of Lust,
Some with the hands of Gold:
The kindest use a knife, because
The dead so soon grow cold.

Some love too little, some too long,
Some sell, and others buy;
Some do the deed with many tears,
And some without a sigh:
For each man kills the thing he loves,
Yet each man does not die.

He does not die a death of shame
On a day of dark disgrace,
Nor have a noose about his neck,
Nor a cloth upon his face,
Nor drop feet foremost through the floor
Into an empty space.

He does not sit with silent men
  Who watch him night and day;
Who watch him when he tries to weep,
  And when he tries to pray;
Who watch him lest himself should rob
  The prison of its prey.

He does not wake at dawn to see
  Dread figures throng his room,
The shivering Chaplain robed in white,
  The Sheriff stern with gloom,
And the Governor all in shiny black,
  With the yellow face of Doom.

He does not rise in piteous haste
  To put on convict-clothes,
While some coarse-mouthed Doctor gloats, and notes
  Each new and nerve-twitched pose,
Fingering a watch whose little ticks
  Are like horrible hammer-blows.

He does not know that sickening thirst
  That sands one's throat, before
The hangman with his gardener's gloves
  Slips through the padded door,
And binds one with three leathern thongs,
  That the throat may thirst no more.

He does not bend his head to hear
  The Burial Office read,
Nor, while the terror of his soul
  Tells him he is not dead,
Cross his own coffin, as he moves
  Into the hideous shed.

He does not stare upon the air
  Through a little roof of glass:
He does not pray with lips of clay
  For his agony to pass;
Nor feel upon his shuddering cheek
  That kiss of Caiaphas.

II

Six weeks our guardsman walked the yard,
In the suit of shabby gray:
His cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay,
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every wandering cloud that trailed
Its raveled fleeces by.

He did not wring his hands, as do
Those witless men who dare
To try to rear the changeling Hope
In the cave of black Despair:
He only looked upon the sun,
And drank the morning air.

He did not wring his hands nor weep,
Nor did he peek or pine,
But he drank the air as though it held
Some healthful anodyne;
With open mouth he drank the sun
As though it had been wine!

And I and all the souls in pain,
Who tramped the other ring,
Forgot if we ourselves had done
A great or little thing,
And watched with gaze of dull amaze
The man who had to swing.

And strange it was to see him pass
With a step so light and gay,
And strange it was to see him look
So wistfully at the day,
And strange it was to think that he
Had such a debt to pay.

For oak and elm have pleasant leaves
That in the spring-time shoot:
But grim to see is the gallows-tree,
With its adder-bitten root,
And, green or dry, a man must die
Before it bears its fruit!

The loftiest place is that seat of grace
For which all wordlings try:
But who would stand in hempen band
Upon a scaffold high,
And through a murderer's collar take
His last look at the sky?

It is sweet to dance to violins
When Love and Life are fair:
To dance to flutes, to dance to lutes
Is delicate and rare:
But it is not sweet with nimble feet
To dance upon the air!

So with curious eyes and sick surmise
We watched him day by day,
And wondered if each one of us
Would end the self-same way,
For none can tell to what red Hell
His sightless soul may stray.

At last the dead men walked no more
Amongst the Trial Men,
And I knew that he was standing up
In the black dock's dreadful pen,
And that never would I see his face
In God's sweet world again.

Like two doomed ships that pass in storm,
We had crossed each other's way:
But we made no sign, we said no word,
We had no word to say;
For we did not meet in the holy night,
But in the shameful day.

A prison wall was round us both,
Two outcast men we were:
The world had thrust us from its heart,
And God from out his care:
And the iron gin that waits for Sin
Had caught us in its snare.

III

In Debtor's Yard the stones are hard,
And the dripping wall is high,
So it was there he took the air
Beneath the leaden sky,
And by each side a Warder walked,
For fear the man might die.

Or else he sat with those who watched
His anguish night and day;
Who watched him when he rose to weep,
And when he crouched to pray;
Who watched him lest himself should rob
Their scaffold of its prey.

The Governor was strong upon
The Regulations Act:
The Doctor said that Death was but
A scientific fact:
And twice a day the Chaplain called,
And left a little tract.

And twice a day he smoked his pipe,
And drank his quart of beer:
His soul was resolute, and held
No hiding-place for fear;
He often said that he was glad
The hangman's hands were near.

But why he said so strange a thing
No Warder dared to ask:
For he to whom a watcher's doom
Is given as his task,
Must set a lock upon his lips,
And make his face a mask.

Or else he might be moved, and try
To comfort or console:
And what should Human Pity do
Pent up in Murderers' Hole?
What word of grace in such a place
Could help a brother's soul?

With slouch and swing around the ring
We trod the Fools' Parade!
We did not care: we knew we were
The Devil's Own Brigade:
And shaven head and feet of lead
Make a merry masquerade.

We tore the tarry rope to shreds
With blunt and bleeding nails;
We rubbed the doors, and scrubbed the floors,
And cleaned the shining rails:
And, rank by rank, we soaped the plank,
And clattered with the pails.

We sewed the sacks, we broke the stones,
We turned the dusty drill:
We banged the tins, and bawled the hymns,
And sweated on the mill:
But in the heart of every man
Terror was lying still.

So still it lay that every day
Crawled like a weed-clogged wave:
And we forgot the bitter lot
That waits for fool and knave,
Till once, as we tramped in from work,
We passed an open grave.

With yawning mouth the yellow hole
Gaped for a living thing;
The very mud cried out for blood
To the thirsty asphalt ring:
And we knew that ere one dawn grew fair,
Some prisoner had to swing.

Right in we went, with soul intent
On Death and Dread and Doom:
The hangman, with his little bag,
Went shuffling through the gloom:
And each man trembled as he crept
Into his numbered tomb.

That night the empty corridors
Were full of forms of Fear,
And up and down the iron town
Stole feet we could not hear,
And through the bars that hide the stars
White faces seemed to peer.

He lay as one who lies and dreams
In a pleasant meadow-land,
The watchers watched him as he slept,
And could not understand
How one could sleep so sweet a sleep
With a hangman close at hand.

But there is no sleep when men must weep
Who never yet have wept:
So we—the fool, the fraud, the knave—
That endless vigil kept,
And through each brain on hands of pain
Another's terror crept.

Alas! it is a fearful thing
To feel another's guilt!
For, right within, the sword of Sin
Pierced to its poisoned hilt,
And as molten lead were the tears we shed
For the blood we had not spilt.

The Warders with their shoes of felt
Crept by each padlocked door,
And peeped and saw, with eyes of awe,
Gray figures on the floor,
And wondered why men knelt to pray
Who never prayed before.

All through the night we knelt and prayed,
Mad mourners of a corse!
The troubled plumes of midnight were
The plumes upon a hearse:
And bitter wine upon a sponge
Was the savor of Remorse.

The gray cock crew, the red cock crew,
But never came the day;
And crooked shapes of terror crouched
In the corners where we lay:
And each evil sprite that walks by night
Before us seemed to play.

They glided past, they glided fast,
Like travelers through a mist:
They mocked the moon in a rigadoon
Of delicate turn and twist,
And with formal pace and loathsome grace
The phantoms kept their tryst.

With mop and mow, we saw them go,
Slim shadows hand and hand:
About, about, in ghostly rout
They trod a saraband:
And the damned grotesques made arabesques,
Like the wind upon the sand!

With the pirouettes of marionettes
They tripped on pointed tread:
But with flutes of Fear they filled the ear,
As their grisly masque they led,
And loud they sang, and long they sang,
For they sang to wake the dead.

"*Oho!*" they cried, "*The world is wide,*
But fettered limbs go lame!
And once, or twice, to throw the dice
Is a gentlemanly game,
But he does not win who plays with Sin
In the Secret House of Shame."

No things of air these antics were,
That frolicked with such glee:
To men whose lives were held in gyves,
And whose feet might not go free,
Ah! wounds of Christ! they were living things,
Most terrible to see.

Around, around, they waltzed and wound;
Some wheeled in smirking pairs;
With the mincing step of a demirep
Some sidled up the stairs:
And with subtle sneer, and fawning leer,
Each helped us at our prayers.

The morning wind began to moan,
But still the night went on;
Through its giant loom the web of gloom
Crept till each thread was spun:
And, as we prayed, we grew afraid
Of the Justice of the Sun.

The moaning wind went wandering round
The weeping prison-wall:
Till like a wheel of turning steel
We felt the minutes crawl:
O moaning wind! what had we done
To have such a seneschal?

At last I saw the shadowed bars,
Like a lattice wrought in lead,
Move right across the whitewashed wall
That faced my three-planked bed,
And I knew that somewhere in the world
God's dreadful dawn was red.

At six o'clock we cleaned our cells,
At seven all was still,
But the sough and swing of a mighty wing
The prison seemed to fill,
For the Lord of Death with icy breath,
Had entered in to kill.

He did not pass in purple pomp,
  Nor ride a moon-white steed.
Three yards of cord and a sliding board
  Are all the gallows' need:
So with rope of shame the Herald came
  To do the secret deed.

We were as men who through a fen
  Of filthy darkness grope:
We did not dare to breathe a prayer,
  Or to give our anguish scope:
Something was dead in each of us,
  And what was dead was Hope.

For Man's grim Justice goes its way,
  And will not swerve aside:
It slays the weak, it slays the strong,
  It has a deadly stride:
With iron heel it slays the strong,
  The monstrous parricide!

We waited for the stroke of eight:
  Each tongue was thick with thirst:
For the stroke of eight is the stroke of Fate
  That makes a man accursed,
And Fate will use a running noose
  For the best man and the worst.

We had no other thing to do,
  Save to wait for the sign to come:
So, like things of stone in a valley lone,
  Quiet we sat and dumb:
But each man's heart beat thick and quick,
  Like a madman on a drum!

With sudden shock, the prison-clock
  Smote on the shivering air,
And from all the jail rose up a wail
  Of impotent despair,
Like the sound that frightened marshes hear
  From some leper in his lair.

And as one sees most dreadful things
In the crystal of a dream,
We saw the greasy hempen rope
Hooked to the blackened beam,
And heard the prayer the hangman's snare
Strangled into a scream.

And all the woe that moved him so
That he gave that bitter cry,
And the wild regrets, and the bloody sweats,
None knew so well as I:
For he who lives more lives than one
More deaths than one must die.

IV

There is no chapel on the day
On which they hang a man:
The Chaplain's heart is far too sick,
Or his face is far too wan,
Or there is that written in his eyes
Which none should look upon.

So they kept us close till nigh on noon,
And then they rang the bell,
And the Warders with their jingling keys
Opened each listening cell,
And down the iron stair we tramped,
Each from his separate Hell.

Out into God's sweet air we went,
But not in wonted way,
For this man's face was white with fear,
And that man's face was gray,
And I never saw sad men who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw sad men who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
We prisoners call the sky,
And at every careless cloud that passed
In happy freedom by.

But there were those amongst us all
  Who walked with downcast head,
And knew that, had each got his due,
  They should have died instead:
He had but killed a thing that lived,
  Whilst they had killed the dead.

For he who sins a second time
  Wakes a dead soul to pain,
And draws it from its spotted shroud,
  And makes it bleed again,
And makes it bleed great gouts of blood,
  And makes it bleed in vain!

Like ape or clown, in monstrous garb
  With crooked arrows starred,
Silently we went round and round
  The slippery asphalt yard;
Silently we went round and round,
  And no man spoke a word.

Silently we went round and round,
  And through each hollow mind
The Memory of dreadful things
  Rushed like a dreadful wind,
And Honor stalked before each man,
  And Terror crept behind.

The Warders strutted up and down,
  And kept their herd of brutes,
Their uniforms were spick and span,
  They wore their Sunday suits,
But we knew the work they had been at,
  By the quicklime on their boots.

For where a grave had opened wide,
  There was no grave at all:
Only a stretch of mud and sand
  By the hideous prison-wall,
And a little heap of burning lime,
  That the man should have his pall.

For he has a pall, this wretched man,
Such as few men can claim:
Deep down below a prison-yard,
Naked for greater shame,
He lies, with fetters on each foot,
Wrapped in a sheet of flame!

And all the while the burning lime
Eats flesh and bone away,
It eats the brittle bone by night,
And the soft flesh by day,
It eats the flesh and bone by turns,
But it eats the heart alway.

For three long years they will not sow
Or root or seedling there:
For three long years the unblessed spot
Will sterile be and bare,
And look upon the wondering sky
With unreproachful stare.

They think a murderer's heart would taint
Each simple seed they sow.
It is not true! God's kindly earth
Is kindlier than men know,
And the red rose would but blow more red,
The white rose whiter blow.

Out of his mouth a red, red rose!
Out of his heart a white!
For who can say by what strange way
Christ brings his will to light,
Since the barren staff the pilgrim bore
Bloomed in the great Pope's sight?

But neither milk-white rose nor red
May bloom in prison air;
The shard, the pebble, and the flint,
Are what they give us there:
For flowers have been known to heal
A common man's despair.

So never will wine-red rose or white
  Petal by petal, fall
On that stretch of mud and sand that lies
  By that hideous prison-wall,
To tell the men who tramp the yard
  That God's Son died for all.

Yet though the hideous prison-wall
  Still hems him round and round,
And a spirit may not walk by night
  That is with fetters bound,
And a spirit may but weep that lies
  In such unholy ground,

He is at peace—this wretched man—
  At peace, or will be soon:
There is no thing to make him mad,
  Nor does Terror walk at noon,
For the lampless Earth in which he lies
  Has neither Sun nor Moon.

They hanged him as a beast is hanged:
  They did not even toll
A requiem that might have brought
  Rest to his startled soul,
But hurriedly they took him out,
  And hid him in a hole.

They stripped him of his canvas clothes,
  And gave him to the flies:
They mocked the swollen purple throat,
  And the stark and staring eyes:
And with laughter loud they heaped the shroud
  In which their convict lies.

The Chaplain would not kneel to pray
  By his dishonored grave:
Nor mark it with that blessed Cross
  That Christ for sinners gave,
Because the man was one of those
  Whom Christ came down to save.

Yet all is well; he has but passed
To Life's appointed bourne:
And alien tears will fill for him
Pity's long-broken urn,
For his mourners will be outcast men,
And outcasts always mourn.

V

I know not whether Laws be right,
Or whether Laws be wrong;
All that we know who lie in jail
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long.

But this I know, that every Law
That men have made for Man,
Since first Man took his brother's life,
And this sad world began,
But straws the wheat and saves the chaff
With a most evil fan.

This too I know—and wise it were
If each could know the same—
That every prison that men build
Is built with bricks of shame,
And bound with bars lest Christ should see
How men their brothers maim.

With bars they blur the gracious moon,
And blind the goodly sun:
And they do well to hide their Hell,
For in it things are done
That Son of God nor son of Man
Ever should look upon!

The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison-air:
It is only what is good in Man
That wastes and withers there:
Pale Anguish keeps the heavy gate,
And the Warder is Despair.

For they starve the little frightened child,
Till it weeps both night and day:
And they scourge the weak, and flog the fool,
And gibe the old and gray,
And some grow mad, and all grow bad,
And none a word may say.

Each narrow cell in which we dwell
Is a foul and dark latrine,
And the fetid breath of living Death
Chokes up each grated screen,
And all, but Lust, is turned to dust
In Humanity's machine.

The brackish water that we drink
Creeps with a loathsome slime,
And the bitter bread they weigh in scales
Is full of chalk and lime,
And Sleep will not lie down, but walks
Wild-eyed, and cries to Time.

But though lean Hunger and green Thirst
Like asp with adder fight,
We have little care of prison fare,
For what chills and kills outright
Is that every stone one lifts by day
Becomes one's heart by night.

With midnight always in one's heart,
And twilight in one's cell,
We turn the crank, or tear the rope,
Each in his separate Hell,
And the silence is more awful far
Than the sound of a brazen bell.

And never a human voice comes near
To speak a gentle word:
And the eye that watches through the door
Is pitiless and hard:
And by all forgot, we rot and rot,
With soul and body marred.

And thus we rust Life's iron chain,
Degraded and alone:
And some men curse, and some men weep,
And some men make no moan:
But God's eternal Laws are kind
And break the heart of stone.

And every human heart that breaks,
In prison-cell or yard,
Is as that broken box that gave
Its treasure to the Lord,
And filled the unclean leper's house
With the scent of costliest nard.

Ah! happy they whose hearts can break
And peace of pardon win!
How else may man make straight his plan
And cleanse his soul from Sin?
How else but through a broken heart
May Lord Christ enter in?

And he of the swollen purple throat,
And the stark and staring eyes,
Waits for the holy hands that took
The Thief to Paradise;
And a broken and a contrite heart
The Lord will not despise.

The man in red who reads the Law
Gave him three weeks of life,
Three little weeks in which to heal
His soul of his soul's strife,
And cleanse from every blot of blood
The hand that held the knife.

And with tears of blood he cleansed the hand,
The hand that held the steel:
For only blood can wipe out blood,
And only tears can heal:
And the crimson stain that was of Cain
Became Christ's snow-white seal.

VI

In Reading gaol by Reading town
There is a pit of shame,
And in it lies a wretched man
Eaten by teeth of flame,
In a burning winding-sheet he lies,
And his grave has got no name.

And there, till Christ call forth the dead,
In silence let him lie:
No need to waste the foolish tear,
Or heave the windy sigh:
The man had killed the thing he loved,
And so he had to die.

And all men kill the thing they love,
By all let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!

Oscar Wilde [1856–1900]

THE BALLAD OF JUDAS ISCARIOT

'Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
Lay in the Field of Blood;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Beside the body stood.

Black was the earth by night,
And black was the sky;
Black, black were the broken clouds,
Though the red Moon went by.

'Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
Strangled and dead lay there;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Looked on it in despair.

The breath of the World came and went
Like a sick man's in rest;
Drop by drop on the World's eyes
The dews fell cool and blest.

Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did make a gentle moan—
"I will bury underneath the ground
My flesh and blood and bone.

"I will bury deep beneath the soil,
Lest mortals look thereon,
And when the wolf and raven come
The body will be gone!

"The stones of the field are sharp as steel,
And hard and bold, God wot;
And I must bear my body hence
Until I find a spot!"

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
So grim, and gaunt, and gray,
Raised the body of Judas Iscariot,
And carried it away.

And as he bare it from the field
Its touch was cold as ice,
And the ivory teeth within the jaw
Rattled aloud, like dice.

As the soul of Judas Iscariot
Carried its load with pain,
The Eye of Heaven, like a lantern's eye,
Opened and shut again.

Half he walked, and half he seemed
Lifted on the cold wind;
He did not turn, for chilly hands
Were pushing from behind.

The first place that he came unto
It was the open wold,
And underneath were prickly whins,
And a wind that blew so cold.

The next place that he came unto
It was a stagnant pool,
And when he threw the body in
It floated light as wool.

He drew the body on his back,
And it was dripping chill,
And the next place that he came unto
Was a Cross upon a hill.

A Cross upon the windy hill,
And a Cross on either side,
Three skeletons that swing thereon,
Who had been crucified.

And on the middle cross-bar sat
A white Dove slumbering;
Dim it sat in the dim light,
With its head beneath its wing.

And underneath the middle Cross
A grave yawned wide and vast,
But the soul of Judas Iscariot
Shivered, and glided past.

The fourth place that he came unto
It was the Brig of Dread,
And the great torrents rushing down
Were deep, and swift, and red.

He dared not fling the body in
For fear of faces dim,
And arms were waved in the wild water
To thrust it back to him.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Turned from the Brig of Dread,
And the dreadful foam of the wild water
  Had splashed the body red.

For days and nights he wandered on
  Upon an open plain,
And the days went by like blinding mist,
  And the nights like rushing rain.

For days and nights he wandered on,
  All through the Wood of Woe;
And the nights went by like moaning wind,
  And the days like drifting snow.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Came with a weary face—
Alone, alone, and all alone,
  Alone in a lonely place!

He wandered east, he wandered west,
  And heard no human sound;
For months and years, in grief and tears,
  He wandered round and round.

For months and years, in grief and tears,
  He walked the silent night;
Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Perceived a far-off light.

A far-off light across the waste,
  As dim as dim might be,
That came and went like a lighthouse gleam
  On a black night at sea.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Crawled to the distant gleam;
And the rain came down, and the rain was blown
  Against him with a scream.

For days and nights he wandered on,
  Pushed on by hands behind;
And the days went by like black, black rain,
  And the nights like rushing wind.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot,
  Strange, and sad, and tall,
Stood all alone at dead of night
  Before a lighted hall.

And the wold was white with snow,
  And his foot-marks black and damp,
And the ghost of the silver Moon arose,
  Holding her yellow lamp.

And the icicles were on the eaves,
  And the walls were deep with white,
And the shadows of the guests within
  Passed on the window light.

The shadows of the wedding guests
  Did strangers come and go,
And the body of Judas Iscariot
  Lay stretched along the snow.

The body of Judas Iscariot
  Lay stretched along the snow;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Ran swiftly to and fro.

To and fro, and up and down,
  He ran so swiftly there,
As round and round the frozen Pole
  Glideth the lean white bear.

'Twas the Bridegroom sat at the table-head,
  And the lights burned bright and clear—
"Oh, who is that?" the Bridegroom said,
  "Whose weary feet I hear?"

'Twas one looked from the lighted hall,
And answered soft and slow,
"It is a wolf runs up and down
With a black track in the snow."

The Bridegroom in his robe of white
Sat at the table-head—
"Oh, who is that who moans without?"
The blessed Bridegroom said.

'Twas one looked from the lighted hall,
And answered fierce and low,
"'Tis the soul of Judas Iscariot
Gliding to and fro."

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did hush itself and stand,
And saw the Bridegroom at the door
With a light in his hand.

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he was clad in white,
And far within the Lord's Supper
Was spread so long and bright.

The Bridegroom shaded his eyes and looked,
And his face was bright to see—
"What dost thou here at the Lord's Supper
With thy body's sins?" said he.

'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stood black, and sad, and bare—
"I have wandered many nights and days;
There is no light elsewhere."

'Twas the wedding guests cried out within,
And their eyes were fierce and bright—
"Scourge the soul of Judas Iscariot
Away into the night!"

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he waved hands still and slow,
And the third time that he waved his hands
The air was thick with snow.

And of every flake of falling snow,
Before it touched the ground,
There came a dove, and a thousand doves
Made sweet sound.

'Twas the body of Judas Iscariot
Floated away full fleet,
And the wings of the doves that bare it off
Were like its winding-sheet.

'Twas the Bridegroom stood at the open door,
And beckoned, smiling sweet;
'Twas the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stole in, and fell at his feet.

"The Holy Supper is spread within,
And the many candles shine,
And I have waited long for thee
Before I poured the wine!"

The supper wine is poured at last,
The lights burn bright and fair,
Iscariot washes the Bridegroom's feet,
And dries them with his hair.

Robert Buchanan [1841–1901]

HE FELL AMONG THIEVES

"Ye have robbed," said he, "ye have slaughtered and made an end,
Take your ill-got plunder, and bury the dead:
What will ye more of your guest and sometime friend?"
"Blood for our blood," they said.

He laughed: "If one may settle the score for five,
I am ready; but let the reckoning stand till day:
I have loved the sunlight as dearly as any alive."
"You shall die at dawn," said they.

He flung his empty revolver down the slope,
He climbed alone to the Eastward edge of the trees;
All night long in a dream untroubled of hope
He brooded, clasping his knees.

He did not hear the monotonous roar that fills
The ravine where the Yassîn river sullenly flows;
He did not see the starlight on the Laspur hills,
Or the far Afghan snows.

He saw the April noon on his books aglow,
The wistaria trailing in at the window wide;
He heard his father's voice from the terrace below
Calling him down to ride.

He saw the gray little church across the park,
The mounds that hid the loved and honored dead;
The Norman arch, the chancel softly dark,
The brasses black and red.

He saw the School Close, sunny and green,
The runner beside him, the stand by the parapet wall,
The distant tape, and the crowd roaring between,
His own name over all.

He saw the dark wainscot and timbered roof,
The long tables, and the faces merry and keen;
The College Eight and their trainer dining aloof,
The Dons on the daïs serene.

He watched the liner's stem plowing the foam,
He felt her trembling speed and the thrash of her screw;
He heard the passengers' voices talking of home,
He saw the flag she flew.

And now it was dawn. He rose strong on his feet,
  And strode to his ruined camp below the wood;
He drank the breath of the morning cool and sweet;
  His murderers round him stood.

Light on the Laspur hills was broadening fast,
  The blood-red snow-peaks chilled to a dazzling white;
He turned, and saw the golden circle at last,
  Cut by the Eastern height.

"O glorious Life, Who dwellest in earth and sun,
  I have lived, I praise and adore Thee."
                A sword swept.
Over the pass the voices one by one
  Faded, and the hill slept.

Henry Newbolt [1862–

THE LAST HUNT

Oh, it's twenty gallant gentlemen
  Rode out to hunt the deer,
With mirth upon the silver horn
  And gleam upon the spear;
They galloped through the meadow-grass,
  They sought the forest's gloom,
And loudest rang Sir Morven's laugh,
  And lightest tossed his plume.
    There's no delight by day or night
      Like hunting in the morn;
    So busk ye, gallant gentlemen,
      And sound the silver horn!

They rode into the dark greenwood
  By ferny dell and glade,—
And now and then upon their cloaks
  The yellow sunshine played;
They heard the timid forest-birds
  Break off amid their glee,
They saw the startled leveret,
  But not a stag did see.

Wind, wind the horn, on summer morn!
Though ne'er a buck appear,
There's health for horse and gentleman
A-hunting of the deer!

They panted up Ben Lomond's side
Where thick the leafage grew,
And when they bent the branches back
The sunbeams darted through;
Sir Morven in his saddle turned,
And to his comrades spake,
"Now quiet! we shall find a stag
Beside the Brownies' Lake."
Then sound not on the bugle-horn,
Bend bush and do not break,
Lest ye should start the timid hart
A-drinking at the lake.

Now they have reached the Brownies' Lake,—
A blue eye in the wood,—
And on its brink a moment's space
All motionless they stood:
When, suddenly, the silence broke
With fifty bowstrings' twang,
And hurtling through the drowsy air
Full fifty arrows sang.
Ah, better for those gentlemen,
Than horn and slender spear,
Were morion and buckler true,
A-hunting of the deer.

Not one of that brave company
Shall hunt the deer again;
Some fell beside the Brownies' Pool,
Some dropped in dell or glen;
An arrow pierced Sir Morven's breast,
His horse plunged in the lake,
And swimming to the farther bank
He left a bloody wake.

Ah, what avails the silver horn,
And what the slender spear?
There's other quarry in the wood
Beside the fallow deer!

O'er ridge and hollow sped the horse
Besprent with blood and foam,
Nor slackened pace until at eve
He brought his master home.
How tenderly the Lady Ruth
The cruel dart withdrew!
"False Tirrell shot the bolt," she said,
"That my Sir Morven slew!"
Deep in the forest lurks the foe,
While gayly shines the morn:
Hang up the broken spear, and blow
A dirge upon the horn.

William Roscoe Thayer [1859-

ANDRÉ'S RIDE

When André rode to Pont-du-lac,
With all his raiders at his back,
Mon Dieu! the tumult in the town!
Scarce clanged the great portcullis down
Ere in the sunshine gleamed his spears,
And up marched all his musketeers,
And far and fast in haste's array
Sped men to fight and priests to pray:
In every street a barricade
Of aught that lay to hand was made;
From every house a man was told,
Nor quittance given to young or old:
Should youth be spared or age be slack
When André rode to Pont-du-lac?

When André rode to Pont-du-lac,
With all his ravening reiver-pack,
The mid lake was a frozen road
Unbending to the cannon's load;

No warmth the sun had as it shone;
The kine were stalled, the birds were gone;
Like wild things seemed the shapes of fur
With which was every street astir,
And over all the huddling crowd
The thick breath hung—a solid cloud,—
Roof, road, and river, all were white;
Men moved benumbed by day—by night
The boldest durst not bivouac,
When André rode to Pont-du-lac.

When André rode to Pont-du-lac,
We scarce could stem his swift attack;
A halt, a cheer, a bugle-call,—
Like wild-cats they were up the wall:
But still as each man won the town,
We tossed him from the ramparts down;
And when at last the stormers quailed,
And back the assailants shrank assailed,
Like wounded wasps that still could sting,
Or tigers that had missed their spring,
They would not fly, but turned at bay
And fought out all the dying day;—
Sweet saints! it was a curious track
That André left by Pont-du-lac.

When André rode to Pont-du-lac,
Said he, "A troop of girls could sack
This huckster town, that hugs its hoard
But wists not how to wield a sword."
It makes my blood warm now to know
How soon Sir Cockerel ceased to crow,
And how 'twas my sure dagger-point
In André's harness found a joint:
For I, who now am old, was young,
And strong the thews were, now unstrung,
And deadly though our danger then,
I would that day were back again;
Ay, would to God that day were back
When André rode to Pont-du-lac!

A. H. Beesly [18 –

THE BALLAD OF FATHER GILLIGAN

The old priest Peter Gilligan
Was weary night and day;
For half his flock were in their beds,
Or under green sods lay.

Once, while he nodded on a chair,
At the moth-hour of eve,
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.

"I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
For people die and die";
And after cried he, "God forgive!
My body spake, not I!"

He knelt, and leaning on the chair
He prayed and fell asleep;
And the moth-hour went from the fields,
And stars began to peep.

They slowly into millions grew,
And leaves shook in the wind;
And God covered the world with shade,
And whispered to mankind.

Upon the time of sparrow chirp
When the moths came once more,
The old priest Peter Gilligan
Stood upright on the floor.

"Mavrone, mavrone! the man has died,
While I slept on the chair";
He roused his horse out of his sleep,
And rode with little care.

He rode now as he never rode,
By rocky lane and fen;
The sick man's wife opened the door:
"Father! you come again!"

"And is the poor man dead?" he cried.
"He died an hour ago."
The old priest Peter Gilligan
In grief swayed to and fro.

"When you were gone, he turned and died
As merry as a bird."
The old priest Peter Gilligan
He knelt him at the word.

"He who hath made the night of stars
For souls, who tire and bleed,
Sent one of His great angels down
To help me in my need.

"He who is wrapped in purple robes,
With planets in His care,
Had pity on the least of things
Asleep upon a chair."

William Butler Yeats [1865–

HERVÉ RIEL

I

On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-two,
Did the English fight the French,—woe to France!
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to Saint Malo on the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

II

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in full chase;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship, Damfreville;
Close on him fled, great and small,
Twenty-two good ships in all;

And they signalled to the place
"Help the winners of a race!
Get us guidance, give us harbor, take us quick—or, quicker still,
Here's the English can and will!"

III

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on board;
"Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass?" laughed they:
"Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage scarred and scored,
Shall the *Formidable* here, with her twelve-and-eighty guns,
Think to make the river-mouth by the single narrow way,
Trust to enter where 'tis ticklish for a craft of twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside?
Now, 'tis slackest ebb of tide.
Reach the mooring? Rather say,
While rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay!"

IV

Then was called a council straight.
Brief and bitter the debate:
"Here's the English at our heels; would you have them take in tow
All that's left us of the fleet, linked together stern and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
Better run the ships aground!"
(Ended Damfreville his speech).
"Not a minute more to wait!
Let the Captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on the beach!
France must undergo her fate.

V

"Give the word!" But no such word
Was ever spoke or heard;
For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid all these

—A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate—first, second, third?
No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete!
But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for the fleet,
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisickese.

VI

And "What mockery or malice have we here?" cries Hervé Riel:
"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cowards, fools, or rogues?
Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the soundings, tell
On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river disembogues?
Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?
Morn and eve, night and day,
Have I piloted your bay,
Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.
Burn the fleet and ruin France? That were worse than fifty Hogues!
Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, believe me there's a way!
Only let me lead the line,
Have the biggest ship to steer,
Get this *Formidable* clear,
Make the others follow mine,
And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well,
Right to Solidor past Grève,
And there lay them safe and sound;
And if one ship misbehave,—
—Keel so much as grate the ground,
Why, I've nothing but my life,—here's my head!" cries Hervé Riel.

VII

Not a minute more to wait.
"Steer us in, then, small and great!
Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!" cried its chief.

Captains, give the sailor place!
He is Admiral, in brief.
Still the north-wind, by God's grace!
See the noble fellow's face
As the big ship, with a bound,
Clears the entry like a hound,
Keeps the passage, as its inch of way were the wide seas profound!
See, safe through shoal and rock,
How they follow in a flock,
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the ground,
Not a spar that comes to grief!
The peril, see, is past.
All are harbored to the last,
And just as Hervé Riel hollas "Anchor!"—sure as fate,
Up the English come,—too late!

VIII

So, the storm subsides to calm:
They see the green trees wave
On the heights o'erlooking Grève.
Hearts that bled are stanched with balm.
"Just our rapture to enhance,
Let the English rake the bay,
Gnash their teeth and glare askance
As they cannonade away!
'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the Rance!"
How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's countenance!
Out burst all with one accord,
"This is Paradise for Hell!
Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing!"
What a shout, and all one word,
"Hervé Riel!"
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

IX

Then said Damfreville, "My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips:
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have! or my name's not Damfreville."

X

Then a beam of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:
"Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is it but a run?—
Since 'tis ask and have, I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the Belle Aurore!"
That he asked and that he got,—nothing more.

XI

Name and deed alike are lost:
Not a pillar or a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;
Not a head in white and black
On a single fishing-smack,
In memory of the man but for whom had gone to wrack
All that France saved from the fight whence England bore the bell:

Go to Paris: rank on rank
  Search the heroes flung pell-mell
On the Louvre, face and flank!
  You shall look long enough ere you come to Hervé Riel.
So, for better and for worse,
Hervé Riel, accept my verse!
In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more
Save the squadron, honor France, love thy wife the Belle
    Aurore!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE HIGHWAYMAN

PART I

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding—
    Riding—riding—
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace
    at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the
    thigh!
And he rode with a jeweled twinkle,
    His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jeweled sky.

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-
    yard,
And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was
    locked and barred;
He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be wait-
    ing there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
    Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked
Where Tim the ostler listened; his face was white and peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like moldy hay,
But he loved the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's red-lipped daughter,
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say—

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize to-night,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning light;
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way."

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
(Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight!)
Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped away to the West.

PART II

He did not come in the dawning; he did not come at noon;
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon,
When the road was a gipsy's ribbon, looping the purple moor,
A red-coat troop came marching—
Marching—marching—
King George's men came marching, up to the old inn-door.

They said no word to the landlord, they drank his ale instead,
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot of her narrow bed;

Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their side!
There was death at every window;
And hell at one dark window;
For Bess could see, through her casement, the road that *he* would ride.

They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering jest;
They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel beneath her breast!
"Now keep good watch!" and they kissed her. She heard the dead man say—
Look for me by moonlight;
Watch for me by moonlight;
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way!

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held good!
She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat or blood!
They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours crawled by like years,
Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,
Cold, on the stroke of midnight,
The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least was hers!

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for the rest!
Up, she stood up to attention, with the barrel beneath her breast,
She would not risk their hearing: she would not strive again;
For the road lay bare in the moonlight;
Blank and bare in the moonlight;
And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed to her love's refrain.

Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs ringing clear;
Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot, in the distance? Were they deaf that they did not hear?

Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,
The highwayman came riding,
Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up, straight and still!

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot*, in the echoing night!
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,
Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him—with her death.

He turned; he spurred to the Westward; he did not know who stood
Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her own red blood!
Not till the dawn he heard it, his face grew gray to hear
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in the darkness there.

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,
With the white road smoking behind him, and his rapier brandished high!
Blood-red were his spurs in the golden noon; wine-red was his velvet coat,
When they shot him down on the highway,
Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of lace at his throat.

. . . . . .

And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,

When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding—
Riding—riding—
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.

Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-yard;
And he taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked and barred;
He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

Alfred Noyes [1880–

LANCELOT AND GUINEVERE

Sir Lancelot beside the mere
Rode at the golden close of day,
And the sad eyes of Guinevere
Went with him, with him, all the way.

The golden light to silver turned,
The mist came up out of the mere,
And steadily before him burned
The sombre gaze of Guinevere.

A dreadful chill about him crept,
The pleasant air to winter turned;
Like the wan eyes of one that wept
Far through the mist the faint stars burned.

All that had sinned in days gone by
Like pale companions round him crept—
All that beneath the morning sky
Had called the night to mind and wept.

But strangest showed his own offence
Of all the shadows creeping by;
The star of his magnificence
Fell from its station in the sky.

The lean wind robbed him of his pride;
Keen grew the sting of his offence;
And like a lamp within him died
The flame of his magnificence.

The drifting phantoms of the mere
Were death to pleasure and to pride;
The joy he had of Guinevere
Faded into the dark and died.

Oh loss of hope with loss of day
In mist and shadow of the mere!—
Where with him, with him, all the way,
Went the sad eyes of Guinevere.

Gerald Gould [18 –1916]

BALLAD OF THE GOODLY FERE

SIMON ZELOTES SPEAKETH IT SOMEWHILE AFTER THE CRUCIFIXION

Ha' we lost the goodliest fere o' all
For the priests and the gallows tree?
Aye lover he was of brawny men,
O' ships and the open sea.

When they came wi' a host to take Our Man
His smile was good to see,
"First let these go!" quo' our Goodly Fere,
"Or I'll see ye damned," says he.

Aye he sent us out through the crossed high spears
And the scorn of his laugh rang free,
"Why took ye not me when I walked about
Alone in the town?" says he.

Oh we drank his "Hale" in the good red wine
When we last made company.
No capon priest was the Goodly Fere,
But a man o' men was he.

I ha' seen him drive a hundred men
Wi' a bundle o' cords swung free.

That they took the high and holy house
For their pawn and treasury.

They'll no' get him a' in a book, I think,
Though they write it cunningly;
No mouse of the scrolls was the Goodly Fere
But aye loved the open sea.

If they think they ha' snared our Goodly Fere
They are fools to the last degree.
"I'll go the feast," quo' our Goodly Fere,
"Though I go the gallows tree.

"Ye ha' seen me heal the lame and blind,
And wake the dead," says he.
"Ye shall see one thing to master all:
'Tis how a brave man dies on the tree."

A son of God was the Goodly Fere
That bade his brothers be.
I ha' seen him cow a thousand men.
I have seen him upon the tree.

He cried no cry when they drave the nails
And the blood gushed hot and free.
The hounds of the crimson sky gave tongue,
But never a cry cried he.

I ha' seen him cow a thousand men
On the hills o' Galilee.
They whined as he walked out calm between,
Wi' his eyes like the gray o' the sea.

Like the sea that brooks no voyaging,
With the winds unleashed and free,
Like the sea that he cowed at Genseret
Wi' twey words spoke suddently.

A master of men was the Goodly Fere,
A mate of the wind and sea.
If they think they ha' slain our Goodly Fere
They are fools eternally.

I ha' seen him eat o' the honey-comb
Sin' they nailed him to the tree.

Ezra Pound [1885–

EVE

Eve, with her basket, was
Deep in the bells and grass,
Wading in bells and grass
Up to her knees,
Picking a dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Down in the bells and grass
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a
Corner the cobra lay,
Curled round a bough of the
Cinnamon tall. . . .
Now to get even and
Humble proud heaven and
Now was the moment or
Never at all.

"Eva!" Each syllable
Light as a flower fell,
"Eva!" he whispered the
Wondering maid,
Soft as a bubble sung
Out of a linnet's lung,
Soft and most silverly
"Eva!" he said.

Picture that orchard sprite,
Eve, with her body white,
Supple and smooth to her
Slim finger tips,
Wondering, listening,
Listening, wondering,
Eve with a berry
Half-way to her lips

Oh, had our simple Eve
Seen through the make-believe!
Had she but known the
Pretender he was!

Out of the boughs he came,
Whispering still her name,
Tumbling in twenty rings
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair
In the world anywhere,
Eve in the bells and grass
Kneeling, and he
Telling his story low. . . .
Singing birds saw them go
Down the dark path to
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh, what a clatter when
Titmouse and Jenny Wren
Saw him successful and
Taking his leave!
How the birds rated him,
How they all hated him!
How they all pitied
Poor motherless Eve!

Picture her crying
Outside in the lane,
Eve, with no dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Haunting the gate of the
Orchard in vain. . . .
Picture the lewd delight
Under the hill to-night—
"Eva!" the toast goes round,
"Eva!" again. *Ralph Hodgson* [18

"TIME, YOU OLD GIPSY MAN"

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,

Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing,
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may.
Time, you old gipsy,
Why hasten away?

Last week in Babylon,
Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush
Under Paul's dome;
Under Paul's dial
You tighten your rein—
Only a moment,
And off once again;
Off to some city
Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

Ralph Hodgson [18

CHANSON OF THE BELLS OF OSENEY

(THIRTEENTH CENTURY)

THE bells of Oseney
(*Hautclère, Doucement, Austyn*)
Chant sweetly every day,
And sadly, for our sin.
The bells of Oseney
(*John, Gabriel, Marie*)
Chant lowly,
Chant slowly,

Chant wistfully and holy
Of Christ, our Paladin.

Hautclère chants to the East
(His tongue is silvery high),
And Austyn like a priest
Sends West a weighty cry;
But Doucement set between
(Like an appeasive nun)
Chants cheerly,
Chants clearly,
As if Christ heard her nearly,
A plea to every sky.

A plea that John takes up
(He is the evangelist)
Till Gabriel's angel cup
Pours sound to sun or mist.
And last of all Marie
(The virgin-voice of God)
Peals purely,
Demurely,
And with a tone so surely
Divine that all must hear.

The bells of Oseney
(*Doucement, Austyn, Hautclêre*)
Pour ever day by day
Their peals on the rapt air;
And with their mellow mates
(*John, Gabriel, Marie*)
Tell slowly,
Tell lowly,
Of Christ the High and Holy,
Who makes the whole world fair.

Cale Young Rice, [1872–

THE WASTE PLACES

I

As a naked man I go
Through the desert sore afraid,

Holding up my head although
I'm as frightened as a maid.

The couching lion there I saw
From barren rocks lift up his eye;
He parts the cactus with his paw,
He stares at me as I go by.

He would follow on my trace
If he knew I was afraid,
If he knew my hardy face
Hides the terrors of a maid.

In the night he rises and
He stretches forth, he snuffs the air;
He roars and leaps along the sand,
He creeps and watches everywhere.

His burning eyes, his eyes of bale,
Through the darkness I can see;
He lashes fiercely with his tail,
He would love to spring at me.

I am the lion in his lair;
I am the fear that frightens me;
I am the desert of despair
And the nights of agony.

Night or day, whate'er befall,
I must walk that desert land,
Until I can dare to call
The lion out to lick my hand.

II

As a naked man I tread
The gloomy forests, ring on ring,
Where the sun that's overhead
Cannot see what's happening.

There I go: the deepest shade,
The deepest silence pressing me;
And my heart is more afraid
Than a maiden's heart would be.

Every day I have to run
Underneath the demon tree,
Where the ancient wrong is done
While I shrink in agony.

There the demon held a maid
In his arms, and as she, daft,
Screamed again in fear, he laid
His lips upon her lips and laughed.

And she beckoned me to run,
And she called for help to me,
And the ancient wrong was done
Which is done eternally.

I am the maiden and the fear;
I am the sunless shade, the strife;
I the demon lips, the sneer
Showing under every life.

I must tread that gloomy way
Until I shall dare to run
And bear the demon with his prey
From the forest to the sun.

James Stephens [18

THE WARRIOR MAID

They bade me to my spinning
Because I was a maid,
But down into the battle
I marshalled unafraid.

Brightly against the sunbeams
I shook the flaming lance.
Then out I swept to gather
With the red and royal dance.

The war was stately in me,
And in my heart was pride—
Fierce moods like neighing horses
Most terribly did ride.

Deep as a sea of scarlet
I saw the banners roll—
And then the great war terror
Laid hold upon my soul.

I laughed aloud to feel it
And royally did cheer:
I strode amid my tremblings
And did not fear to fear.

A warrior rode against me.
I laid him to his rest.
I could not stop to gather
The bright sword from his breast.

But on I drove in splendor,
I—that was but a maid—
With piercing calls of triumph
And I was not afraid.

But once, beneath my charging,
A face shone up below.
Dead in the bloody furrow,
A stranger white as snow!

The foe rode close behind me!
I lost the day for this—
I sprang from off my stallion
And left on him a kiss.

The sword that pierced his bosom
With jewelled splendor shone.
I snatched it from his bleeding,
And lo, it was my own.

The spears blazed thick around me
When I leaped forth again.
But jubilant they found me
To face a thousand men.

Bright-voiced was my laughter,
I—that was a maid!
And when the sharp gyve bound me,
Then was I not afraid.

Ah, hadst thou lived, my warrior,
Among the glorious ones,
I had borne thee savage daughters
And beautiful fierce sons.

Anna Hempstead Branch [18

THE SONGS OF GUTHRUM AND ALFRED

From "The Ballad of the White Horse"

He took the great harp wearily,
Even Guthrum of the Danes,
With wide eyes bright as the one long day
On the long polar plains.

For he sang of a wheel returning,
And the mire trod back to mire,
And how red hells and golden heavens
Are castles in the fire.

"It is good to sit where the good tales go,
To sit as our fathers sat;
But the hour shall come after his youth,
When a man shall know not tales but truth,
And his heart fail thereat.

"When he shall read what is written
So plain in clouds and clods,
When he shall hunger without hope
Even for evil gods.

"For this is a heavy matter,
And the truth is cold to tell;
Do we not know, have we not heard,
The soul is like a lost bird,
The body a broken shell?

"And a man hopes, being ignorant,
Till in white woods apart,
He finds at last the lost bird dead:
And a man may still lift up his head,
But never more his heart.

"There comes no noise but weeping
Out of the ancient sky,
And a tear is in the tiniest flower,
Because the gods must die.

"The little brooks are very sweet
Like a girl's ribbons curled,
But the great sea is bitter
That washes all the world.

"Strong are the Roman roses
Or the free flowers of the heath,
But every flower, like a flower of the sea,
Smelleth with the salt of death.

"And the heart of the locked battle
Is the happiest place for men;
When shrieking souls as shafts go by
And many have died and all may die;
Though this word be a mystery,
Death is most distant then.

"Death blazes bright above the cup,
And clear above the crown;
But in that dream of battle
We seem to tread it down.

"Wherefore I am a great King
And waste the world in vain,
Because man hath not other power,
Save that in dealing death for dower,
He may forget it for an hour
To remember it again."

And slowly his hands and thoughtfully
Fell from the lifted lyre,
And the owls moaned from the mighty trees
Till Alfred caught it to his knees
And smote it as in ire.

He heaved the head of the harp on high,
And swept the frame-work barred,

And his stroke had all the rattle and spark
Of horses flying hard.

"When God put man in a garden
He girt him with a sword,
And sent him forth a free knight,
That might betray his lord;

"He brake Him and betrayed Him
And fast and far he fell
Till you and I may stretch our necks
And burn our beards in hell.

"But though I lie on the floor of the world
With the seven sins for rods,
I would rather fall with Adam
Than rise with all your gods.

"What have the strong gods given?
Where have the glad gods led?
When Guthrum sits on a hero's throne
And asks if he is dead?

"Sirs, I am but a nameless man,
A rhymester without home,
Yet since I come to the Wessex clay
And carry the cross of Rome,

"I will even answer the mighty earl
That asked of Wessex men
Why they be meek and monkish folk,
And bow to the White Lord's broken yoke;
What sign have we save blood and smoke?
Here is my answer then.

"That on you is fallen the shadow,
And not upon the Name;
That though we scatter and though we fly
And you hang over us like the sky
You are more tired of victory,
Than we are tired of shame.

"That though you hunt the Christian man
Like a hare in the hill-side
The hare has still more heart to run
Than you have heart to ride.

"That though all lances split on you,
All swords be heaved in vain,
We have more lust again to lose
Than you to win again.

"Your lord sits high in the saddle,
A broken-hearted king,
But our King Alfred, lost from fame,
Fallen among foes or bonds of shame,
In I know not what mean trade or name,
Has still some song to sing;

"Our monks go robed in rain and snow
But the heart of flame therein,
But you go clothed in feasts and flames
When all is ice within;

"Nor shall all iron dooms make dumb
Men wondering ceaselessly,
If it be not better to fast for joy
Than feast for misery.

"Nor monkish order only
Slides down, as field to fen,
All things achieved and chosen pass
As the White Horse fades in the grass,
No work of Christian men,

"Ere the sad gods that made your gods
Saw their sad sunrise pass,
The White Horse of the White Horse Vale,
That you have left to darken and fail,
Was cut out of the grass.

"Therefore your end is on you,
Is on you and your kings,
Not for a fire in Ely fen,

Not that your gods are nine or ten,
But because it is only Christian men
Guard even heathen things,

"For our God hath blessed creation,
Calling it good. I know—
What spirit with whom you blindly band
Hath blessed destruction with this hand;
But by God's death the stars shall stand
And the small apples grow."

And the King, with harp on shoulder,
Stood up and ceased his song;
And the owls moaned from the mighty trees,
And the Danes laughed loud and long.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton [1874–

THE PAGEANT OF SEAMEN

The song of the sea-adventurers, that never were known to fame,
The roving, roistering mariners that builded our England's name:
Foolhardy, reckless, undaunted,
Death they courted and taunted:
In the jaws of hell their flag they flaunted, answering flame with flame.

An endless pageant of power and pride, they steer from the long-ago
From quays that moulder beneath the tide, from cities whose walls lie low:
Carrack and sloop and galley,
Out of the dark they rally,
As homing birds over hill and valley, back to the land they know.

The crews of the Bristol Guinea-men, that traded to Old Calabar,
Fading for years out of English ken in sweltering seas afar;
The Danes and the Dutch they raced there,

The Brandenburgers they chased there,
They bid the Portingale cargoes waste there, under an evil star.

Their ships came back from the Cameroons, ragged and patched and old,
With decks roof-thatched from the Accra noons—but down in their sultry hold,
Battened from wind and weather,
Were coral and ostrich feather,
Jasper and ivory heaped together, amber and dust of gold.

The Greenland skippers that speared the whale at the edge of the grinding floe,
Icicles fringing sheet and sail, and decks in a smother of snow:
Men of Clyde and of Humber,
Cold is their Arctic slumber,
But their deeds of daring that none may number shall live while the north winds blow.

The stately captains of barque and brig, in the days of the good Queen Anne;
Under each powdered periwig was the brain of a sea-bred man.
Was there work to be done? they did it:
Was there danger? they pressed amid it:
Wounded to death, with a smile they hid it, and perished as sailors can.

The filibusters of Tudor years, that held the ocean in fee,
The buccaneers and the privateers, the outlawed sons of the sea:
Terrible, swift, unsleeping,
Like bolts from the azure leaping,
Like birds of prey on their quarry sweeping, foraging far and free.

The pigtailed bo's'ns of Anson and Cook, and the seafaring men they led—
Who has counted in song or book the roll of those glorious dead?

On the desolate isles uncharted
Their valorous souls departed:
They fought—they fell—and in death, blithe-hearted, cheered as the foeman fled.

The men that talked with a Devon twang, as they hoisted the sails of Drake—
All through the West their rumor rang, the pride of the Dons to break,
Fierce to seize and to sunder
The golden argosies' plunder,
The New World's dread and the Old World's wonder, splendid for England's sake.

The coasting-craft and the fishing-craft, lugger and ketch and hoy,
With a duck-gun fore and a blunderbuss aft, served by a man and a boy;
Their tiny armaments flinging
On frigate and gun-boat—bringing
Prizes and prisoners home with singing, fired with a desperate joy.

Ruffed to the chin, or laced to the knee, or stripped to the waist for fight,
Herding the alien hordes of the sea to fields of defeat and flight,
Or, lit by the lightning's flashing,
Close-hauled through the hurricane thrashing,
With decks a-wash and with spars a-crashing, they swoop on the reeling sight.

The sea-dogs sturdy, the sea-hawks bold, that were never known to fame—
The grim adventurers, young and old, that builded our England's name—
Over the waters of dreaming,
Their bows are rocking and gleaming,
To the sun unsetting their flag is streaming, answering flame with flame.

May Byron [1861–

THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat:
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth!

KAMAL is out with twenty men to raise the Border-side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's pride:
He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far away.
Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of the Guides:
"Is there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal hides?"
Then up and spoke Mohammed Khan, the son of the Ressaldar:
"If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where his pickets are.
At dusk he harries the Abazai—at dawn he is into Bonair,
But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,
So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,
By the favor of God ye may cut him off ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai.
But if he be past the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn ye then,
For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown with Kamal's men.
There is rock to the left, and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,
And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a man is seen."
The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough dun was he,
With the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell and the head of a gallows-tree.

The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay to eat—
Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long at his meat.
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can fly,
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the Tongue of Jagai,
Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon her back,
And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling ball went wide.
"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said. "Show now if ye can ride."
It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown dust-devils go.
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare like a barren doe.
The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his head above,
But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars, as a maiden plays with a glove.
There was rock to the left and rock to the right, and low lean thorn between,
And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick though never a man was seen.
They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn,
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like a new-roused fawn.
The dun he fell at a water-course—in a woeful heap fell he,
And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—small room was there to strive,
"'Twas only by favor of mine," quoth he, "ye rode so long alive:
There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was not a clump of tree,
But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked on his knee.
If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast were feasting all in a row:

If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held it high,
The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till she could not fly."
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "Do good to bird and beast,
But count who come for the broken meats before thou makest a feast.
If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my bones away,
Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more than a thief could pay.
They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their men on the garnered grain.
The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when all the cattle are slain.
But if thou thinkest the price be fair,—thy brethren wait to sup,
The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—howl, dog, and call them up!
And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer and gear and stack,
Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight my own way back!"
Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set him upon his feet.
"No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when wolf and gray wolf meet.
May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed or breath;
What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at the dawn with Death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "I hold by the blood of my clan:
Take up the mare for my father's gift—by God, she has carried a man!"
The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and nuzzled against his breast;
"We be two strong men," said Kamal then, "but she loveth the younger best.
So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise-studded rein,
My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups twain."

The Colonel's son a pistol drew, and held it muzzle-end,
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he; "will ye take
the mate from a friend?"
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a limb for the risk
of a limb.
Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to him!"
With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a
mountain-crest—
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked like a
lance in rest.
"Now here is thy master," Kamal said, "who leads a troop
of the Guides,
And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder
rides.
Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board and bed,
Thy life is his—thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.
So thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes
are thine,
And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the
Border-line,
And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way to
power—
Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am hanged
in Peshawur."

They have looked each other between the eyes, and there
they found no fault,
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on
leavened bread and salt:
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on fire
and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and the Won-
drous Names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's boy the dun,
And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where there went
forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full twenty
swords flew clear—
There was not a man but carried his feud with the blood
of the mountaineer.

"Ha' done! ha' done!" said the Colonel's son. "Put up the steel at your sides!
Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—to-night 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from the ends of the earth! *Rudyard Kipling* [1865–

THE MAID

Thunder of riotous hoofs over the quaking sod;
Clash of reeking squadrons, steel-capped, iron-shod;
The White Maid and white horse, and the flapping banner of God.

Black hearts riding for money; red hearts riding for fame;
The Maid who rides for France and the King who rides for shame—
Gentlemen, fools, and a saint riding in Christ's high name!

"Dust to dust!" it is written. Wind-scattered are lance and bow.
Dust, the Cross of Saint George; dust, the banner of snow.
The bones of the King are crumbled, and rotted the shafts of the foe.

Forgotten, the young knight's valor; forgotten, the captain's skill;
Forgotten, the fear and the hate and the mailed hands raised to kill;
Forgotten, the shields that clashed and the arrows that cried so shrill.

Like a story from some old book, that battle of long ago:
Shadows, the poor French King and the might of his English foe;
Shadows, the charging nobles and the archers kneeling a-row—
But a flame in my heart and my eyes, the Maid with her banner of snow! *Theodore Roberts* [1877–

PART VI

POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION

THE NOBLE NATURE

From "An Ode to Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison"

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sear:
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night,—
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see,
And in short measures life may perfect be.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

SWEET AND SOUR

From "Amoretti"

SWEET is the rose, but grows upon a brier;
Sweet is the juniper, but sharp his bough;
Sweet is the eglantine, but pricketh near;
Sweet is the fir-bloom, but his branches rough;
Sweet is the cypress, but his rind is tough;
Sweet is the nut, but bitter is his pill;
Sweet is the broom-flower, but yet sour enough;
And sweet is moly, but his root is ill:
So every sweet with sour is tempered still,
That maketh it be coveted the more;
For easy things, that may be got at will,
Most sorts of men do set but little store.
Why then should I account of little pain,
That endless pleasure shall unto me gain?

Edmund Spenser [1552?–1599]

ON THE LIFE OF MAN

LIKE to the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are,
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew,
Or like a wind that chafes the flood,
Or bubbles which on water stood:
Even such is Man, whose borrowed light
Is straight called in and paid to night.
The wind blows out, the bubble dies,
The spring entombed in autumn lies;
The dew dries up, the star is shot,
The flight is past,—and man forgot.

Henry King [1592–1699]

ALL IS VANITY

WHETHER men do laugh or weep,
Whether they do wake or sleep,
Whether they die young or old,
Whether they feel heat or cold;
There is underneath the sun
Nothing in true earnest done.

All our pride is but a jest,
None are worst and none are best,
Grief and joy, and hope and fear
Play their pageants everywhere:
Vain Opinion all doth sway,
And the world is but a play.

Powers above in clouds do sit,
Mocking our poor apish wit,
That so lamely with such state
Their high glory imitate.
No ill can be felt but pain,
And that happy men disdain.

Philip Rosseter [1575?–1623]

TIMES GO BY TURNS

THE loppèd tree in time may grow again,
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower;
The sorriest wight may find release of pain,
The driest soil suck in some moistening shower;
Times go by turns, and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow,
She draws her favors to the lowest ebb;
Her tides have equal times to come and go,
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web;
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

Not always fall of leaf, nor ever spring,
No endless night, yet not eternal day;
The saddest birds a season find to sing,
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay:
Thus, with succeeding turns, God tempereth all,
That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

A chance may win that by mischance was lost;
That net that holds no great, takes little fish;
In some things all, in all things none are crossed;
Few all they need, but none have all they wish.
Unmingled joys here to no man befall:
Who least, hath some; who most, hath never all.

Robert Southwell [1561?–1595]

"SAY NOT, THE STRUGGLE NAUGHT AVAILETH"

Say not, the struggle naught availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

Arthur Hugh Clough [1819–1861]

KYRIELLE

A LARK in the mesh of the tangled vine,
A bee that drowns in the flower-cup's wine,
A fly in the sunshine,—such is man.
All things must end, as all began.

A little pain, a little pleasure,
A little heaping up of treasure;
Then no more gazing upon the sun.
All things must end that have begun.

Where is the time for hope or doubt?
A puff of the wind, and life is out;
A turn of the wheel, and rest is won.
All things must end that have begun.

Golden morning and purple night,
Life that fails with the failing light;
Death is the only deathless one.
All things must end that have begun.

Ending waits on the brief beginning;
Is the prize worth the stress of winning?
E'en in the dawning the day is done.
All things must end that have begun.

Weary waiting and weary striving,
Glad outsetting and sad arriving;
What is it worth when the goal is won?
All things must end that have begun.

Speedily fades the morning glitter;
Love grows irksome and wine grows bitter.
Two are parted from what was one.
All things must end that have begun.

Toil and pain and the evening rest;
Joy is weary and sleep is best;
Fair and softly the day is done.
All things must end that have begun.

John Payne [*fl.* 1770–1800]

"LET ME ENJOY"

Let me enjoy the earth no less
Because the all-enacting Might
That fashioned forth its loveliness
Had other aims than my delight.

About my path there flits a Fair,
Who throws me not a word or sign;
I will find charm in her uncare,
And laud those lips not meant for mine.

From manuscripts of moving song
Inspired by scenes and souls unknown,
I'll pour out raptures that belong
To others, as they were my own.

Perhaps some day, toward Paradise
And all its blest—if such should be—
I shall lift glad, afar-off eyes,
Though it contain no place for me.

Thomas Hardy [1840–

SONG

Because the rose must fade,
  Shall I not love the rose?
Because the summer shade
  Passes when winter blows,
Shall I not rest me there
In the cool air?

Because the sunset sky
  Makes music in my soul,
Only to fail and die,
  Shall I not take the whole
Of beauty that it gives
While yet it lives?

Because the sweet of youth
  Doth vanish all too soon,
Shall I forget, forsooth,
  To learn its lingering tune;
My joy to memorize
In those young eyes?

If, like the summer flower
  That blooms—a fragrant death,
Keen music hath no power
  To live beyond its breath,
Then of this flood of song
Let me drink long!

Ah, yes, because the rose
  Fades like the sunset skies;
Because rude winter blows
  All bare, and music dies—
Therefore, now is to me
Eternity!

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

"WHERE RUNS THE RIVER"

WHERE runs the river? Who can say
Who hath not followed all the way
By alders green and sedges gray
  And blossoms blue?

Where runs the river? Hill and wood
Curve round to hem the eager flood;
It cannot straightly as it would
  Its path pursue.

Yet this we know: O'er whatso plains
Or rocks or waterfalls it strains,
At last the Vast the stream attains;
  And I, and you.

Francis William Bourdillon [1852–

SELF-DEPENDENCE

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
"Ye who from my childhood up have calmed me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer:
"Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silvered roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
"Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he,
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

HOPE AND FEAR

BENEATH the shadow of dawn's aerial cope,
With eyes enkindled as the sun's own sphere,
Hope from the front of youth in godlike cheer
Looks Godward, past the shades where blind men grope
Round the dark door that prayers nor dreams can ope,
And makes for joy the very darkness dear
That gives her wide wings play; nor dreams that Fear
At noon may rise and pierce the heart of Hope.
Then, when the soul leaves off to dream and yearn,
May Truth first purge her eyesight to discern
What once being known leaves time no power to appall;
Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not, learn
The kind wise word that falls from years that fall—
"Hope not thou much, and fear thou not at all."

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

ON HIS BLINDNESS

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent, which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best; his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton [1608–1674]

OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT

I MET a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

A TURKISH LEGEND

A CERTAIN Pasha, dead five thousand years,
Once from his harem fled in sudden tears,

And had this sentence on the city's gate
Deeply engraven, "Only God is great."

So these four words above the city's noise
Hung like the accents of an angel's voice,

And evermore, from the high barbican,
Saluted each returning caravan.

Lost is that city's glory. Every gust
Lifts, with dead leaves, the unknown Pasha's dust,

And all is ruin,—save one wrinkled gate
Whereon is written, "Only God is great."

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

"EVEN THIS SHALL PASS AWAY"

ONCE in Persia reigned a King,
Who upon his signet ring
'Graved a maxim true and wise,
Which, if held before the eyes,

Gave him counsel at a glance,
Fit for every change and chance.
Solemn words, and these are they:
"Even this shall pass away."

Trains of camels through the sand
Brought him gems from Samarcand;
Fleets of galleys through the seas
Brought him pearls to match with these.
But he counted not his gain
Treasures of the mine or main;
"What is wealth?" the King would say;
"Even this shall pass away."

In the revels of his court
At the zenith of the sport,
When the palms of all his guests
Burned with clapping at his jests,
He, amid his figs and wine,
Cried: "Oh, loving friends of mine!
Pleasure comes, but not to stay;
Even this shall pass away."

Fighting on a furious field,
Once a javelin pierced his shield;
Soldiers with a loud lament
Bore him bleeding to his tent;
Groaning from his tortured side,
"Pain is hard to bear," he cried,
"But with patience, day by day—
Even this shall pass away."

Towering in the public square,
Twenty cubits in the air,
Rose his statue, carved in stone.
Then the King, disguised, unknown,
Stood before his sculptured name,
Musing meekly, "What is fame?
Fame is but a slow decay—
Even this shall pass away."

Struck with palsy, sere and old,
Waiting at the gates of gold,
Said he, with his dying breath:
"Life is done, but what is death?"
Then, in answer to the King,
Fell a sunbeam on his ring,
Showing by a heavenly ray—
"Even this shall pass away."

Theodore Tilton [1835–1907]

SESOSTRIS

Sole Lord of Lords and very King of Kings,
He sits within the desert, carved in stone;
Inscrutable, colossal, and alone,
And ancienter than memory of things.
Graved on his front the sacred beetle clings;
Disdain sits on his lips; and in a frown
Scorn lives upon his forehead for a crown.
The affrighted ostrich dare not dust her wings
Anear this Presence. The long caravan's
Dazed camels pause, and mute the Bedouins stare.
This symbol of past power more than man's
Presages doom. Kings look—and Kings despair:
Their scepters tremble in their jeweled hands
And dark thrones totter in the baleful air!

Lloyd Mifflin [1846–

THREE SONNETS ON OBLIVION

OBLIVION

Her eyes have seen the monoliths of kings
Upcast like foam of the effacing tide;
She hath beheld the desert stars deride
The monuments of power's imaginings:
About their base the wind Assyrian flings
The dust that throned the satrap in his pride;
Cambyses and the Memphian pomps abide

As in the flame the moth's presumptuous wings.
There gleams no glory that her hand shall spare,
Nor any sun whose rays shall cross her night,
Whose realm enfolds man's empire and its end.
No armor of renown her sword shall dare,
No council of the gods withstand her might—
Stricken at last Time's lonely Titans bend.

THE DUST DETHRONED

Sargon is dust, Semiramis a clod.
In crypts profaned the moon at midnight peers;
The owl upon the Sphinx hoots in her ears,
And scant and sere the desert grasses nod
Where once the armies of Assyria trod,
With younger sunlight splendid on the spears;
The lichens cling the closer with the years,
And seal the eyelids of the weary god.
Where high the tombs of royal Egypt heave,
The vulture shadows with arrested wings
The indecipherable boasts of kings,
Till Arab children hear their mother's cry
And leave in mockery their toy—they leave
The skull of Pharaoh staring at the sky.

THE NIGHT OF GODS

Their mouths have drunken the eternal wine—
The draught that Baal in oblivion sips.
Unseen about their courts the adder slips,
Unheard the sucklings of the leopard whine;
The toad has found a resting-place divine,
And bloats in stupor between Ammon's lips.
O Carthage and the unreturning ships,
The fallen pinnacle, the shifting Sign!
Lo! when I hear from voiceless court and fane
Time's adoration of eternity,—
The cry of kingdoms past and gods undone,—
I stand as one whose feet at noontide gain
A lonely shore; who feels his soul set free,
And hears the blind sea chanting to the sun.

George Sterling [1869-

THE MAGIC MIRROR

THE Magic Mirror makes not nor unmakes,
Charms none to sleep nor any from sleep wakes;
It only giveth back the thing it takes.

It is the heart's own cheer that makes it glad,
And one's own bitterness will drive him mad;
It needeth not that other help be had.

The Mirror maketh none to rise or fall;
To him that hath not doth no portion call;
To him that hath is freely given all.

They see themselves who look in Fortune's face;
Unto the sad is sadness Heaven's grace,
And to the souls that love is love's embrace.

Henry Mills Alden [1836–

EBB AND FLOW

I WALKED beside the evening sea,
And dreamed a dream that could not be;
The waves that plunged along the shore
Said only—"Dreamer, dream no more!"

But still the legions charged the beach;
Loud rang their battle-cry, like speech;
But changed was the imperial strain:
It murmured—"Dreamer, dream again!"

I homeward turned from out the gloom,—
That sound I heard not in my room;
But suddenly a sound, that stirred
Within my very breast, I heard.

It was my heart, that like a sea
Within my breast beat ceaselessly:
But like the waves along the shore,
It said—"Dream on!" and "Dream no more!"

George William Curtis [1824–1892]

THE KING OF DREAMS

Some must delve when the dawn is nigh;
Some must toil when the noonday beams;
But when night comes, and the soft winds sigh,
Every man is a King of Dreams!

One must plod while another must ply
At plow or loom till the sunset streams,
But when night comes, and the moon rides high,
Every man is a King of Dreams!

One is slave to a master's cry,
Another serf to a despot seems,
But when night comes, and the discords die,
Every man is a King of Dreams!

This you may sell and that may buy,
And this you may barter for gold that gleams,
But there's one domain that is fixed for aye,—
Every man is a King of Dreams!

Clinton Scollard [1860–

IF ONLY THE DREAMS ABIDE

If the things of earth must pass
Like the dews upon the grass,
Like the mists that break and run
At the forward sweep of the sun,
I shall be satisfied
If only the dreams abide.

Nay, I would not be shorn
Of gold from the mines of morn!
I would not be bereft
Of the last blue flower in the cleft,—
Of the haze that haunts the hills,
Or the moon that the midnight fills!
Still would I know the grace
Upon love's uplifted face,

And the slow, sweet joy-dawn there
Under the dusk of her hair.

I pray thee, spare me, Fate,
The woeful, wearying weight
Of a heart that feels no pain
At the sob of the autumn rain,
And takes no breath of glee
From the organ-surge of the sea,—
Of a mind where memory broods
Over songless solitudes!
I shall be satisfied
If only the dreams abide.

Clinton Scollard [1860–

NEW DREAMS FOR OLD

Is there no voice in the world to come crying,
"New dreams for old!
New for old!" ?
Many have long in my heart been lying,
Faded, weary, and cold.
All of them, all, would I give for a new one.
(Is there no seeker
Of dreams that were?)
Nor would I ask if the new were a true one:
Only for new dreams!
New for old!

For I am here, halfway of my journey,
Here with the old!
All so old!
And the best heart with death is at tourney,
If naught new it is told.
Will there no voice, then, come—or a vision—
Come with the beauty
That ever blows
Out of the lands that are called Elysian?
I must have new dreams!
New for old!

Cale Young Rice [1872–

"LORD OF MY HEART'S ELATION"

Lord of my heart's elation,
Spirit of things unseen,
Be thou my aspiration
Consuming and serene!

Bear up, bear out, bear onward,
This mortal soul alone,
To selfhood or oblivion,
Incredibly thine own,—

As the foamheads are loosened
And blown along the sea,
Or sink and merge forever
In that which bids them be.

I, too, must climb in wonder,
Uplift at thy command,—
Be one with my frail fellows
Beneath the wind's strong hand,

A fleet and shadowy column
Of dust or mountain rain,
To walk the earth a moment
And be dissolved again.

Be thou my exaltation
Or fortitude of mien,
Lord of the world's elation,
Thou breath of things unseen!

Bliss Carman [1861–

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM

The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?

Is not the Vision he? though He be not that which He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why;
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel "I am I"?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some: no God at all, says the fool;
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision—were it not He?

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE WHITE PEACE

It lies not on the sunlit hill
Nor on the sunlit plain:
Nor ever on any running stream
Nor on the unclouded main—

But sometimes, through the Soul of Man,
Slow moving o'er his pain,
The moonlight of a perfect peace
Floods heart and brain.

William Sharp [1855–1905]

THE MYSTIC'S PRAYER

Lay me to sleep in sheltering flame,
O Master of the Hidden Fire!
Wash pure my heart, and cleanse for me
My soul's desire.

In flame of sunrise bathe my mind,
O Master of the Hidden Fire,
That, when I wake, clear-eyed may be
My soul's desire.

William Sharp [1855–1905]

THE PLAY

The endless mime goes on; new faces come,
New mummers babble in each other's ears;
And some wear masks of woe, of laughter some,
Nor know they play Life's Comedy of Tears.

James B. Kenyon [1858–

THE WAYFARER

I will reach far down in the pit of sorrow
And gather song,
With the bitter past I will deck to-morrow.

I will turn no cowardly look behind me,
But still fare on
Till the glow of ultimate joy shall blind me.

For I ask no blessing and no forgiving,
The gain was mine,
Since I learn from all things the truth of living.

Helen Huntington [18 –

BOOKRA

As I lay asleep in Italy.—Shelley

One night I lay asleep in Africa,
In a closed garden by the city gate;
A desert horseman, furious and late,
Came wildly thundering at the massive bar,

"Open in Allah's name! Wake, Mustapha!
Slain is the Sultan,—treason, war, and hate
—Rage from Fez to Tetuan! Open straight."
The watchman heard as thunder from afar:
"Go to! In peace this city lies asleep;
To all-knowing Allah 'tis no news you bring;"
Then turned in slumber still his watch to keep.
At once a nightingale began to sing,
In oriental calm the garden lay,—
Panic and war postponed another day.

Charles Dudley Warner [1829–1900]

INTO THE TWILIGHT

Out-worn heart, in a time out-worn,
Come clear of the nets of wrong and right;
Laugh, heart, again in the gray twilight,
Sigh, heart, again in the dew of the morn.

Your mother Eire is always young,
Dew ever shining and twilight gray;
Though hope fall from you and love decay,
Burning in fires of a slanderous tongue.

Come, heart, where hill is heaped upon hill:
For there the mystical brotherhood
Of sun and moon and hollow and wood
And river and stream work out their will;

And God stands winding His lonely horn,
And time and the world are ever in flight;
And love is less kind than the gray twilight,
And hope is less dear than the dew of the morn.

William Butler Yeats [1865–

TEARS

When I consider Life and its few years—
A wisp of fog betwixt us and the sun;
A call to battle, and the battle done
Ere the last echo dies within our ears;

A rose choked in the grass; an hour of fears;
The gusts that past a darkening shore do beat;
The burst of music down an unlistening street—
I wonder at the idleness of tears.
Ye old, old dead, and ye of yesternight,
Chieftains, and bards, and keepers of the sheep,
By every cup of sorrow that you had,
Loose me from tears, and make me see aright
How each hath back what once he stayed to weep;
Homer his sight, David his little lad!

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856–

VERS LA VIE

The statue by Victor Rosseau in the Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels

Angel, hast thou betrayed me? Long ago
In the Forgotten Land of souls that wait,
Thou leddest me to the outward-folding gate,
Bidding me live. I leaned into the flow
Of earthward-rushing spirits, fain to know
What are humanity and human fate
Of which the rumor reached to where we sate
In our cool, hidden, dreamless ante-glow.
But I learn not, and am bewildered here
To know why thou with seeming-kindly hands
Didst let me forth, explorer of a star
Where all is strange, and very often Fear
Urges retreat to that Forgotten Land's
Unthoughtful shores where thou and Silence are!

Arthur Upson [1877–1908]

LEAVES

One by one, like leaves from a tree,
All my faiths have forsaken me;
But the stars above my head
Burn in white and delicate red,
And beneath my feet the earth
Brings the sturdy grass to birth.

I who was content to be
But a silken-singing tree,
But a rustle of delight
In the wistful heart of night—
I have lost the leaves that knew
Touch of rain and weight of dew.
Blinded by a leafy crown,
I looked neither up nor down—
But the little leaves that die
Have left me room to see the sky;
Now for the first time I know
Stars above and earth below.

Sara Teasdale [1884–

PRE-EXISTENCE

While sauntering through the crowded street,
Some half-remembered face I meet,

Albeit upon no mortal shore
That face, methinks, has smiled before.

Lost in a gay and festal throng,
I tremble at some tender song,

Set to an air whose golden bars
I must have heard in other stars.

In sacred aisles I pause to share
The blessing of a priestly prayer,—

When the whole scene which greets mine eyes
In some strange mode I recognize,

As one whose every mystic part
I feel prefigured in my heart.

At sunset, as I calmly stand,
A stranger on an alien strand,

Familiar as my childhood's home
Seems the long stretch of wave and foam.

One sails toward me o'er the bay,
And what he comes to do and say

I can foretell. A prescient lore
Springs from some life outlived of yore.

O swift, instinctive, startling gleams
Of deep soul-knowledge! not as *dreams*

For aye ye vaguely dawn and die,
But oft with lightning certainty

Pierce through the dark, oblivious brain,
To make old thoughts and memories plain—

Thoughts which perchance must travel back
Across the wild, bewildering track

Of countless æons; memories far,
High-reaching as yon pallid star,

Unknown, scarce seen, whose flickering grace
Faints on the outmost rings of space!

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830–1886]

ENVOY

From "Songs from Vagabondia"

I

Have little care that Life is brief,
And less that Art is long.
Success is in the silences
Though Fame is in the song.

II

With the Orient in her eyes,
Life my mistress lured me on.
"Knowledge," said that look of hers,
"Shall be yours when all is done."

Like a pomegranate in halves,
"Drink me," said that mouth of hers,
And I drank who now am here
Where my dust with dust confers.

Bliss Carman [1861–

THE PETRIFIED FERN

In a valley, centuries ago,
Grew a little fern-leaf, green and slender,
Veining delicate and fibers tender;
Waving when the wind crept down so low.
Rushes tall, and moss, and grass grew round it,
Playful sunbeams darted in and found it,
Drops of dew stole in by night, and crowned it,
But no foot of man e'er trod that way;
Earth was young, and keeping holiday.

Monster fishes swam the silent main,
Stately forests waved their giant branches,
Mountains hurled their snowy avalanches,
Mammoth creatures stalked across the plain;
Nature reveled in grand mysteries,
But the little fern was not of these,
Did not number with the hills and trees;
Only grew and waved its wild sweet way,—
No one came to note it day by day.

Earth, one time, put on a frolic mood,
Heaved the rocks and changed the mighty motion
Of the deep, strong currents of the ocean;
Moved the plain and shook the haughty wood,
Crushed the little fern in soft moist clay,
Covered it, and hid it safe away.
Oh, the long, long centuries since that day!
Oh, the changes! Oh, life's bitter cost,
Since that useless little fern was lost!

Useless? Lost? There came a thoughtful man
Searching Nature's secrets, far and deep;
From a fissure in a rocky steep
He withdrew a stone, o'er which there ran

Fairy pencilings, a quaint design,
Veinings, leafage, fibers clear and fine.
And the fern's life lay in every line!
So, I think, God hides some souls away,
Sweetly to surprise us, the last day.

Mary Bolles Branch [1840–

THE QUESTION WHITHER

When we have thrown off this old suit,
So much in need of mending,
To sink among the naked mute,
Is that, think you, our ending?
We follow many, more we lead,
And you who sadly turf us,
Believe not that all living seed
Must flower above the surface.

Sensation is a gracious gift,
But were it cramped to station,
The prayer to have it cast adrift,
Would spout from all sensation.
Enough if we have winked to sun,
Have sped the plow a season;
There is a soul for labor done,
Endureth fixed as reason.

Then let our trust be firm in Good,
Though we be of the fasting;
Our questions are a mortal brood,
Our work is everlasting.
We children of Beneficence
Are in its being sharers;
And Whither vainer sounds than Whence,
For word with such wayfarers.

George Meredith [1828–1909]

THE GOOD GREAT MAN

How seldom, friend, a good great man inherits
Honor or wealth, with all his worth and pains!

It seems a story from the land of spirits
When any man obtains that which he merits,
  Or any merit that which he obtains.

REPLY TO THE ABOVE

For shame, dear friend! renounce this canting strain!
What wouldst thou have a good great man obtain?
Wealth, title, dignity, a gilded chain,
Or throne of corses which his sword hath slain?
Greatness and goodness are not means, but ends.
Hath he not always treasures, always friends,—
The good great man? Three treasures,—love, and light,
  And calm thoughts, equable as infant's breath;
And three firm friends, more sure than day and night,—
  Himself, his Maker, and the Angel Death.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

HUMAN FRAILTY

Weak and irresolute is man;
  The purpose of to-day,
Woven with pains into his plan,
  To-morrow rends away.

The bow well bent, and smart the spring,
  Vice seems already slain;
But Passion rudely snaps the string,
  And it revives again.

Some foe to his upright intent
  Finds out his weaker part;
Virtue engages his assent,
  But Pleasure wins his heart.

'Tis here the folly of the wise
  Through all his art we view:
And while his tongue the charge denies,
  His conscience owns it true.

Bound on a voyage of awful length
And dangers little known,
A stranger to superior strength,
Man vainly trusts his own.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail
To reach the distant coast;
The breath of Heaven must swell the sail,
Or all the toil is lost.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

STANZAS

WHERE forlorn sunsets flare and fade
On desolate sea and lonely sand,
Out of the silence and the shade
What is the voice of strange command
Calling you still, as friend calls friend
With love that cannot brook delay,
To rise and follow the ways that wend
Over the hills and far away?

Hark to the city, street on street
A roaring reach of death and life,
Of vortices that clash and fleet
And ruin in appointed strife;
Hark to it calling, calling clear,
Calling until you cannot stay,
From dearer things than your own most dear
Over the hills and far away.

Out of the sound of the ebb-and-flow,
Out of the sight of lamp and star,
It calls you where the good winds blow,
And the unchanging meadows are;
From faded hopes and hopes agleam,
It calls you, calls you night and day
Beyond the dark, into the dream
Over the hills and far away.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

THE SEEKERS

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth, nor blest abode,
But the hope, the burning hope, and the road, the lonely road.

Not for us are content, and quiet, and peace of mind,
For we go seeking a city that we shall never find.

There is no solace on earth for us—for such as we—
Who search for a hidden city that we shall never see.

Only the road and the dawn, the sun, the wind, the rain,
And the watch-fire under stars, and sleep, and the road again.

We seek the City of God, and the haunt where beauty dwells,
And we find the noisy mart and the sound of burial bells.

Never the golden city, where radiant people meet,
But the dolorous town where mourners are going about the street.

We travel the dusty road till the light of the day is dim
And sunset shows us spires away on the world's rim.

We travel from dawn till dusk, till the day is past and by,
Seeking the Holy City beyond the rim of the sky.

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth, nor blest abode,
But the hope, the burning hope, and the road, the lonely road.

John Masefield [1874–

THE BELEAGUERED CITY

I have read, in some old, marvelous tale,
Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of specters pale
Beleaguered the walls of Prague.

Beside the Moldau's rushing stream,
With the wan moon overhead,
There stood, as in an awful dream,
The army of the dead.

White as the sea-fog, landward bound,
The spectral camp was seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
The river flowed between.

No other voice nor sound was there,
No drum, nor sentry's pace;
The mist-like banners clasped the air,
As clouds with clouds embrace.

But when the old cathedral bell
Proclaimed the morning prayer,
The white pavilions rose and fell
On the alarmèd air.

Down the broad valley fast and far
The troubled army fled;
Up rose the glorious morning star,
The ghastly host was dead.

I have read, in the marvelous heart of man
That strange and mystic scroll,
That an army of Phantoms vast and wan
Beleaguer the human soul.

Encamped beside Life's rushing stream,
In Fancy's misty light,
Gigantic shapes and shadows gleam
Portentous through the night.

Upon its midnight battle-ground
The spectral camp is seen,
And, with a sorrowful, deep sound,
Flows the River of Life between.

No other voice nor sound is there,
In the army of the grave;
No other challenge breaks the air,
But the rushing of Life's wave.

And when the solemn and deep church-bell
  Entreats the soul to pray,
The midnight phantoms feel the spell,
  The shadows sweep away.

Down the broad Vale of Tears afar
  The spectral camp is fled;
Faith shineth as a morning star,
  Our ghastly fears are dead.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

A DOUBTING HEART

WHERE are the swallows fled?
  Frozen and dead
Perchance upon some bleak and stormy shore.
  O doubting heart!
  Far over purple seas
  They wait, in sunny ease,
  The balmy southern breeze,
To bring them to their northern homes once more.

Why must the flowers die?
  Prisoned they lie
In the cold tomb, heedless of tears or rain.
  O doubting heart!
  They only sleep below
  The soft white ermine snow
  While winter winds shall blow,
To breathe and smile upon you soon again.

The sun has hid its rays
  These many days;
Will dreary hours never leave the earth?
  O doubting heart!
  The stormy clouds on high
  Veil the same sunny sky
  That soon (for spring is nigh),
Shall wake the summer into golden mirth.

Fair hope is dead, and light
Is quenched in night.
What sound can break the silence of despair?
O doubting heart!
The sky is overcast,
Yet stars shall rise at last,
Brighter for darkness past,
And angels' silver voices stir the air.

Adelaide Anne Procter [1825–1864]

VAIN VIRTUES

From "The House of Life"

WHAT is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?
None of the sins,—but this and that fair deed
Which a soul's sin at length could supersede.
These yet are virgins, whom death's timely knell
Might once have sainted; whom the fiends compel
Together now, in snake-bound shuddering sheaves
Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves
Their refuse maidenhood abominable.
Night sucks them down, the tribute of the pit,
Whose names, half entered in the book of Life,
Were God's desire at noon. And as their hair
And eyes sink last, the Torturer deigns no whit
To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined wife,
The Sin still blithe on earth that sent them there.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

EVOLUTION

OUT of the dusk a shadow,
Then, a spark;
Out of the cloud a silence,
Then, a lark;
Out of the heart a rapture,
Then, a pain;
Out of the dead, cold ashes,
Life again.

John Banister Tabb [1845–1909]

EACH IN HIS OWN TONGUE

A FIRE-MIST and a planet,—
  A crystal and a cell,—
A jellyfish and a saurian,
  And caves where the cave-men dwell;
Then a sense of law and beauty,
  And a face turned from the clod,—
Some call it Evolution,
  And others call it God.

A haze on the far horizon,
  The infinite, tender sky,
The ripe, rich tint of the cornfields,
  And the wild geese sailing high,—
And all over upland and lowland
  The charm of the goldenrod,—
Some of us call it Autumn,
  And others call it God.

Like tides on a crescent sea-beach,
  When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts high yearnings
  Come welling and surging in,—
Come from the mystic ocean,
  Whose rim no foot has trod,—
Some of us call it Longing,
  And others call it God.

A picket frozen on duty,—
  A mother starved for her brood,—
Socrates drinking the hemlock,
  And Jesus on the rood;
And millions who, humble and nameless,
  The straight, hard pathway plod,—
Some call it Consecration,
  And others call it God.

William Herbert Carruth [1859–

THE NAME

It shifts and shifts from form to form,
  It drifts and darkles, glooms and glows,
It is the passion of the storm,
  The poignance of the rose;
Through changing shapes, through devious ways,
  By noon or night, through cloud or flame,
My heart hath followed all my days
  Something I cannot name.

In sunlight on some woman's hair,
  Or starlight in some woman's eyne—
Or in low laughter smothered where
  Her red lips wedded mine—
My heart has known, and thrilled to know,
  This unnamed presence that it sought;
And when thy heart hath found it so,
  "*Love is the name,*" I thought.

Sometimes when sudden afterglows
  In futile glory storm the skies
Within their transient gold and rose
  The secret stirs and dies;
Or when the tramping Morn walks o'er
  The troubled seas with feet of flame
My awed heart whispers, "*Ask no more,*
  For Beauty is the name!"

Or dreaming in old chapels where
  The dim aisles pulse with murmurings
That part are music, part are prayer—
  (Or rush of hidden wings)—
I often lift a startled head
  To some saint's carven countenance,
Half fancying that the lips have said,
  "*All names mean God perchance.*"

Don Marquis [1878–]

"IN GOD'S ETERNAL STUDIOS"

From "The Studios Photographic"

By every light, in every pose,
In God's Eternal Studios,
The human heart, with frown or laugh,
Is posing for its photograph.
Sweet smile; sad, serious expression;
Honor triumphant over passion:
Oh! wonderful are the effects
He through Truth's living lens detects,
As, instant, watchful for the best,
Behind the curtain without rest,
In loving eagerness He waits
To catch our souls on deathless plates!

Fear not the darkness that surrounds
Thy character. On dark backgrounds,
With light from Heaven in thy face,
What tones He gets! With what fine grace
He molds and modulates and blends
The history of face and hands:
Revealing through what grief and bliss
The spirit came to look like this!
To look like Him Who long ago
For His good pleasure planned it so,
That He in His Eternal Home
Might treasure them in Time to Come!

Through unknown fortunes yet to be,
Beneath the stars, beside the sea,
Between the birthday and the grave,
Teaching the tender heart be brave,
He woos our better from our worse,
The Artist of the Universe!
The undiscouraged Connoisseur
Of priceless human character!
The glory of Whose presence fills
With master might the steadfast hills!
While deep within our souls it glows
From all His starry studios!

Paul Shivell [1874–

INDIRECTION

Fair are the flowers and the children, but their subtle suggestion is fairer;
Rare is the roseburst of dawn, but the secret that clasps it is rarer;
Sweet the exultance of song, but the strain that precedes it is sweeter;
And never was poem yet writ, but the meaning outmastered the meter.

Never a daisy that grows, but a mystery guideth the growing;
Never a river that flows, but a majesty scepters the flowing;
Never a Shakespeare that soared, but a stronger than he did enfold him;
Nor ever a prophet foretells, but a mightier seer hath foretold him.

Back of the canvas that throbs the painter is hinted and hidden;
Into the statue that breathes the soul of the sculptor is bidden;
Under the joy that is felt lie the infinite issues of feeling;
Crowning the glory revealed is the glory that crowns the revealing.

Great are the symbols of being, but that which is symboled is greater;
Vast the create and beheld, but vaster the inward creator;
Back of the sound broods the silence, back of the gift stands the giving;
Back of the hand that receives thrill the sensitive nerves of receiving.

Space is as nothing to spirit, the deed is outdone by the doing;
The heart of the wooer is warm, but warmer the heart of the wooing;

And up from the pits where these shiver, and up from the heights where those shine,
Twin voices and shadows swim starward, and the essence of life is divine.

Richard Realf [1834–1878]

A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING IN EUROPE

Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together.
Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes
Each in its tether
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,
Cared-for till cock-crow:
Look out if yonder be not day again
Rimming the rock-row!
That's the appropriate country; there, man's thought,
Rarer, intenser,
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
Chafes in the censer.
Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop;
Seek we sepulture
On a tall mountain, citied to the top,
Crowded with culture!
All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;
Clouds overcome it;
No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's
Circling its summit.
Thither our path lies; wind we up the heights;
Wait ye the warning?
Our low life was the level's and the night's;
He's for the morning.
Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head.
'Ware the beholders!
This is our master, famous, calm and dead,
Borne on our shoulders.

Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling thorpe and croft,
Safe from the weather!
He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
Singing together,
He was a man born with thy face and throat,
Lyric Apollo!
Long he lived nameless: how should Spring take note
Winter would follow?
Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone!
Cramped and diminished,
Moaned he, "New measures, other feet anon!
My dance is finished"?
No, that's the world's way: (keep the mountain-side,
Make for the city!)
He knew the signal, and stepped on with pride
Over men's pity;
Left play for work, and grappled with the world
Bent on escaping:
"What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou keepest furled?
Show me their shaping,
Theirs who most studied man, the bard and sage,—
Give!"—So, he gowned him,
Straight got by heart that book to its last page:
Learnèd, we found him.
Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like lead,
Accents uncertain:
"Time to taste life," another would have said,
"Up with the curtain!"
This man said rather, "Actual life comes next?
Patience a moment!
Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed text,
Still there's the comment.
Let me know all! Prate not of most or least,
Painful or easy!
Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
Ay, nor feel queasy."
Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,
When he had learned it,
When he had gathered all books had to give!
Sooner, he spurned it.

Image the whole, then execute the parts—
Fancy the fabric
Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from quartz,
Ere mortar dab brick!

(Here's the town-gate reached: there's the market-place
Gaping before us.)
Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace
(Hearten our chorus!)
That before living he'd learn how to live—
No end to learning:
Earn the means first—God surely will contrive
Use for our earning.
Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes:
Live now or never!"
He said, "What's time? Leave Now for dogs and apes!
Man has Forever."
Back to his book then: deeper drooped his head:
Calculus racked him:
Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:
Tussis attacked him.
"Now, master, take a little rest!"—not he!
(Caution redoubled,
Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly!)
Not a whit troubled,
Back to his studies, fresher than at first,
Fierce as a dragon
He (soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst)
Sucked at the flagon.
Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
Heedless of far gain,
Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure
Bad is our bargain!
Was it not great? did not he throw on God,
(He loves the burthen)—
God's task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen?
Did not he magnify the mind, show clear
Just what it all meant?
He would not discount life, as fools do here,
Paid by instalment.

He ventured neck or nothing—heaven's success
Found, or earth's failure:
"Wilt thou trust death or not?" He answered "Yes!
Hence with life's pale lure!"
That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it:
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it.
That low man goes on adding one to one,
His hundred's soon hit:
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit.
That, has the world here—should he need the next,
Let the world mind him!
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find him.
So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
Ground he at grammar;
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife:
While he could stammer
He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be!—
Properly based *Oun*—
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,
Dead from the waist down.
Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place:
Hail to your purlieus,
All ye highfliers of the feathered race,
Swallows and curlews!
Here's the top-peak; the multitude below
Live, for they can, there:
This man decided not to Live but Know—
Bury this man there?
Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go! Let joy break with the storm,
Peace let the dew send!
Lofty designs must close in like effects:
Loftily lying,
Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,
Living and dying.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHÁYYÁM

WAKE! For the Sun who scattered into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
  Drives Night along with them from Heaven, and strikes
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

Before the phantom of False morning died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
  "When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshiper outside?"

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—"Open then the Door!
  You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more."

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
  Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the ground suspires.

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's Seven-ringed Cup where no one knows;
  But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

And David's lips are locked; but in divine
High-piping Pehlevi, with "Wine! Wine! Wine!
  Red Wine!"—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That sallow cheek of hers t' incarnadine.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
  The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
  The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?
Let Zál and Rustum bluster as they will,
Or Hátim call to Supper—heed not you.

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot—
And peace to Máhmúd on his golden Throne!

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

Some for the Glories of this World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

Look to the blowing Rose about us—"Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,
At once the silken tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turned
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—was gone.

Think, in this battered caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahrám, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropped in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean—
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

Ah, my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regret and future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Seven thousand Years.

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath pressed,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

And we that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend—ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,
And those that after some To-morrow stare,
A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,
"Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There!"

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the two Worlds so wisely—they are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scattered, and their Mouths are stopped with Dust.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reaped—
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

Into this Universe, and *Why* not Knowing
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence?*
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

Up from Earth's Center through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
And many a Knot unraveled by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I might not see;
Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
There was—and then no more of Thee and Me.

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
  Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs revealed
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
  A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
As from Without—"THE ME WITHIN THEE BLIND!"

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
I leaned, the Secret of my Life to learn:
  And Lip to Lip it murmured—"While you live,
Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall return."

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answered, once did live,
  And drink; and ah! the passive Lip I kissed,
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
  And with its all-obliterated Tongue
It murmured—"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

And has not such a Story from of Old
Down Man's successive generations rolled
  Of such a cloud of saturated Earth
Cast by the Maker into Human mold?

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
For Earth to drink of, but may steal below
  To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
There hidden—far beneath, and long ago.

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
Of Heavenly Vintage from the soil looks up,
  Do you devoutly do the like, till Heaven
To Earth invert you—like an empty Cup.

Perplexed no more with Human or Divine,
To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes;
Think then you are To-day what Yesterday
You were—To-morrow you shall not be less.

So when the Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff—you shall not shrink.

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Wer't not a Shame—wer't not a Shame for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one-day's rest
A Sultán to the realm of Death addressed;
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more
The Eternal Sákí from that Bowl has poured
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

When You and I behind the Veil are passed,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of Being from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reached
The Nothing it set out from—Oh, make haste!

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About THE SECRET—quick about it, Friend!
A Hair perhaps divides the False and True—
And upon what, prithee, does life depend?

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue—
Could you but find it—to the Treasure-house,
And peradventure to THE MASTER too:

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins
Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains;
Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi; and
They change and perish all—but He remains;

A moment guessed—then back behind the Fold
Immersed of Darkness round the Drama rolled
Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heaven's unopening Door,
You gaze TO-DAY, while You are You—how then
TO-MORROW, You when shall be You no more?

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavor and dispute;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

For "IS" and "IS-NOT" though with Rule and Line,
And "UP-AND-DOWN" by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Reduced the Year to better reckoning?—Nay,
'Twas only striking from the Calendar
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

The mighty Mahmúd, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup—when crumbled into Dust!

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain—*This* Life flies:
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

The Revelations of Devout and Learned
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burned,
  Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep,
They told their comrades and to Sleep returned.

I sent my Soul through the Invisible
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
  And by and by my Soul returned to me,
And answered, "I Myself am Heaven and Hell."

Heaven but the Vision of fulfilled Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire
  Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
  Round with the Sun-illumined Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Checker-board of Nights and Days;
  Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Here or There, as strikes the Player, goes;
  And He that tossed you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—He knows—HE knows!

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
  Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die,
  Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for It
As impotently moves as you or I.

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sowed the Seed;
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
TO-MORROW'S Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why:
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

I tell you this—When, started from the Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
Of Heaven Parwín and Mushtarí they flung,
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

The Vine had struck a fiber: which about
If clings my Being—let the Dervish flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath consume me quite,
One flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-allayed—
Sue for a Debt we never did contract,
And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

Oh Thou, who Man of Baser Earth didst make,
And even with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blackened—Man's forgiveness give—and take!

. . . . . .

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
And some loquacious vessels were; and some
Listened perhaps, but never talked at all.

Said one among them—"Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
And to this Figure molded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

Then said a Second—"Ne'er a peevish Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in Joy;
And He that with his hand the Vessel made
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly make:
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry:
What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot—
I think a Súfi pipkin—waxing hot—
"All this of Pot and Potter—Tell me then,
Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

"Why," said another, "Some there are who tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
The luckless Pots he marred in making—Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

"Well," murmured one, "let whoso make or buy,
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry;
  But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by and by."

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
The little Moon looked in that all were seeking:
  And then they jogged each other, "Brother! Brother!
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking!"

. . . . . .

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has died,
  And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

That even my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
  As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in the World much wrong:
  Have drowned my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my reputation for a Song.

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
  And then, and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

And much as Wine has played the Infidel,
And robbed me of my Robe of Honor—Well,
  I often wonder what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
  The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse—if dimly, yet indeed, revealed,
To which the fainting Traveler might spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

Would but some wingèd Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Remold it nearer to the Heart's desire!

. . . . . .

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden—and for *one* in vain!

And when like her, oh Sákí, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!

Edward Fitzgerald [1809–1883]

THE KASÎDAH

THE LAY OF THE HIGHER LAW

II

In these drear wastes of sea-born land, these wilds where none may dwell but He,
What visionary Pasts revive, what process of the Years we see:

Gazing beyond the thin blue line that rims the far horizon-ring,
Our saddened sight why haunt these ghosts, whence do these spectral shadows spring?

What endless questions vex the thought, of Whence and Whither, When and How?
What fond and foolish strife to read the Scripture writ on human brow;

As stand we perched on point of Time, betwixt the two Eternities,
Whose awful secrets gathering round with black profound oppress our eyes.

"This gloomy night, these grisly waves, these winds and whirlpools loud and dread:
What reck they of our wretched plight who Safety's shore so lightly tread?"

Thus quoth the Bard of Love and Wine, whose dream of Heaven ne'er could rise
Beyond the brimming Kauser-cup and Houris with the white-black eyes.

Ah me! my race of threescore years is short, but long enough to pall
My sense with joyless joys as these, with Love and Houris, Wine and all.

Another boasts he would divorce old barren Reason from his bed,
And wed the Vine-maid in her stead;—fools who believe a word he said!

And "'Dust thou art to dust returning,' ne'er was spoke of human soul,"
The Soofi cries: 'tis well for him that hath such gift to ask its goal.

"And this is all, for this we're born to weep a little and to die!'
So sings the shallow bard whose life still labors at the letter "I".

"Ear never heard, Eye never saw the bliss of those who enter in

My heavenly kingdom," Isâ said, who wailed our sorrows
and our sin:

Too much of words or yet too few! What to thy Godhead
easier than
One little glimpse of Paradise to ope the eyes and ears of
man?

"I am the Truth! I am the Truth!" we hear the God-
drunk gnostic cry;
"The microcosm abides in ME; Eternal Allah's naught but
I!"

Mansûr was wise, but wiser they who smote him with the
hurlèd stones;
And, though his blood a witness bore, no wisdom-might
could mend his bones.

"Eat, drink, and sport; the rest of life's not worth a fillip,"
quoth the King;
Methinks the saying saith too much: the swine would say
the self-same thing!

Two-footed beasts that browse through life, by Death to
serve as soil designed,
Bow prone to Earth whereof they be, and there the proper
pleasures find:

But you of finer, nobler stuff, ye, whom to Higher leads the
High,
What binds your hearts in common bond with creatures
of the stall and sty?

"In certain hope of Life-to-come I journey through this
shifting scene,"
The Zâhid snarls and saunters down his Vale of Tears with
confident mien.

Wiser than Amrân's Son art thou, who ken'st so well the
world-to-be,
The Future when the Past is not, the Present merest dream-
ery.

What know'st thou, man, of Life? and yet, for ever twixt
the womb, the grave,
Thou pratest of the Coming Life, of Heaven and Hell thou
fain must rave.

The world is old and thou art young: the world is large
and thou art small:
Cease, atom of a moment's span, to hold thyself an All-in-
All!

IX

How then shall man so order life that when his tale of years
is told,
Like sated guest he wend his way; how shall his even tenor
hold—

Despite the Writ that stores the skull; despite the Table
and the Pen;
Maugre the Fate that plays us down, her board the world,
her pieces men?

How when the light and glow of life wax dim in thickly
gathering gloom,
Shall mortal scoff at sting of Death, shall scorn the victory
of the Tomb?

One way, two paths, one end the grave. This runs athwart
the flowery plain,
That breasts the bush, the steep, the crag, in sun and wind
and snow and rain:

Who treads the first must look adown, must deem his life
an all in all;
Must see no heights where man may rise, must sight no
depths where man may fall.

Allah in Adam's form must view: adore the Maker in the
made,
Content to bask in Mâyâ's smile, in joys of pain, in lights
of shade.

He breaks the Law, he burns the Book, he sends the Moolah
back to school;
Laughs at the beards of Saintly men, and dubs the Prophet
dolt and fool;

Embraces Cypress' taper-waist; cools feet on wavy breast
of rill;
Smiles in the Nargis' love-lorn eyes, and 'joys the dance
of Daffodil;

Melts in the saffron light of Dawn to hear the moaning of
the Dove;
Delights in Sundown's purpling hues when Bulbul woos the
Rose's love;

Finds mirth and joy in Jamshid-bowl; toys with the Daugh-
ter of the vine;
And bids the beauteous cup-boy say, "Master, I bring thee
ruby wine!"

Sips from the maiden's lips the dew; brushes the bloom
from virgin brow:—
Such is his fleshly bliss that strives the Maker through the
Made to know.

I've tried them all; I find them all so same and tame, so
drear, so dry,
My gorge ariseth at the thought; I commune with myself
and cry:—

Better the myriad toils and pains that make the man to
manhood true;
This be the rule that guideth life; these be the laws for me
and you:

With Ignorance wage eternal war, to know thy self for ever
strain;
Thine ignorance of thine ignorance is thy fiercest foe, thy
deadliest bane,

That blunts thy sense, and dulls thy taste: that deafs thine
ears, and blinds thine eyes;
Creates the thing that never was, the Thing that ever is
defies.

The finite Atom infinite that forms thy circle's centre-dot,
So full-sufficient for itself, for other selves existing not,

Finds the world mighty as 'tis small; yet must be fought
the unequal fray;
A myriad giants here; and there a pinch of dust, a clod of
clay.

Yes! maugre all thy dreams of peace, still must the fight
unfair be fought;
Where thou mayest learn the noblest lore, to know that all
we know is naught.

True to thy Nature, to Thy self, Fame and Disfame nor
hope nor fear:
Enough to thee the small still voice aye thundering in thine
inner ear.

From self-approval seek applause: what ken not men thou
kennest, thou!
Spurn every idol others raise: before thine own Ideal bow:

Be thine own Deus: make self free, liberal as the circling air:
Thy Thought to thee an Empire be; break every prisoning
lock and bar:

Do thou the Ought to self aye owed: here all the duties meet
and blend,
In widest sense, withouten care of what began, for what
shall end.

Thus, as thou view the Phantom-forms which in the misty
Past were thine,
To be again the thing thou wast with honest pride thou
mayest decline:

And, glancing down the range of years, fear not thy future self to see;
Resigned to life, to death resigned, as though the choice were naught to thee.

On Thought itself feed not thy Thought; nor turn from Sun and Light to gaze
At darkling cloisters paved with tombs, where rot the bones of bygone days:

"Eat not thy heart," the Sages said: "nor mourn the Past, the buried Past:"
Do what thou dost, be strong, be brave; and, like the Star, nor rest nor haste.

Pluck the old woman from thy breast: be stout in woe, be stark in weal;
Do good for Good is good to do: spurn bribe of Heaven and threat of Hell.

To seek the True, to glad the heart, such is of life the HIGHER LAW,
Whose difference is the Man's degree, the Man of gold, the Man of straw.

See not that something in Mankind that rouses hate or scorn or strife;
Better the worm of Izrâil than Death that walks in form of life

Survey thy kind as One whose wants in the great Human Whole unite;
The Homo rising high from earth to seek the Heavens of Life-in-Light;

And hold Humanity one man, whose universal agony
Still strains and strives to gain the goal, where agonies shall cease to be.

Believe in all things; none believe; judge not nor warp by "Facts" the thought:

See clear, hear clear, though life may seem Mâyâ and Mirage, Dream and Naught.

Abjure the Why and seek the How: the God and gods enthroned on high,
Are silent all, are silent still; nor hear thy voice, nor deign reply.

The Now, that indivisible point which studs the length of infinite line
Whose ends are nowhere, is thine all, the puny all thou callest thine.

Perchance the law some Giver hath: Let be! let be! what canst thou know?
A myriad races came and went; this Sphinx hath seen them come and go.

Haply the Law that rules the world allows to man the widest range;
And haply Fate's a Theist-word, subject to human chance and change.

This "I" may find a future Life, a nobler copy of our own,
Where every riddle shall be ree'd, where every knowledge shall be known;

Where 'twill be man's to see the whole of what on Earth he sees in part;
Where change shall ne'er surcharge the thought; nor hope deferred shall hurt the heart.

But!—faded flower and fallen leaf no more shall deck the parent tree;
And man once dropped by Tree of Life what hope of other life has he?

The shattered bowl shall know repair; the riven lute shall sound once more;
But who shall mend the clay of man, the stolen breath to man restore?

The shivered clock again shall strike; the broken reed shall pipe again;
But we, we die, and Death is one, the doom of brutes, the doom of men.

Then, if Nirwânâ round our life with nothingness, 'tis haply best;
Thy toils and troubles, want and woe, at length have won their guerdon—Rest.

Cease, Abdû, cease! Thy song is sung, nor think the gain the singer's prize;
Till men hold Ignorance deadly sin, till man deserves his title "Wise:"

In Days to come, Days slow to dawn, when Wisdom deigns to dwell with men,
These echoes of a voice long stilled haply shall wake responsive strain:

Wend now thy way with brow serene, fear not thy humble tale to tell:—
The whispers of the Desert-wind; the Tinkling of the camel's-bell.

Richard Francis Burton [1821–1890]

GAUDEAMUS IGITUR *

Let us live, then, and be glad
While young life's before us!
After youthful pastime had,
After old age, hard and sad,
Earth will slumber o'er us.

Where are they who in this world,
Ere we kept, were keeping?
Go ye to the gods above;
Go to hell; inquire thereof:
They are not: they're sleeping.

* For the original of this poem see page 3829.

Brief is life, and brevity
Briefly shall be ended:
Death comes like a whirlwind strong,
Bears us with his blast along;
None shall be defended.

Live this university,
Men that learning nourish!
Live each member of the same,
Long live all that bear its name;
Let them ever flourish!

Live the commonwealth also,
And the men that guide it!
Live our town in strength and health,
Founders, patrons, by whose wealth
We are here provided!

Live all gods! A health to you,
Melting maids and beauteous!
Like the wives and women too,
Gentle, loving, tender, true,
Good, industrious, duteous!

Perish cares that pule and pine!
Perish envious blamers!
Die the Devil, thine and mine!
Die the starch-neck Philistine!
Scoffers and defamers!

Translated from the Latin by
John Addington Symonds [1840–1893]

LAURIGER HORATIUS *

Laurel-crowned Horatius,
True, how true thy saying!
Swift as wind flies over us
Time, devouring, slaying.

* For the original of this poem see page 3831.

Where are, oh! those goblets full
Of wine, honey-laden,
Strifes and loves and bountiful
Lips of ruddy maiden?

Grows the young grape tenderly,
And the maid is growing;
But the thirsty poet, see,
Years on him are snowing!
What's the use on hoary curls
Of the bays undying,
If we may not kiss the girls,
Drink while time's a-flying?

Translated from the Latin by
John Addington Symonds [1840–1893]

THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER

From "The House of a Hundred Lights"

The Great Sword Bearer only knows just when He'll wound my heart,—not I:
But since He is the one who gives the balm, what does it signify?

If my Control should lose its hold on Fortune's collar through some hurt,
What then?—Why then I'd simply cling to old gray Resignation's skirt.

Of all the languages of earth in which the human kind confer
The Master Speaker is the Tear: it is the Great Interpreter.

Man's life is like a tide that weaves the sea within its daily web.
It rises, surges, swells, and grows,—a pause—then comes the evening ebb.

In this rough field of earthly life I have reaped cause for tears enough,
Yet, after all, I think I've gleaned my modicum of Laughing-Stuff.

Frederic Ridgely Torrence [1875–

IN MEMORIAM

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou.
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;
We mock thee when we do not fear:
But help thy foolish ones to bear;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seemed my sin in me,
What seemed my worth since I began;

For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

I

I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand through time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss.
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with Death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
The long result of love, and boast,
"Behold the man that loved and lost,
But all he was is overworn."

XXVII

I envy not in any moods
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods;

I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time,
Unfettered by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
  The heart that never plighted troth
  But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
  I feel it, when I sorrow most;
  'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

LIV

O, yet we trust that somehow good
  Will be the final goal of ill,
  To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
  That not one life shall be destroyed,
  Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
  That not a moth with vain desire
  Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
  I can but trust that good shall fall
  At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream; but what am I?
  An infant crying in the night;
  An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry.

LV

The wish, that of the living whole
  No life may fail beyond the grave,
  Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life,

That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

LVI

"So careful of the type?" but no.
From scarped cliff and quarried stone
She cries, "A thousand types are gone;
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me:
I bring to life, I bring to death;
The spirit does but mean the breath:
I know no more." And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who rolled the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
And love Creation's final law—
Though Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravine, shrieked against his creed—

Who loved, who suffered countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just,

Be blown about the desert dust,
Or sealed within the iron hills?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons of the prime,
That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music matched with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LXXIII

So many worlds, so much to do,
So little done, such things to be,
How know I what had need of thee,
For thou wert strong as thou wert true?

The fame is quenched that I foresaw,
The head hath missed an earthly wreath:
I curse not Nature, no, nor Death;
For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass; the path that each man trod
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds.
What fame is left for human deeds
In endless age? It rests with God.

O hollow wraith of dying fame,
Fade wholly, while the soul exults,
And self-infolds the large results
Of force that would have forged a name.

CVI

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

CXVII

O days and hours, your work is this,
To hold me from my proper place,
A little while from his embrace,
For fuller gain of after bliss;

That out of distance might ensue
Desire of nearness doubly sweet,
And unto meeting, when we meet,
Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
And every span of shade that steals,
And every kiss of toothed wheels,
And all the courses of the suns.

CXXVI

Love is and was my lord and king,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend,
Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my king and lord,
And will be, though as yet I keep
Within the court on earth, and sleep
Encompassed by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
Who moves about from place to place,
And whispers to the worlds of space,
In the deep night, that all is well.

CXXVII

And all is well, though faith and form
Be sundered in the night of fear;
Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice, even though thrice again
The red fool-fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
And him, the lazar, in his rags!
They tremble, the sustaining crags;
The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood;
The fortress crashes from on high,
The brute earth lightens to the sky,
And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compassed by the fires of hell;
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXX

Thy voice is on the rolling air;
I hear thee where the waters run;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then? I cannot guess;
But though I seem in star and flower
To feel thee some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less.

My love involves the love before;
My love is vaster passion now;
Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
I have thee still, and I rejoice;
I prosper, circled with thy voice;
I shall not lose thee though I die.

CXXXI

O living will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow through our deeds and make them pure,

That we may lift from out of dust
A voice as unto him that hears,
A cry above the conquered years
To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,
The truths that never can be proved
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

DRIFTWOOD

I

Heaven is lovelier than the stars,
The sea is fairer than the shore;
I've seen beyond the sunset bars
A color more.

A thought is floating round my mind,
And there are words that will not come.
Do you believe, as I, the wind
Somewhere goes home?

II

In grassy paths my spirit walks.
The earth I travel speaks me fair
And still through many voices talks
Of that deep oneness which we are.

I love to see the rolling sod
Mixing and changing ever grow
To other forms,—and this is God
And all of God and all we know.

I love to feel the dead dust whirled
About my face, to touch the dust;
And this large muteness of the world
Gives me vitality of trust.

Here on the earth I lie a space,
The quiet earth that knows no strife.
I mix with her and take my place
In the dark matter that is life.

IV

Between the sun and moon
A voice, now vague, now clear—
Do you hear?—
Says, "Wander on."

And on the hearthstone black
The embers poignantly—
Do you see?—
Spell, "Come back."

Trumbull Stickney [1874–1904]

"WHAT RICHES HAVE YOU"

WHAT riches have you that you deem me poor,
Or what large comfort that you call me sad?
Tell me what makes you so exceeding glad:
Is your earth happy or your heaven sure?
I hope for heaven, since the stars endure
And bring such tidings as our fathers had.
I know no deeper doubt to make me mad,
I need no brighter love to keep me pure.
To me the faiths of old are daily bread;
I bless their hope, I bless their will to save,
And my deep heart still meaneth what they said.
It makes me happy that the soul is brave,
And, being so much kinsman to the dead,
I walk contented to the peopled grave.

George Santayana [1863–]

"O WORLD"

O WORLD, thou choosest not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes,
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world, and had no chart,
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies;
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science and his only art.
Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
That lights the pathway but one step ahead
Across a void of mystery and dread.
Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
By which alone the mortal heart is led
Unto the thinking of the thought divine.

George Santayana [1863–]

THE RUSTIC AT THE PLAY

Our youth is like a rustic at the play
That cries aloud in simple-hearted fear,
Curses the villain, shudders at the fray,
And weeps before the maiden's wreathèd bier.
Yet once familiar with the changeful show,
He starts no longer at a brandished knife,
But, his heart chastened at the sight of woe,
Ponders the mirrored sorrows of his life.

So tutored too, I watch the moving art
Of all this magic and impassioned pain
That tells the story of the human heart
In a false instance, such as poets feign;
I smile, and keep within the parchment furled
That prompts the passions of this strutting world.

George Santayana [1863–

TO HASEKAWA

Perhaps it is no matter that you died.
Life's an *incognito* which you saw through:
You never told on life—you had your pride;
But life has told on you.

Walter Conrad Arensberg [1861–

LIFE, A QUESTION

Life? and worth living?
Yes, with each part of us—
Hurt of us, help of us, hope of us, heart of us,
Life is worth living.
Ah! with the whole of us,
Will of us, brain of us, senses and soul of us.
Is life worth living?
Aye, with the best of us,
Heights of us, depths of us,—
Life is the test of us!

Corinne Roosevelt Robinson [1861–

THE EARTH AND MAN

A little sun, a little rain,
A soft wind blowing from the west—
And woods and fields are sweet again,
And warmth within the mountain's breast.

So simple is the earth we tread,
So quick with love and life her frame:
Ten thousand years have dawned and fled,
And still her magic is the same.

A little love, a little trust,
A soft impulse, a sudden dream—
And life as dry as desert dust
Is fresher than a mountain stream.

So simple is the heart of man,
So ready for new hope and joy:
Ten thousand years since it began
Have left it younger than a boy.

Stopford Augustus Brooke [1832–1916]

DESERVINGS

This is the height of our deserts:
A little pity for life's hurts;
A little rain, a little sun,
A little sleep when work is done.

A little righteous punishment,
Less for our deeds than their intent;
A little pardon now and then,
Because we are but struggling men.

A little light to show the way,
A little guidance where we stray;
A little love before we pass
To rest beneath the kirkyard grass.

A little faith, in days of change,
When life is stark and bare and strange;
A solace when our eyes are wet
With tears of longing and regret.

True it is that we cannot claim
Unmeasured recompense or blame,
Because our way of life is small:
A little is the sum of all.

Unknown

"A LITTLE WORK"

From "Trilby"

A LITTLE work, a little play
To keep us going—and so, good-day!

A little warmth, a little light
Of love's bestowing—and so, good-night!

A little fun, to match the sorrow
Of each day's growing—and so, good-morrow!

A little trust that when we die
We reap our sowing! And so—good-bye!

George du Maurier [1834–1896]

MAN'S DAYS

A SUDDEN wakin', a sudden weepin',
A li'l suckin', a li'l sleepin';
A cheel's full joys an' a cheel's short sorrows,
Wi' a power o' faith in gert to-morrows.

Young blood red-hot an' the love of a maid,
One glorious day as'll never fade;
Some shadows, some sunshine, some triumphs, some tears,
And a gatherin' weight o' the flyin' years.

Then old man's talk o' the days behind 'e,
Your darter's youngest darter to mind 'e;
A li'l dreamin', a li'l dyin':
A li'l lew corner o' airth to lie in.

Eden Phillpotts [1862–

A LITTLE WHILE

A LITTLE while the tears and laughter,
The willow and the rose—
A little while, and what comes after
No man knows.

An hour to sing, to love and linger. . . .
Then lutanist and lute
Will fall on silence, song and singer
Both be mute.

Our gods from our desires we fashion. . . .
Exalt our baffled lives,
And dream their vital bloom and passion
Still survives;

But when we're done with mirth and weeping,
With myrtle, rue, and rose,
Shall Death take Life into his keeping? . . .
No man knows.

What heart hath not, through twilight places,
Sought for its dead again
To gild with love their pallid faces? . . .
Sought in vain! . . .

Still mounts the Dream on shining pinion. . . . .
Still broods the dull distrust . . .
Which shall have ultimate dominion,
Dream, or dust?

A little while with grief and laughter,
And then the day will close;
The shadows gather . . . what comes after
No man knows!

Don Marquis [1878–

THE CONDUCT OF LIFE

INTEGER VITÆ *

The man of life upright,
  Whose guiltless heart is free
From all dishonest deeds,
  Or thought of vanity;

The man whose silent days
  In harmless joys are spent
Whom hope cannot delude,
  Nor sorrow discontent;

That man needs neither towers
  Nor armor for defense,
Nor secret vaults to fly
  From thunder's violence:

He only can behold
  With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
  And terrors of the skies.

Thus, scorning all the cares
  That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book,
  His wisdom heavenly things;

Good thoughts his only friends,
  His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober inn
  And quiet pilgrimage.

After Horace, by Thomas Campion [?–1619]

* For the original of this poem see page 3828

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

From "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table"

THIS is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!

Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

A PSALM OF LIFE

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO THE PSALMIST

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

EXCELSIOR

The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath,
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsior!

"Try not the Pass!" the old man said;
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"
And loud that clarion voice replied,
Excelsior!

"Oh stay," the maiden said, "and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast!"
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
Excelsior!

"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!"
This was the peasant's last Good-night,
A voice replied, far up the height,
Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
Excelsior!

A traveler, by the faithful hound,
Half buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

FOUR THINGS

FOUR things a man must learn to do
If he would make his record true:
To think without confusion clearly;
To love his fellow-men sincerely;
To act from honest motives purely;
To trust in God and Heaven securely.

Henry Van Dyke [1852–

LABOR AND LOVE

LABOR and love! there are no other laws
To rule the liberal action of that soul
Which fate hath set beneath thy brief control,
Or lull the empty fear that racks and gnaws;
Labor! then like a rising moon, the cause
Of life shall light thine hour from pole to pole,
Thou shalt taste health of purpose, and the roll
Of simple joys unwind without a pause.
Love! and thy heart shall cease to question why
Its beating pulse was set to rock and rave;
Find but another heart this side the grave
To soothe and cling to,—thou hast life's reply.
Labor and love! then fade without a sigh,
Submerged beneath the inexorable wave.

Edmund Gosse [1849–

WHAT IS GOOD

"WHAT is the real good?"
I asked in musing mood.

Order, said the law court;
Knowledge, said the school;
Truth, said the wise man;
Pleasure, said the fool;
Love, said the maiden;
Beauty, said the page;

Freedom, said the dreamer;
Home, said the sage;
Fame, said the soldier;
Equity, the seer;—

Spake my heart full sadly,
"The answer is not here."

Then within my bosom
Softly this I heard:
"Each heart holds the secret;
Kindness is the word."

John Boyle O'Reilly [1844–1890]

FAITH

Better trust all and be deceived,
And weep that trust and that deceiving,
Than doubt one heart that, if believed,
Had blessed one's life with true believing.

Oh, in this mocking world, too fast
The doubting fiend o'ertakes our youth;
Better be cheated to the last
Than lose the blessed hope of truth.

Frances Anne Kemble [1809–1893]

A CHARGE

If thou hast squandered years to grave a gem
Commissioned by thy absent Lord, and while
'Tis incomplete,
Others would bribe thy needy skill to them—
Dismiss them to the street!

Should'st thou at last discover Beauty's grove,
At last be panting on the fragrant verge,
But in the track,
Drunk with divine possession, thou meet Love—
Turn, at her bidding, back.

When round thy ship in tempest Hell appears,
And every specter mutters up more dire
To snatch control
And loose to madness thy deep-kenneled Fears—
Then to the helm, O Soul!

Last, if upon the cold, green-mantling sea,
Thou cling, alone with Truth, to the last spar,
Both castaway,
And one must perish—let it not be he
Whom thou art sworn to obey.

Herbert Trench [1865–

TO-DAY

So here hath been dawning
Another blue Day:
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Out of Eternity
This new Day is born;
Into Eternity,
At night, will return.

Behold it aforetime
No eye ever did:
So soon it for ever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue Day:
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Thomas Carlyle [1795–1881]

"MY DAYS AMONG THE DEAD ARE PASSED"

My days among the Dead are passed,
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old:

My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedewed
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the Dead; with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears;
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead; anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

Robert Southey [1774–1843]

OPPORTUNITY

MASTER of human destinies am I!
Fame, love, and fortune on my footsteps wait.
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote, and passing by
Hovel and mart and palace—soon or late
I knock unbidden once at every gate!

If sleeping, wake—if feasting, rise before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe

Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury, and woe,
Seek me in vain and uselessly implore.
I answer not, and I return no more!

John James Ingalls [1833–1900]

OPPORTUNITY

THEY do me wrong who say I come no more
When once I knock and fail to find you in;
For every day I stand outside your door
And bid you wake, and rise to fight and win.

Wail not for precious chances passed away!
Weep not for golden ages on the wane!
Each night I burn the records of the day—
At sunrise every soul is born again!

Dost thou behold thy lost youth all aghast?
Dost reel from righteous Retribution's blow?
Then turn from blotted archives of the past
And find the future's pages white as snow.

Art thou a mourner? Rouse thee from thy spell;
Art thou a sinner? Sins may be forgiven;
Each morning gives thee wings to flee from hell,
Each night a star to guide thy feet to heaven.

Laugh like a boy at splendors that have sped,
To vanished joys be blind and deaf and dumb;
My judgments seal the dead past with its dead,
But never bind a moment yet to come.

Though deep in mire, wring not your hands and weep;
I lend my arm to all who say "I can!"
No shame-faced outcast ever sank so deep
But yet might rise and be again a man!

Walter Malone [1866–1915]

OPPORTUNITY

THIS I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream:—
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain;
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.
A craven hung along the battle's edge,
And thought, "Had I a sword of keener steel—
That blue blade that the king's son bears,—but this
Blunt thing!" he snapped and flung it from his hand,
And lowering crept away and left the field.
Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,
Hilt-buried in the dry and trodden sand,
And ran and snatched it, and with battle-shout
Lifted afresh he hewed his enemy down,
And saved a great cause that heroic day.

Edward Rowland Sill [1841–1887]

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

CALUMNY

A WHISPER woke the air,
  A soft, light tone, and low,
  Yet barbed with shame and woe.
Ah! might it only perish there,
  Nor farther go!

But no! a quick and eager ear
  Caught up the little, meaning sound;
Another voice has breathed it clear;
  And so it wandered round
From ear to lip, from lip to ear,
Until it reached a gentle heart
That throbbed from all the world apart
  And that—it broke!

It was the only heart it found,—
The only heart 'twas meant to find,
  When first its accents woke.
It reached that gentle heart at last,
  And that—it broke!

Frances Sargent Osgood [1811–1850]

THE EFFECT OF EXAMPLE

WE scatter seeds with careless hand,
  And dream we ne'er shall see them more;
    But for a thousand years
    Their fruit appears,
In weeds that mar the land,
  Or healthful shore.

The deeds we do, the words we say,—
  Into still air they seem to fleet,
    We count them ever past;
    But they shall last,—
In the dread judgment they
  And we shall meet.

I charge thee by the years gone by,
For the love's sake of brethren dear,
Keep thou the one true way,
In work and play,
Lest in that world their cry
Of woe thou hear.

John Keble [1792–1866]

LITTLE AND GREAT

A TRAVELER on a dusty road
Strewed acorns on the lea;
And one took root and sprouted up,
And grew into a tree.
Love sought its shade at evening-time,
To breathe its early vows;
And Age was pleased, in heats of noon,
To bask beneath its boughs.
The dormouse loved its dangling twigs,
The birds sweet music bore—
It stood a glory in its place,
A blessing evermore.

A little spring had lost its way
Amid the grass and fern;
A passing stranger scooped a well
Where weary men might turn;
He walled it in, and hung with care
A ladle at the brink;
He thought not of the deed he did,
But judged that Toil might drink.
He passed again; and lo! the well,
By summer never dried,
Had cooled ten thousand parchèd tongues,
And saved a life beside.

A dreamer dropped a random thought;
'Twas old, and yet 'twas new;
A simple fancy of the brain,
But strong in being true.

It shone upon a genial mind,
And, lo! its light became
A lamp of life, a beacon ray,
A monitory flame:
The thought was small; its issue great;
A watch-fire on the hill,
It sheds its radiance far adown,
And cheers the valley still.

A nameless man, amid the crowd
That thronged the daily mart,
Let fall a word of hope and love,
Unstudied from the heart;—
A whisper on the tumult thrown,
A transitory breath,—
It raised a brother from the dust,
It saved a soul from death.
O germ! O fount! O word of love!
O thought at random cast!
Ye were but little at the first,
But mighty at the last.

Charles Mackay [1814–1889]

THE SIN OF OMISSION

It isn't the thing you do, dear;
It's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.
The tender word forgotten,
The letter you did not write,
The flower you might have sent, dear,
Are your haunting ghosts to-night.

The stone you might have lifted
Out of a brother's way,
The bit of heartsome counsel
You were hurried too much to say;

The loving touch of the hand, dear,
The gentle and winsome tone,
That you had no time nor thought for,
With troubles enough of your own.

The little acts of kindness,
So easily out of mind;
Those chances to be angels
Which every one may find—
They come in night and silence—
Each chill, reproachful wraith—
When hope is faint and flagging
And a blight has dropped on faith.

For life is all too short, dear,
And sorrow is all too great;
So suffer our great compassion
That tarries until too late;
And it's not the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives you the bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.

Margaret Sangster [1838–

THE FLOWER

Once in a golden hour
I cast to earth a seed.
Up there came a flower,
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
Through my garden-bower,
And muttering discontent
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall
Stole the seed by night;

Sowed it far and wide
By every town and tower,
Till all the people cried,
"Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable:
He that runs may read.
Most can raise the flowers now,
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
And some are poor indeed;
And now again the people
Call it but a weed.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

STANZAS

Often rebuked, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with me,
And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
For idle dreams of things that cannot be:

To-day, I will seek not the shadowy region;
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality,
And not among the half-distinguished faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading:
It vexes me to choose another guide:
Where the gray flocks in ferny glens are feeding;
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

What have those lonely mountains worth revealing?
More glory and more grief than I can tell:
The earth that wakes *one* human heart to feeling
Can center both the worlds of Heaven and Hell.

Emily Brontë [1818–1848]

SOLITUDE

Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone,
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air,
The echoes bound to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go.
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all,—
There are none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live,
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a long and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox [1855–

RECOMPENSE

The gifts that to our breasts we fold
Are brightened by our losses.
The sweetest joys a heart can hold
Grow up between its crosses.
And on life's pathway many a mile
Is made more glad and cheery,
Because, for just a little while,
The way seemed dark and dreary.

Nixon Waterman [1859–

THE LESSON OF THE WATER-MILL

Listen to the Water-Mill;
Through the live-long day
How the clicking of its wheel
Wears the hours away!
Languidly the Autumn wind
Stirs the forest leaves,
From the field the reapers sing,
Binding up their sheaves;
And a proverb haunts my mind
As a spell is cast,
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Autumn winds revive no more
Leaves that once are shed,
And the sickle cannot reap
Corn once gatherèd;
Flows the ruffled streamlet on,
Tranquil, deep, and still,
Never gliding back again
To the water-mill;
Truly speaks the proverb old,
With a meaning vast,—
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Take the lesson to thyself
True and loving heart;
Golden youth is fleeting by,
Summer hours depart;
Learn to make the most of life,
Lose no happy day,
Time will never bring thee back
Chances swept away!
Leave no tender word unsaid,
Love while love shall last;
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Work while yet the daylight shines,
Man of strength and will!
Never does the streamlet glide
Useless by the mill;
Wait not till to-morrow's sun
Beams upon thy way,
All that thou canst call thine own
Lies in thy "to-day";
Power and intellect and health
May not always last,
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

O the wasted hours of life
That have drifted by!
O the good that might have been,—
Lost, without a sigh!
Love, that we might once have saved
By a single word,
Thoughts conceived, but never penned,
Perishing unheard;—
Take the proverb to thine heart,
Take, and hold it fast,—
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Sarah Doudney [1843–

LIFE

I MADE a posy, while the day ran by:
Here will I smell my remnant out, and tie
My life within this band.
But Time did beckon to the flowers, and they
By noon most cunningly did steal away,
And withered in my hand.

My hand was next to them, and then my heart;
I took, without more thinking, in good part
Time's gentle admonition;

Who did so sweetly Death's sad taste convey,
Making my mind to smell my fatal day,
Yet sugaring the suspicion.

Farewell, dear flowers! sweetly your time ye spent,
Fit, while ye lived, for smell or ornament,
And after death for cures.
I follow straight, without complaints or grief;
Since, if my scent be good, I care not if
It be as short as yours.

George Herbert [1593–1633]

BE TRUE

Thou must be true thyself,
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another's soul wouldst reach!
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.

Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.

Horatius Bonar [1808–1889]

TO-DAY

Why fear to-morrow, timid heart?
Why tread the future's way?
We only need to do our part
To-day, dear child, to-day.

The past is written! Close the book
On pages sad and gay;
Within the future do not look,
But live to-day—to-day.

'Tis this one hour that God has given;
His Now we must obey;
And it will make our earth his heaven
To live to-day—to-day.

Lydia Avery Coonley Ward [1845–

THE VALLEY OF VAIN VERSES

The grief that is but feigning,
And weeps melodious tears
Of delicate complaining
From self-indulgent years;
The mirth that is but madness,
And has no inward gladness
Beneath its laughter, straining
To capture thoughtless ears;

The love that is but passion
Of amber-scented lust;
The doubt that is but fashion;
The faith that has no trust;—
These Thamyris disperses,
In the Valley of Vain Verses
Below the Mount Parnassian,
And they crumble into dust.

Henry Van Dyke [1852–

A THANKSGIVING

Lord, for the erring thought
Not unto evil wrought;
Lord, for the wicked will
Betrayed and baffled still;
For the heart from itself kept:
Our Thanksgiving accept!

For ignorant hopes that were
Broken to our blind prayer;
For pain, death, sorrow—sent
Unto our chastisement;

For all loss of seeming good:
Quicken our gratitude!

William Dean Howells [1837–

THE LADY POVERTY

The Lady Poverty was fair:
But she has lost her looks of late,
With change of times and change of air.
Ah slattern, she neglects her hair,
Her gown, her shoes. She keeps no state
As once when her pure feet were bare.

Or—almost worse, if worse can be—
She scolds in parlors; dusts and trims,
Watches and counts. Oh, is this she
Whom Francis met, whose step was free,
Who with Obedience caroled hymns,
In Umbria walked with Chastity?

Where is her ladyhood? Not here,
Not among modern kinds of men;
But in the stony fields, where clear
Through the thin trees the skies appear;
In delicate spare soil and fen,
And slender landscape and austere.

Alice Meynell [1853–

THE LADY POVERTY

I met her on the Umbrian Hills,
Her hair unbound, her feet unshod;
As one whom secret glory fills
She walked—alone with God.

I met her in the city street;
Oh, how changed was her aspect then!
With heavy eyes and weary feet
She walked alone—with men.

Jacob Fischer [18 –

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?

It is the generous spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:
Whose high endeavors are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright:
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care;
Who, doomed to go in company with pain,
And fear, and bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable—because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.

'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labors good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:
Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand

On honorable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love.
'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won:
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpassed:

Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name—
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause.

This is the happy Warrior; this is he
That every man in arms should wish to be.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

'Tis sweet to hear of heroes dead,
To know them still alive;
But sweeter if we earn their bread,
And in us they survive.

Ye skies, drop gently round my breast
And be my corselet blue;
Ye earth, receive my lance in rest,
My faithful charger you:

Ye stars my spear-heads in the sky,
My arrow-tips ye are:
I see the routed foemen fly
My bright spears fixed [for war].

Give me an angel for a foe!
Fix now the place and time!
And straight to meet him I will go
Above the starry chime:

And with our clashing bucklers' clang
The heavenly spheres shall ring,
While bright the northern lights shall hang
Beside our tourneying.

And if she lose her champion true,
Tell Heaven not to despair,
For I will be her champion new,
Her fame I will repair.

Henry David Thoreau [1817–1862]

"HE WHOM A DREAM HATH POSSESSED"

He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of doubting,
For mist and the blowing of winds and the mouthing of words he scorns;
Not the sinuous speech of schools he hears, but a knightly shouting,
And never comes darkness down, yet he greeteth a million morns.

He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of roaming;
All roads and the flowing of waves and the speediest flight he knows,
But wherever his feet are set, his soul is forever homing,
And going, he comes, and coming he heareth a call and goes.

He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of sorrow,
At death and the dropping of leaves and the fading of suns he smiles,
For a dream remembers no past and scorns the desire of a morrow,
And a dream in a sea of doom sets surely the ultimate isles.

He whom a dream hath possessed treads the impalpable marches,
From the dust of the day's long road he leaps to a laughing star,
And the ruin of worlds that fall he views from eternal arches,
And rides God's battle-field in a flashing and golden car.

Shaemas OSheel [1886–

MASTERY

I would not have a god come in
To shield me suddenly from sin,
And set my house of life to rights;
Nor angels with bright burning wings
Ordering my earthly thoughts and things;

Rather my own frail guttering lights
Wind-blown and nearly beaten out,
Rather the terror of the nights
And long sick groping after doubt,
Rather be lost than let my soul
Slip vaguely from my own control—
Of my own spirit let me be
In sole though feeble mastery.

Sara Teasdale [1884-

A PRAYER

I KNEEL not now to pray that thou
  Make white one single sin,—
I only kneel to thank thee, Lord,
  For what I have not been;

For deeds which sprouted in my heart
  But ne'er to bloom were brought,
For monstrous vices which I slew
  In the shambles of my thought—

Dark seeds the world has never guessed
  By hell and passion bred,
Which never grew beyond the bud
  That cankered in my head.

Some said I was a righteous man—
  Poor fools! The gallow's tree
(If thou hadst let one foot to slip)
  Had grown a limb for me.

So for the Man I might have been
  My heart must cease to mourn—
'Twere best to praise the living Lord
  For monsters never born,

To bend the spiritual knee
  (Knowing myself within)
And thank the kind, benignant God
  For what I have not been.

Harry Kemp [1883-

PRAYER

God, though this life is but a wraith,
Although we know not what we use,
Although we grope with little faith,
Give me the heart to fight—and lose.

Ever insurgent let me be,
Make me more daring than devout;
From sleek contentment keep me free,
And fill me with a buoyant doubt.

Open my eyes to visions girt
With beauty, and with wonder lit—
But let me always see the dirt,
And all that spawn and die in it.

Open my ears to music; let
Me thrill with Spring's first flutes and drums—
But never let me dare forget
The bitter ballads of the slums.

From compromise and things half-done,
Keep me, with stern and stubborn pride;
And when, at last, the fight is won,
God, keep me still unsatisfied.

Louis Untermeyer [1885–

PRAYER FOR PAIN

I do not pray for peace nor ease,
Nor truce from sorrow:
No suppliant on servile knees
Begs here against to-morrow!

Lean flame against lean flame we flash,
O Fates that meet me fair;
Blue steel against blue steel we clash—
Lay on, and I shall dare!

But Thou of deeps the awful Deep,
Thou breather in the clay,

Grant this my only prayer—Oh keep
My soul from turning gray!

For until now, whatever wrought
Against my sweet desires,
My days were smitten harps strung taut,
My nights were slumbrous lyres.

And howsoe'er the hard blow rang
Upon my battered shield,
Some lark-like, soaring spirit sang
Above my battle-field;

And through my soul of stormy night
The zigzag blue flame ran.
I asked no odds—I fought my fight—
Events against a man.

But now—at last—the gray mist chokes
And numbs me. *Leave me pain!*
Oh, let me feel the biting strokes
That I may fight again!

John G. Neihardt [1881–

CARRY ON!

It's easy to fight when everything's right,
And you're mad with the thrill and the glory;
It's easy to cheer when victory's near,
And wallow in fields that are gory.
It's a different song when everything's wrong,
When you're feeling infernally mortal;
When it's ten against one, and hope there is none,
Buck up, little soldier, and chortle:

Carry on! Carry on!
There isn't much punch in your blow.
You're glaring and staring and hitting out blind;
You're muddy and bloody, but never you mind.
Carry on! Carry on!
You haven't the ghost of a show.
It's looking like death, but while you've a breath,
Carry on, my son! Carry on!

And so in the strife of the battle of life
It's easy to fight when you're winning;
It's easy to slave, and starve and be brave,
When the dawn of success is beginning.
But the man who can meet despair and defeat
With a cheer, there's the man of God's choosing;
The man who can fight to Heaven's own height
Is the man who can fight when he's losing.

Carry on! Carry on!
Things never were looming so black.
But show that you haven't a cowardly streak,
And though you're unlucky you never are weak.
Carry on! Carry on!
Brace up for another attack.
It's looking like hell, but—you never can tell:
Carry on, old man! Carry on!

There are some who drift out in the deserts of doubt,
And some who in brutishness wallow;
There are others, I know, who in piety go
Because of a Heaven to follow.
But to labor with zest, and to give of your best,
For the sweetness and joy of the giving;
To help folks along with a hand and a song;
Why, there's the real sunshine of living.

Carry on! Carry on!
Fight the good fight and true;
Believe in your mission, greet life with a cheer;
There's big work to do, and that's why you are here.
Carry on! Carry on!
Let the world be the better for you;
And at last when you die, let this be your cry:
Carry on, my soul! Carry on!

Robert W. Service [1874–

THE FIGHTING FAILURE

He has come the way of the fighting men and fought by the rules of the Game.
And out of Life he has gathered—what? A living—and little fame.

Ever and ever the Goal looms near—seeming each time
worth while,
But ever it proves a mirage fair—ever the grim gods smile.
And so, with lips hard set and white, he buries the hope
that is gone—
His fight is lost—and he knows it is lost—and yet he is
fighting on.

Out of the smoke of the battle-line, watching men win their
way
And cheering with those who cheer success, he enters again
the fray,
Licking the blood and dust from his lips, wiping the sweat
from his eyes,
He does the work he is set to do, and—"therein honor lies."
Brave they were, those men he cheered, theirs is the winners'
thrill;
His fight is lost—and he knows it is lost—and yet he is
fighting still.

And those who have won, have rest and peace; and those
who have died, have more;
But weary and spent, he cannot stop, seeking the ultimate
score.
Courage was theirs for a little time—but what of the man
who sees
That lose he must, yet will not beg, for mercy, upon his knees?
Side by side with grim Defeat, he struggles at dusk or dawn;
His fight is lost—and he knows it is lost—and yet, he is
fighting on.

Praise for the warriors who succeed, and tears for the van-
quished dead.
The world will hold them close to Her heart, wreathing
each honored head;
But there in the ranks, soul-sick, time-tried, he battles
against the odds,
Sans hope, but true to his colors torn, the plaything of the
gods!
Uncover when he goes by at last! Held to his task by *will*—
The fight is lost—and he knows it is lost—and yet he is
fighting still!

Everard J. Appleton [1872–

THE PRAYER OF BEATEN MEN

From "The House of Broken Swords"

We are the fallen, who, with helpless faces
Low in the dust, in stiffening ruin lay,
Felt the hoof's beat, and heard the rattling traces
As o'er us drove the chariots of the fray.

We are the fallen, who by ramparts gory,
Awaiting death, heard the far shouts begin,
And with our last glance glimpsed the victor's glory
For which we died, but dying might not win.

We were but men. Always our eyes were holden,
We could not read the dark that walled us round,
Nor deem our futile plans with thine enfolden—
We fought, not knowing God was on the ground.

Give us our own; and though in realms eternal
The potsherd and the pot, belike, are one,
Make our old world to know that with supernal
Powers we were matched, and by the stars o'erthrown.

Ay, grant our ears to hear the foolish praising
Of men—old voices of our lost home-land,
Or else, the gateways of this dim world raising,
Give us our swords again, and hold thy hand.

William Hervey Woods [1852–

THE LAST WORD

Creep into thy narrow bed,
Creep, and let no more be said!
Vain thy onset! all stands fast.
Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease!
Geese are swans, and swans are geese,
Let them have it how they will!
Thou art tired; best be still.

They out-talked thee, hissed thee, tore thee?
Better men fared thus before thee;
Fired their ringing shot and passed,
Hotly charged—and sank at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb!
Let the victors, when they come,
When the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall!

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

IO VICTIS

From "He and She"

I SING the hymn of the conquered, who fell in the Battle of Life,
The hymn of the wounded, the beaten, who died overwhelmed in the strife;
Not the jubilant song of the victors, for whom the resounding acclaim
Of nations was lifted in chorus, whose brows wore the chaplet of fame,
But the hymn of the low and the humble, the weary, the broken in heart,
Who strove and who failed, acting bravely a silent and desperate part;
Whose youth bore no flower on its branches, whose hopes burned in ashes away,
From whose hands slipped the prize they had grasped at, who stood at the dying of day
With the wreck of their life all around them, unpitied, unheeded, alone,
With Death swooping down o'er their failure, and all but their faith overthrown,
While the voice of the world shouts its chorus—its pæan for those who have won;
While the trumpet is sounding triumphant and high to the breeze and the sun

Glad banners are waving, hands clapping and hurrying feet
Thronging after the laurel-crowned victors, I stand on the field of defeat
In the shadow, with those who are fallen, and wounded, and dying, and there
Chant a requiem low, place my hand on their pain-knotted brows, breathe a prayer,
Hold the hand that is helpless and whisper, "They only the victory win
Who have fought the good fight and have vanquished the demon that tempts us within,
Who have held to their faith unseduced by the prize that the world holds on high,
Who have dared for a high cause to suffer, resist, fight—if need be, to die."
Speak, History! Who are life's victors? Unroll the long annals and say,
Are they those whom the world called the victors,—who won the success of a day?
The martyrs, or Nero? The Spartans who fell at Thermopylæ's tryst,
Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges, or Socrates? Pilate, or Christ?

William Wetmore Story [1819–1895]

"THEY WENT FORTH TO BATTLE BUT THEY ALWAYS FELL"

They went forth to battle but they always fell;
Their eyes were fixed above the sullen shields;
Nobly they fought and bravely, but not well,
And sank heart-wounded by a subtle spell.
They knew not fear that to the foeman yields,
They were not weak, as one who vainly wields
A futile weapon; yet the sad scrolls tell
How on the hard-fought field they always fell.

It was a secret music that they heard,
A sad sweet plea for pity and for peace;
And that which pierced the heart was but a word,
Though the white breast was red-lipped where the sword

Pressed a fierce cruel kiss, to put surcease
On its hot thirst, but drank a hot increase.
Ah, they by some strange troubling doubt were stirred,
And died for hearing what no foeman heard.

They went forth to battle but they always fell:
Their might was not the might of lifted spears;
Over the battle-clamor came a spell
Of troubling music, and they fought not well.
Their wreaths are willows and their tribute, tears;
Their names are old sad stories in men's ears;
Yet they will scatter the red hordes of Hell,
Who went to battle forth and always fell.

Shaemas O Sheel [1886–]

THE MASTERS

Oh, Masters, you who rule the world,
Will you not wait with me awhile,
When swords are sheathed and sails are furled,
And all the fields with harvest smile?
I would not waste your time for long,
I ask you but, when you are tired,
To read how by the weak, the strong
Are weighed and worshiped and desired.

When weary of the Mart, the Loom,
The Withering-house, the Riffle-blocks,
The Barrack-square, the Engine-room,
The pick-axe, ringing on the rocks,—
When tents are pitched and work is done,
While restful twilight broods above,
By fresh-lit lamp, or dying sun,
See in my songs how women love.

We shared your lonely watch by night,
We knew you faithful at the helm,
Our thoughts went with you through the fight,
That saved a soul,—or wrecked a realm;

Ah, how our hearts leapt forth to you,
In pride and joy, when you prevailed,
And when you died, serene and true:
—We wept in silence when you failed!

Oh, brain, that did not gain the gold!
Oh, arm, that could not wield the sword,
Here is the love, that is not sold,
Here are the hearts to hail you Lord!

You played and lost the game? What then?
The rules are harsh and hard, we know;
You, still, oh, brothers, are the men
Whom we in secret reverence so.
Your work was waste? Maybe your share
Lay in the hour you laughed and kissed;
Who knows but that your son shall wear
The laurels that his father missed?

Ay, you who win, and you who lose,
Whether you triumph,—or despair,—
When your returning footsteps choose
The homeward track, our love is there.
For, since the world is ordered thus,
To you, the fame, the stress, the sword,
We can but wait, until to us
You give yourselves, for our reward.

To Whaler's deck and Coral beach,
To lonely Ranch and Frontier-Fort,
Beyond the narrow bounds of speech
I lay the cable of my thought.
I fain would send my thanks to you,
(Though who am I, to give you praise?)
Since what you are, and work you do
Are lessons for our easier ways.

'Neath alien stars your camp-fires glow,
I know you not,—your tents are far.
My hope is but in song to show
How honored and how dear you are.

Laurence Hope [1865–1904]

THE KINGS

A MAN said unto his Angel:
"My spirits are fallen low,
And I cannot carry this battle:
O brother! where might I go?

"The terrible Kings are on me
With spears that are deadly bright;
Against me so from the cradle
Do fate and my fathers fight."

Then said to the man his Angel:
"Thou wavering witless soul,
Back to the ranks! What matter
To win or to lose the whole,

"As judged by the little judges
Who hearken not well, nor see?
Not thus, by the outer issue,
The Wise shall interpret thee.

"Thy will is the sovereign measure
And only event of things:
The puniest heart, defying,
Were stronger than all these Kings.

"Though out of the past they gather,
Mind's Doubt and Bodily Pain,
And pallid Thirst of the Spirit
That is kin to the other twain,

"And Grief, in a cloud of banners,
And ringleted Vain Desires,
And Vice with the spoils upon him
Of thee and thy beaten sires,—

"While Kings of eternal evil
Yet darken the hills about,
Thy part is with broken saber
To rise on the last redoubt;

"To fear not sensible failure,
Nor covet the game at all,
But fighting, fighting, fighting,
Die, driven against the wall!"

Louise Imogen Guiney [1861–

FAILURES

They bear no laurels on their sunless brows,
Nor aught within their pale hands as they go;
They look as men accustomed to the slow
And level onward course 'neath drooping boughs.
Who may these be no trumpet doth arouse,
These of the dark processionals of woe,
Unpraised, unblamed, but whom sad Acheron's flow
Monotonously lulls to leaden drowse?
These are the Failures. Clutched by Circumstance,
They were—say not too weak!—too ready prey
To their own fear whose fixèd Gorgon glance
Made them as stone for aught of great essay;—
Or else they nodded when their Master-Chance
Wound his one signal, and went on his way.

Arthur Upson [1877–1908]

DON QUIXOTE

Behind thy pasteboard, on thy battered hack,
Thy lean cheek striped with plaster to and fro,
Thy long spear leveled at the unseen foe,
And doubtful Sancho trudging at thy back,
Thou wert a figure strange enough, good lack!
To make Wiseacredom, both high and low,
Rub purblind eyes, and (having watched thee go),
Dispatch its Dogberrys upon thy track:
Alas! poor Knight! Alas! poor soul possessed!
Yet would to-day, when Courtesy grows chill,
And life's fine loyalties are turned to jest,
Some fire of thine might burn within us still!
Ah! would but one might lay his lance in rest,
And charge in earnest—were it but a mill.

Austin Dobson [1840–

A PRAYER

Lord, not for light in darkness do we pray,
Not that the veil be lifted from our eyes,
Nor that the slow ascension of our day
Be otherwise.

Not for a clearer vision of the things
Whereof the fashioning shall make us great,
Nor for remission of the peril and stings
Of time and fate.

Not for a fuller knowledge of the end
Whereto we travel, bruised yet unafraid,
Nor that the little healing that we lend
Shall be repaid.

Not these, O Lord. We would not break the bars
Thy wisdom sets about us; we shall climb
Unfettered to the secrets of the stars
In thy good time.

We do not crave the high perception swift
When to refrain were well, and when fulfil,
Nor yet the understanding strong to sift
The good from ill.

Not these, O Lord. For these thou hast revealed.
We know the golden season when to reap
The heavy-fruited treasure of the field,
The hour to sleep.

Not these. We know the hemlock from the rose,
The pure from stained, the noble from the base,
The tranquil holy light of truth that glows
On Pity's face.

We know the paths wherein our feet should press,
Across our hearts are written thy decrees.
Yet now, O Lord, be merciful to bless
With more than these.

Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,
Grant us the strength to labor as we know,
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
To strike the blow.

Knowledge we ask not—knowledge thou hast lent;
But Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need.
Give us to build above the deep intent
The deed, the deed.

John Drinkwater [1882–

BATTLE CRY

More than half beaten, but fearless,
Facing the storm and the night;
Breathless and reeling, but tearless,
Here in the lull of the fight,
I who bow not but before Thee,
God of the fighting Clan,
Lifting my fists I implore Thee,
Give me the heart of a Man!

What though I live with the winners,
Or perish with those who fall?
Only the cowards are sinners,
Fighting the fight is all.
Strong is my Foe—he advances!
Snapped is my blade, O Lord!
See the proud banners and lances!
O spare me this stub of a sword!

Give me no pity, nor spare me;
Calm not the wrath of my Foe.
See where he beckons to dare me!
Bleeding, half-beaten—I go.
Not for the glory of winning,
Not for the fear of the night;
Shunning the battle is sinning—
O spare me the heart to fight!

Red is the mist about me;
  Deep is the wound in my side;
"Coward" thou criest to flout me?
  O terrible Foe, thou hast lied!
Here with my battle before me,
  God of the fighting Clan,
Grant that the woman who bore me
  Suffered to suckle a man!

John G. Neihardt [1881–

RABIA

Rabia, sick upon her bed,
By two saints was visited,—

Holy Malik, Hassan wise—
Men of mark in Moslem eyes.

Hassan says, "Whose prayer is pure,
Will God's chastisement endure."

Malik, from a deeper sense
Uttered his experience:

"He who loves his Master's choice
Will in chastisement rejoice."

Rabia saw some selfish will
In their maxims lingering still,

And replied, "O men of grace!
He who sees his Master's face

Will not, in his prayer, recall
That he is chastised at all."

From the Arabic, by James Freeman Clarke [1810–1888]

THE JOYFUL WISDOM

From "The Angel in the House"

Would Wisdom for herself be wooed,
  And wake the foolish from his dream,
She must be glad as well as good,
  And must not only be, but seem.

Beauty and joy are hers by right;
And, knowing this, I wonder less
That she's so scorned, when falsely dight
In misery and ugliness.
What's that which Heaven to man endears,
And that which eyes no sooner see
Than the heart says, with floods of tears,
"Ah, that's the thing which I would be!"
Not childhood, full of frown and fret;
Not youth, impatient to disown
Those visions high, which to forget
Were worse than never to have known;
Not worldlings, in whose fair outside,
Nor courtesy nor justice fails,
Thanks to cross-pulling vices tied,
Like Samson's foxes, by the tails;
Not poets; real things are dreams,
When dreams are as realities,
And boasters of celestial gleams
Go stumbling aye for want of eyes;
Not patriots nor people's men,
In whom two worse-matched evils meet
Than ever sought Adullam's den,
Base conscience and a high conceit;
Not new-made saints, their feelings iced,
Their joy in man and nature gone,
Who sing "O easy yoke of Christ!"
But find 'tis hard to get it on;
Not great men, even when they're good;
The good man whom the time makes great,
By some disgrace of chance or blood,
God fails not to humiliate;
Not these: but souls, found here and there,
Oases in our waste of sin,
Where everything is well and fair,
And Heaven remits its discipline;
Whose sweet subdual of the world
The worldling scarce can recognize,
And ridicule, against it hurled,
Drops with a broken sting, and dies;

Who nobly, if they cannot know
  Whether a 'scutcheon's dubious field
Carries a falcon or a crow,
  Fancy a falcon on the shield;
Yet, ever careful not to hurt
  God's honor, who creates success,
Their praise of even the best desert
  Is but to have presumed no less;
Who, should their own life plaudits bring,
  Are simply vexed at heart that such
An easy, yea, delightful thing
  Should move the minds of men so much.
They live by law, not like the fool,
  But like the bard, who freely sings
In strictest bonds of rhyme and rule,
  And finds in them, not bonds, but wings.
Postponing still their private ease
  To courtly custom, appetite,
Subjected to observances,
  To banquet goes with full delight;
Nay, continence and gratitude
  So cleanse their lives from earth's alloy,
They taste, in Nature's common food,
  Nothing but spiritual joy.
They shine like Moses in the face,
  And teach our hearts, without the rod,
That God's grace is the only grace,
  And all grace is the grace of God.

Coventry Patmore [1823–1896]

ODE TO DUTY

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love,
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
O, if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires;
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:

Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
O, let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

CHANT ROYAL OF HIGH VIRTUE

Who lives in suit of armor pent,
And hides himself behind a wall,
For him is not the great event,
The garland, nor the Capitol.
And is God's guerdon less than they?
Nay, moral man, I tell thee Nay:
Nor shall the flaming forts be won
By sneaking negatives alone,
By Lenten fast or Ramazàn,
But by the challenge proudly thrown—
Virtue is that beseems a Man!

God, in his Palace resident
Of Bliss, beheld our sinful ball,
And charged His own Son innocent
Us to redeem from Adam's fall.
—"Yet must it be that men Thee slay."
—"Yea, though it must, must I obey,"
Said Christ,—and came, His royal Son,
To die, and dying to atone
For harlot and for publican.
Read on that rood He died upon—
Virtue is that beseems a Man!

And by that rood where He was bent
I saw the world's great captains all
Go riding to the tournament—
Cyrus the Great and Hannibal,
Cæsar of Rome and Attila,
Lord Charlemagne and his array,
Lord Alisaundre of Macedon—
With flaming lance and habergeon
They passed, and to the rataplan
Of drums gave salutation—
Virtue is that beseems a Man!

Had tall Achilles lounged in tent
For aye, and Xanthus neighed in stall,
The towers of Troy had ne'er been shent,
Nor stayed the dance in Priam's hall.
Bend o'er thy book till thou be gray,
Read, mark, perpend, digest, survey—
Instruct thee deep as Solomon—
One only chapter thou shalt con,
One lesson learn, one sentence scan,
One title and one colophon—
Virtue is that beseems a Man!

High Virtue's hest is eloquent
With spur and not with martingall:
Sufficeth not thou'rt continent:
BE COURTEOUS, BRAVE, AND LIBERAL.
God fashioned thee of chosen clay
For service, nor did ever say
"Deny thee this," "Abstain from yon,"
Save to inure thee, thew and bone,
To be confirmèd of the clan
That made immortal Marathon—
Virtue is that beseems a Man!

ENVOY

Young Knight, the lists are set to-day:
Hereafter shall be long to pray
In sepulture with hands of stone.
Ride, then! outride the bugle blown!

And gaily dinging down the van
Charge with a cheer—Set on! Set on!
Virtue is that beseems a Man!

Arthur T. Quiller-Couch [1863–

THE SPLENDID SPUR

Not on the neck of prince or hound,
Nor on a woman's finger twined,
May gold from the deriding ground
Keep sacred that we sacred bind:
Only the heel
Of splendid steel
Shall stand secure on sliding fate,
When golden navies weep their freight.

The scarlet hat, the laureled stave
Are measures, not the springs, of worth;
In a wife's lap, as in a grave,
Man's airy notions mix with earth.
Seek other spur
Bravely to stir
The dust in this loud world, and tread
Alp-high among the whispering dead.

Trust in thyself,—then spur amain:
So shall Charybdis wear a grace,
Grim Ætna laugh, the Libyan plain
Take roses to her shriveled face.
This orb—this round
Of sight and sound—
Count it the lists that God hath built
For haughty hearts to ride a-tilt.

Arthur T. Quiller-Couch [1863–

SACRIFICE

Though love repine, and reason chafe,
There came a voice without reply,—
"'Tis man's perdition to be safe,
When for the truth he ought to die."

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS

CONSCIENCE

From "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers"

Conscience is instinct bred in the house,
Feeling and Thinking propagate the sin
By an unnatural breeding in and in.
I say, Turn it out of doors,
Into the moors.
I love a life whose plot is simple,
And does not thicken with every pimple,
A soul so sound no sickly conscience binds it,
That makes the universe no worse than 't finds it.
I love an earnest soul,
Whose mighty joy and sorrow
Are not drowned in a bowl,
And brought to life to-morrow;
That lives one tragedy,
And not seventy;
A conscience worth keeping,
Laughing not weeping;
A conscience wise and steady,
And forever ready;
Not changing with events,
Dealing in compliments;
A conscience exercised about
Large things, which one *may* doubt.
I love a soul not all of wood,
Predestined to be good,
But true to the backbone
Unto itself alone,
And false to none;
Born to its own affairs,
Its own joys and own cares;
By whom the work which God begun
Is finished, and not undone;

Taken up where he left off,
Whether to worship or to scoff;
If not good, why then evil,
If not good god, good devil.
Goodness!—you hypocrite, come out of that,
Live your life, do your work, then take your hat.
I have no patience towards
Such conscientious cowards.
Give me simple laboring folk,
Who love their work,
Whose virtue is a song
To cheer God along.

Henry David Thoreau [1817–1862]

MY PRAYER

Great God, I ask thee for no meaner pelf
Than that I may not disappoint myself;
That in my action I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye.

And next in value, which thy kindness lends,
That I may greatly disappoint my friends,
Howe'er they think or hope that it may be,
They may not dream how thou'st distinguished me.

That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practise more than my tongue saith;
That my low conduct may not show,
Nor my relenting lines,
That I thy purpose did not know,
Or overrated thy designs.

Henry David Thoreau [1817–1862]

INSPIRATION

If with light head erect I sing,
Though all the Muses lend their force,
From my poor love of anything,
The verse is weak and shallow as its source.

But if with bended neck I grope
Listening behind me for my wit,
With faith superior to hope,
More anxious to keep back than forward it,—

Making my soul accomplice there
Unto the flame my heart hath lit,
Then will the verse forever wear,—
Time cannot bend the line which God has writ.

I hearing get, who had but ears,
And sight, who had but eyes before;
I moments live, who lived but years,
And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore.

Now chiefly is my natal hour,
And only now my prime of life;
Of manhood's strength it is the flower,
'Tis peace's end, and war's beginning strife.

It comes in summer's broadest noon,
By a gray wall, or some chance place,
Unseasoning time, insulting June,
And vexing day with its presuming face.

I will not doubt the love untold
Which not my worth nor want hath bought,
Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,
And to this evening hath me brought.

Henry David Thoreau [1817–1862]

EACH AND ALL

Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown
Of thee from the hill-top looking down;
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton, tolling his bell at noon,
Deems not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,
Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;

Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent.
All are needed by each one;
Nothing is fair or good alone.
I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
I brought him home, in his nest, at even;
He sings the song, but it cheers not now,
For I did not bring home the river and sky;—
He sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye.

The delicate shells lay on the shore;
The bubbles of the latest wave
Fresh pearls to their enamel gave,
And the bellowing of the savage sea
Greeted their safe escape to me.
I wiped away the weeds and foam,
I fetched my sea-born treasures home;
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things
Had left their beauty on the shore,
With the sun and the sand and the wild uproar.

The lover watched his graceful maid,
As 'mid the virgin train she strayed;
Nor knew her beauty's best attire
Was woven still by the snow-white choir.
At last she came to his hermitage,
Like the bird from the woodlands to the cage;—
The gay enchantment was undone,
A gentle wife, but fairy none.

Then I said, "I covet truth;
Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat;
I leave it behind with the games of youth:"—
As I spoke, beneath my feet
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
Running over the club-moss burrs;
I inhaled the violet's breath;
Around me stood the oaks and firs;
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;

Over me soared the eternal sky,
Full of light and of deity;
Again I saw, again I heard,
The rolling river, the morning bird;—
Beauty through my senses stole;
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

BRAHMA

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

BACCHUS

Bring me wine, but wine which never grew
In the belly of the grape,
Or grew on vine whose tap-roots, reaching through
Under the Andes to the Cape,
Suffered no savor of the earth to 'scape.

Let its grapes the morn salute
From a nocturnal root,
Which feels the acrid juice
Of Styx and Erebus;
And turns the woe of Night,
By its own craft, to a more rich delight.

We buy ashes for bread;
We buy diluted wine;
Give me of the true,—
Whose ample leaves and tendrils curled
Among the silver hills of heaven
Draw everlasting dew;
Wine of wine,
Blood of the world,
Form of forms, and mold of statures,
That I intoxicated,
And by the draught assimilated,
May float at pleasure through all natures;
The bird-language rightly spell,
And that which roses say so well.

Wine that is shed
Like the torrents of the sun
Up the horizon walls,
Or like the Atlantic streams, which run
When the South Sea calls.

Water and bread,
Food which needs no transmuting,
Rainbow-flowering, wisdom-fruiting,
Wine which is already man,
Food which teach and reason can.

Wine which Music is,—
Music and wine are one,—
That I, drinking this,
Shall hear far Chaos talk with me;
Kings unborn shall walk with me,

And the poor grass shall plot and plan
What it will do when it is man.
Quickened so, will I unlock
Every crypt of every rock.

I thank the joyful juice
For all I know;—
Winds of remembering
Of the ancient being blow,
And seeming-solid walls of use
Open and flow.

Pour, Bacchus! the remembering wine;
Retrieve the loss of me and mine!
Vine for vine be antidote,
And the grape requite the lote!
Haste to cure the old despair;—
Reason in Nature's lotus drenched,
The memory of ages quenched;
Give them again to shine;
Let wine repair what this undid;
And where the infection slid,
A dazzling memory revive;
Refresh the faded tints,
Recut the agèd prints,
And write my old adventures with the pen
Which on the first day drew,
Upon the tablets blue,
The dancing Pleiads and eternal men.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

THE PROBLEM

I LIKE a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles:
Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowlèd churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe:
The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;—
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone,
And Morning opes with haste her lids,
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For, out of Thought's interior sphere,
These wonders rose to upper air;
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.
I know what say the fathers wise,—
The Book itself before me lies,—
Old *Chrysostom*, best Augustine,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowlèd portrait dear;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

EVENING HYMN

Slowly by God's hand unfurled,
Down around the weary world
Falls the darkness; oh, how still
Is the working of Thy will!

Mighty Maker! Here am I,—
Work in me as silently,

Veil the day's distracting sights,
Show me heaven's eternal lights.

From the darkened sky come forth
Countless stars, a wondrous birth!
So may gleams of glory dart
Through the dim abyss, my heart;

Living worlds to view be brought,
In the boundless realms of thought,
High and infinite desires,
Burning like those upper fires.

Holy truth, eternal right,
Let them break upon my sight,
Let them shine unclouded, still,
And with light my being fill.

Thou art there. Oh, let me know,
Thou art here within me too;
Be the perfect peace of God
Here as there now shed abroad.

May my soul attunèd be
To that perfect harmony,
Which, beyond the power of sound,
Fills the universe around.

William Henry Furness [1802–1896]

THE HIGHER GOOD

Father, I will not ask for wealth or fame,
Though once they would have joyed my carnal sense:
I shudder not to bear a hated name,
Wanting all wealth, myself my sole defense.
But give me, Lord, eyes to behold the truth;
A seeing sense that knows the eternal right;
A heart with pity filled, and gentlest ruth;
A manly faith that makes all darkness light:

Give me the power to labor for mankind;
Make me the mouth of such as cannot speak;
Eyes let me be to groping men and blind;
A conscience to the base; and to the weak
Let me be hands and feet; and to the foolish, mind;
And lead still further on such as thy kingdom seek.

Theodore Parker [1810–1860]

THE IDLER

I IDLE stand that I may find employ,
Such as my Master when He comes will give;
I cannot find in mine own work my joy,
But wait, although in waiting I must live;
My body shall not turn which way it will,
But stand till I the appointed road can find,
And journeying so his messages fulfil,
And do at every step the work designed.
Enough for me, still day by day to wait
Till Thou who form'st me find'st me too a task,
A cripple lying at the rich man's gate,
Content for the few crumbs I get to ask,
A laborer but in heart, while bound my hands
Hang idly down still waiting thy commands.

Jones Very [1813–1880]

QUESTIONINGS

HATH this world, without me wrought,
Other substance than my thought?
Lives it by my sense alone,
Or by essence of its own?
Will its life, with mine begun,
Cease to be when that is done,
Or another consciousness
With the self-same forms impress?

Doth yon fire-ball, poised in air,
Hang by my permission there?

Are the clouds that wander by
But the offspring of mine eye,
Born with every glance I cast,
Perishing when that is past?
And those thousand, thousand eyes,
Scattered through the twinkling skies,
Do they draw their life from mine,
Or of their own beauty shine?

Now I close my eyes, my ears,
And creation disappears;
Yet if I but speak the word,
All creation is restored.
Or, more wonderful, within
New creations do begin;
Hues more bright and forms more rare
Than reality doth wear
Flash across my inward sense,
Born of the mind's omnipotence.

Soul! that all informest, say!
Shall these glories pass away?
Will those planets cease to blaze
When these eyes no longer gaze?
And the life of things be o'er
When these pulses beat no more?

Thought! that in me works and lives,—
Life to all things living gives,—
Art thou not thyself, perchance,
But the universe in trance?
A reflection inly flung
By that world thou fanciedst sprung
From thyself—thyself a dream—
Of the world's thinking thou the theme?

Be it thus, or be thy birth
From a source above the earth—
Be thou matter, be thou mind,
In thee alone myself I find,

And through thee alone, for me,
Hath this world reality.
Therefore, in thee will I live,
To thee all myself will give,
Losing still, that I may find
This bounded self in boundless Mind.

Frederic Henry Hedge [1805–1890]

THE GREAT VOICES

A VOICE from the sea to the mountains,
From the mountains again to the sea;
A call from the deep to the fountains:
O spirit! be glad and be free!

A cry from the floods to the fountains,
And the torrents repeat the glad song
As they leap from the breast of the mountains:
O spirit! be free and be strong!

The pine forests thrill with emotion
Of praise as the spirit sweeps by;
With a voice like the murmur of ocean
To the soul of the listener they cry.

Oh, sing, human heart, like the fountains,
With joy reverential and free;
Contented and calm as the mountains,
And deep as the woods and the sea.

Charles Timothy Brooks [1813–1883]

BEAUTY AND DUTY

I SLEPT, and dreamed that life was beauty;
I woke, and found that life was duty.
Was thy dream then a shadowy lie?
Toil on, sad heart, courageously,
And thou shalt find thy dream to be
A noonday light and truth to thee.

Ellen Hooper [18 –

THE STRAIGHT ROAD

Beauty may be the path to highest good,
And some successfully have it pursued.
Thou, who wouldst follow, be well warned to see
That way prove not a curvèd road to thee.
The straightest path perhaps which may be sought,
Lies through the great highway men call "I ought."

Ellen Hooper [18 –

THE WAY

They find the way who linger where
The soul finds fullest life;
The battle brave is carried on
By all who wait, and waiting, dare
Deem each day's least that's fitly done
A victory worthy to be won,
Nor seek their gain with strife.

Sidney Henry Morse [18 –

INSPIRATION

Life of Ages, richly poured,
  Love of God, unspent and free,
Flowing in the Prophet's word
  And the People's liberty!

Never was to chosen race
  That unstinted tide confined;
Thine is every time and place,
  Fountain sweet of heart and mind!

Secret of the morning stars,
  Motion of the oldest hours,
Pledge through elemental wars
  Of the coming spirit's powers!

Rolling planet, flaming sun,
Stand in nobler man complete;
Prescient laws Thine errands run,
Frame the shrine for Godhead meet.

Homeward led, the wondering eye
Upward yearned in joy or awe,
Found the love that waited nigh,
Guidance of Thy guardian Law.

In the touch of earth it thrilled;
Down from mystic skies it burned;
Right obeyed and passion stilled
Its eternal gladness earned.

Breathing in the thinker's creed,
Pulsing in the hero's blood,
Nerving simplest thought and deed,
Freshening time with truth and good,

Consecrating art and song,
Holy book and pilgrim track,
Hurling floods of tyrant wrong
From the sacred limits back,—

Life of Ages, richly poured,
Love of God, unspent and free,
Flow still in the Prophet's word
And the People's liberty!

Samuel Johnson [1822–1882]

I IN THEE, AND THOU IN ME

I AM but clay in thy hands; but thou art the all-loving artist;
Passive I lie in thy sight, yet in my selfhood I strive
So to embody the life and love thou ever impartest
That in my spheres of the finite I may be truly alive.

Knowing thou needest this form, as I thy divine inspiration,
Knowing thou shapest the clay with a vision and purpose divine,
So would I answer each touch of thy hand in its loving creation,
That in my conscious life thy power and beauty may shine.

Reflecting the noble intent thou hast in forming thy creatures;
Waking from sense into life of the soul, and the image of thee;
Working with thee in thy work to model humanity's features
Into the likeness of God, myself from myself I would free.

One with all human existence, no one above or below me;
Lit by thy wisdom and love, as roses are steeped in the morn;
Growing from clay to statue, from statue to flesh, till thou know me
Wrought into manhood celestial, and in thine image reborn.

So in thy love will I trust, bringing me sooner or later
Past the dark screen that divides these shows of the finite from thee.
Thine, thine only, this warm dear life, O loving Creator!
Thine the invisible future, born of the present, must be.

Christopher Pearse Cranch [1813–1892]

GNOSIS

Thought is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought;
Souls to souls can never teach
What unto themselves was taught

We are spirits clad in veils;
Man by man was never seen;
All our deep communing fails
To remove the shadowy screen.

Heart to heart was never known;
Mind with mind did never meet;
We are columns left alone
Of a temple once complete.

Like the stars that gem the sky,
Far apart, though seeming near,
In our light we scattered lie;
All is thus but starlight here.

What is social company
But a babbling summer stream?
What our wise philosophy
But the glancing of a dream?

Only when the sun of love
Melts the scattered stars of thought,
Only when we live above
What the dim-eyed world hath taught,

Only when our souls are fed
By the fount which gave them birth,
And by inspiration led
Which they never drew from earth,

We, like parted drops of rain,
Swelling till they meet and run,
Shall be all absorbed again,
Melting, flowing into one.

Christopher Pearse Cranch [1813–1892]

THE FUTURE

WHAT may we take into the vast Forever?
That marble door
Admits no fruit of all our long endeavor,
No fame-wreathed crown we wore,
No garnered lore.

What can we bear beyond the unknown portal?
No gold, no gains
Of all our toiling: in the life immortal
No hoarded wealth remains,
Nor gilds, nor stains.

Naked from out that far abyss behind us
We entered here:
No word came with our coming, to remind us
What wondrous world was near,
No hope, no fear.

Into the silent, starless Night before us,
Naked we glide:
No hand has mapped the constellations o'er us,
No comrade at our side,
No chart, no guide.

Yet fearless toward that midnight, black and hollow,
Our footsteps fare;
The beckoning of a Father's hand we follow—
His love alone is there,
No curse, no care.

Edward Rowland Sill [1841–1887]

LOVE'S LORD

When weight of all the garnered years
Bows me, and praise must find relief
In harvest-song, and smiles and tears
Twist in the band that binds my sheaf;

Thou known Unknown, dark, radiant sea
In whom we live, in whom we move,
My spirit must lose itself in Thee,
Crying a name—Life, Light, or Love.

Edward Dowden [1843–1913]

A MIND CONTENT

"JOG ON, JOG ON"

From "The Winter's Tale"

Jog on, jog on the foot-path way,
And merrily hent the stile-a;
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

ON A CONTENTED MIND

When all is done and said,
In the end this shall you find:
He most of all doth bathe in bliss
That hath a quiet mind;
And, clear from worldly cares,
To deem can be content
The sweetest time in all his life
In thinking to be spent.

The body subject is
To fickle Fortune's power,
And to a million of mishaps
Is casual every hour;
And Death in time doth change
It to a clod of clay;
When as the mind, which is divine,
Runs never to decay.

Companion none is like
Unto the mind alone,
For many have been harmed by speech,—
Through thinking, few, or none.

Fear oftentimes restraineth words,
But makes not thoughts to cease;
And he speaks best that hath the skill
When for to hold his peace.

Our wealth leaves us at death,
Our kinsmen at the grave;
But virtues of the mind unto
The heavens with us we have;
Wherefore, for virtue's sake,
I can be well content
The sweetest time of all my life
To deem in thinking spent.

Thomas Vaux [1510–1556]

MÆSIA'S SONG

From "Farewell to Folly"

SWEET are the thoughts that savor of content,
The quiet mind is richer than a crown,
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent,
The poor estate scorns Fortune's angry frown:
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss,
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.

The homely house that harbors quiet rest,
The cottage that affords no pride nor care,
The mean that 'grees with country music best,
The sweet consort of mirth and modest fare,
Obscurèd life sets down a type of bliss:
A mind content both crown and kingdom is.

Robert Greene [1560?–1592]

THE MEANS TO ATTAIN HAPPY LIFE

MARTIAL, the things that do attain
The happy life be these, I find:
The riches left, not got with pain;
The fruitful ground; the quiet mind;

The equal friend; no grudge, no strife;
No charge of rule, no governance;
Without disease, the healthful life;
The household of continuance;
The mean diet, no delicate fare;
True wisdom joined with simpleness;
The night dischargèd of all care,
Where wine the wit may not oppress;
The faithful wife, without debate;
Such sleeps as may beguile the night:
Contented with thine own estate,
Nor wish for death, nor fear his might.

After Martial, by Henry Howard [1517?–1547]

RISPOSTA

THERE is a jewel which no Indian mines
Can buy, no chemic art can counterfeit;
It makes men rich in greatest poverty;
Makes water wine, turns wooden cups to gold,
The homely whistle to sweet music's strain:
Seldom it comes, to few from heaven sent,
That much in little, all in naught—Content.

Unknown

A CONTENTED MIND

I WEIGH not fortune's frown or smile;
I joy not much in earthly joys;
I seek not state, I reck not style;
I am not fond of fancy's toys:
I rest so pleased with what I have,
I wish no more, no more I crave.

I quake not at the thunder's crack;
I tremble not at news of war;
I swound not at the news of wrack;
I shrink not at a blazing star;
I fear not loss, I hope not gain,
I envy none, I none disdain.

I see ambition never pleased;
  I see some Tantals starved in store;
I see gold's dropsy seldom eased;
  I see even Midas gape for more;
I neither want nor yet abound,—
Enough's a feast, content is crowned.

I feign not friendship where I hate;
  I fawn not on the great (in show);
I prize, I praise a mean estate,—
  Neither too lofty nor too low:
This, this is all my choice, my cheer,—
A mind content, a conscience clear.

Joshua Sylvester [1563–1618]

THE HAPPY HEART

From "Patient Grissell"

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?
  O sweet content!
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexèd?
  O punishment!
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexèd
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers?
O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!
  Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
  Honest labor bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring?
  O sweet content!
Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?
  O punishment!
Then he that patiently want's burden bears
No burden bears, but is a king, a king!
O sweet content! O sweet, O sweet content!
  Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
  Honest labor bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny!

Thomas Dekker [1570?–1641?]

THE MILLER OF THE DEE

THERE dwelt a miller, hale and bold,
Beside the River Dee;
He wrought and sang from morn till night,
No lark more blithe than he;
And this the burden of his song
Forever used to be,
"I envy no man, no, not I,
And no one envies me!"

"Thou'rt wrong, my friend!" said old King Hal,
"As wrong as wrong can be;
For could my heart be light as thine,
I'd gladly change with thee.
And tell me now what makes thee sing
With voice so loud and free,
While I am sad, though I'm the King,
Beside the River Dee?"

The miller smiled and doffed his cap:
"I earn my bread," quoth he;
"I love my wife, I love my friend,
I love my children three.
I owe no one I cannot pay,
I thank the River Dee,
That turns the mill that grinds the corn
To feed my babes and me!"

"Good friend," said Hal, and sighed the while,
"Farewell! and happy be;
But say no more, if thou'dst be true,
That no one envies thee.
Thy mealy cap is worth my crown;
Thy mill my kingdom's fee!
Such men as thou are England's boast,
Oh, miller of the Dee!"

Charles Mackay [1814–1889]

A PHILOSOPHER

To take things as they be—
That's my philosophy.
No use to holler, mope, or cuss—
If they was changed they might be wuss.

If rain is pourin' down,
An' lightnin's buzzin' roun',
I ain't a-fearin' we'll be hit,
But grin that I ain't out in it.

If I got deep in debt—
It hasn't happened yet—
And owed a man two dollars, Gee!
Why, I'd be glad it wasn't three!

If some one come along,
And tried to do me wrong,
Why I should sort of take a whim
To thank the Lord I wasn't him.

I never seen a night
So dark there wasn't light
Somewheres about if I took care
To strike a match and find out where.

John Kendrick Bangs [1862–

THE GOOD DAY

When the golden sun he knelt
On the far horizon's brim,
Casting off the cloaks of night,
At my bed I bowed with him,

Said my prayer, and, as he rose,
Rose up too, and went my way,
Fed the beast and cleaned the byre,
Bent my back above the hay.

When at noon full hot he paused,
Then I spread my cloth, and ate
Meat that had its life from him,
Meat and fruit from his estate,

Rose refreshed, and took my scythe,
Toiled until, as dusk drew nigh,
Passing hence, the moon his bride,
Held her glowing monstrance high,

Bade me see him still, then, blessed,
Sent me home with joyful tread,
Where the two dear hands I love
Poured the wine, and broke the bread.

Henry Howarth Bashford [1880–

"I SAW THE CLOUDS"

I saw the clouds among the hills
  Trailing their plumes of rainy gray.
The purple of the woods behind
  Fell down to where the valley lay
In sweet satiety of rain,
With ripened fruit, and full filled grain.

I saw the graves, upon the plain,
  Of pioneers, who took the land,
And tamed the stubborn elements
  Till they were gentle to the hand.
Their children, now in fortune's ways,
Dwell in their father's palaces.

I saw some old forgotten lays;
  And treasured volumes I passed by.
They were but repetitions cheap
  For any hucksterer to buy.
The clouds, the graves, the worn old song,
I bear them in my heart along.

Hervey White [1866–

CORONATION

At the king's gate the subtle noon
  Wove filmy yellow nets of sun;
Into the drowsy snare too soon
  The guards fell one by one.

Through the king's gate, unquestioned then,
  A beggar went, and laughed, "This brings
Me chance, at last, to see if men
  Fare better, being kings."

The king sat bowed beneath his crown,
  Propping his face with listless hand;
Watching the hour-glass sifting down
  Too slow its shining sand.

"Poor man, what wouldst thou have of me?"
  The beggar turned, and pitying,
Replied, like one in dream, "Of thee,
  Nothing. I want the king."

Uprose the king, and from his head
  Shook off the crown, and threw it by.
"O man, thou must have known," he said,
  "A greater king than I."

Through all the gates, unquestioned then,
  Went king and beggar hand in hand.
Whispered the king, "Shall I know when
  Before *his* throne I stand?"

The beggar laughed. Free winds in haste
  Were wiping from the king's hot brow
The crimson lines the crown had traced.
  "This is his presence now."

At the king's gate, the crafty noon
  Unwove its yellow nets of sun;
Out of their sleep in terror soon
  The guards waked one by one.

"Ho here! Ho there! Has no man seen
The king?" The cry ran to and fro;
Beggar and king, they laughed, I ween,
The laugh that free men know.

On the king's gate the moss grew gray;
The king came not. They called him dead;
And made his eldest son one day
Slave in his father's stead.

Helen Hunt Jackson [1831–1885]

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armor is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are;
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Not tied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good;

Who hath his life from rumors freed;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a well-chosen book or friend;

—This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall:
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Henry Wotton [1568–1639]

"MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS"

My mind to me a kingdom is,
  Such present joys therein I find,
That it excels all other bliss
  That earth affords or grows by kind:
Though much I want which most would have,
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

No princely pomp, no wealthy store,
  No force to win the victory,
No wily wit to salve a sore,
  No shape to feed a loving eye;
To none of these I yield as thrall:
For why? My mind doth serve for all.

I see how plenty [surfeits] oft,
  And hasty climbers soon do fall;
I see that those which are aloft
  Mishap doth threaten most of all;
They get with toil, they keep with fear:
Such cares my mind could never bear.

Content to live, this is my stay;
  I seek no more than may suffice;
I press to bear no haughty sway;
  Look, what I lack my mind supplies:
Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

Some have too much, yet still do crave;
  I little have, and seek no more.
They are but poor, though much they have,
  And I am rich with little store:
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I leave; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at another's loss;
  I grudge not at another's gain;
No worldly waves my mind can toss;
  My state at one doth still remain:

I fear no foe, I fawn no friend;
I loathe not life, nor dread my end.

Some weigh their pleasure by their lust,
Their wisdom by their rage of will;
Their treasure is their only trust;
A cloakèd craft their store of skill:
But all the pleasure that I find
Is to maintain a quiet mind.

My wealth is health and perfect ease;
My conscience clear my chief defense;
I neither seek by bribes to please,
Nor by deceit to breed offense:
Thus do I live; thus will I die;
Would all did so as well as I!

Edward Dyer [1550?–1607]

WRITTEN AT AN INN AT HENLEY

To thee, fair freedom! I retire
From flattery, cards, and dice, and din;
Nor art thou found in mansions higher
Than the low cot, or humble inn.

'Tis here with boundless power I reign;
And every health which I begin,
Converts dull port to bright champagne;
Such freedom crowns it, at an inn.

I fly from pomp, I fly from plate!
I fly from falsehood's specious grin!
Freedom I love, and form I hate,
And choose my lodgings at an inn.

Here, waiter! take my sordid ore,
Which lackeys else might hope to win;
It buys, what courts have not in store;
It buys me freedom at an inn.

Whoe'er has traveled life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome, at an inn.

William Shenstone [1714–1763]

CARELESS CONTENT

I AM content, I do not care,
Wag as it will the world for me!
When fuss and fret was all my fare
It got no ground that I could see;
So when away my caring went
I counted cost and was content.

With more of thanks and less of thought
I strive to make my matters meet;
To seek what ancient sages sought,
Physic and food in sour and sweet;
To take what passes in good part
And keep the hiccups from the heart.

With good and gently-humored hearts
I choose to chat where'er I come,
Whate'er the subject be that starts;
But if I get among the glum
I hold my tongue to tell the troth,
And keep my breath to cool my broth.

For chance or change of peace or pain,
For Fortune's favor or her frown,
For lack or glut, for loss or gain,
I never dodge nor up nor down,
But swing what way the ship shall swim,
Or tack about with equal trim.

I suit not where I shall not speed,
Nor trace the turn of every tide.
If simple sense will not succeed
I made no bustling, but abide.

For shining wealth or scaring woe
I force no friend, I fear no foe.

Of ups and downs, of ins and outs,
Of they're-i'-th'-wrong and we're-i'-th'-right,
I shun the rancors and the routs;
And, wishing well to every wight,
Whatever turn the matter takes,
I deem it all but ducks and drakes.

With whom I feast I do not fawn,
Nor if the folks should flout me, faint.
If wonted welcome be withdrawn
I cook no kind of a complaint.
With none disposed to disagree,
I like them best who best like me.

Not that I rate myself the rule
How all my betters should behave;
But fame shall find me no man's fool,
Nor to a set of men a slave;
I love a friendship free and frank,
But hate to hang upon a hank.

Fond of a true and trusty tie,
I never loose where'er I link,
Though if a business budges by
I talk thereon just as I think;
My word, my work, my heart, my hand,
Still on a side together stand.

If names or notions make a noise,
Whatever hap the question hath
The point impartially I poise,
And read and write, but without wrath;
For, should I burn or break my brains,
Pray, who will pay me for my pains?

I love my neighbor as myself—
Myself like him too, by his leave!
Nor to his pleasure, power or pelf
Came I to crouch, as I conceive!

Dame Nature doubtless has designed
A man the monarch of his mind.

Now taste and try this temper, sirs,
Mood it and brood it in your breast;
Or, if ye ween for worldly stirs
That man does right to mar his rest,
Let me be deft and debonair,
I am content, I do not care!

John Byrom [1692–1763]

THE GOLDEN MEAN*

Receive, dear friend, the truths I teach,
So shalt thou live beyond the reach
Of adverse Fortune's power;
Not always tempt the distant deep,
Nor always timorously creep
Along the treacherous shore.

He that holds fast the golden mean,
And lives contentedly between
The little and the great,
Feels not the wants that pinch the poor,
Nor plagues that haunt the rich man's door,
Imbittering all his state.

The tallest pines feel most the power
Of wintry blasts; the loftiest tower
Comes heaviest to the ground;
The bolts, that spare the mountain's side,
His cloud-capped eminence divide,
And spread the ruin round.

The well-informed philosopher
Rejoices with a wholesome fear,

* For the original of this poem see page 3829.

And hopes, in spite of pain;
If Winter bellow from the north,
Soon the sweet Spring comes dancing forth,
And Nature laughs again.

What if thine heaven be overcast?
The dark appearance will not last;
Expect a brighter sky.
The God, that strings the silver bow,
Awakes sometimes the Muses too,
And lays his arrows by.

If hindrances obstruct thy way,
Thy magnanimity display,
And let thy strength be seen;
But O! if Fortune fill thy sail
With more than a propitious gale,
Take half thy canvas in.

After Horace, by William Cowper [1731–1800]

"ITS AIN DRAP O' DEW"

Confide ye aye in Providence,
For Providence is kind:
An' bear ye a' life's changes
Wi' a calm an' tranquil mind.
Though pressed and hemmed on every side,
Ha'e faith, an' ye'll win through;
For ilka blade o' grass
Keeps its ain drap o' dew.

Gin reft frae friends, or crossed in love,
As whiles nae doubt ye've been,
Grief lies deep-hidden in your heart,
Or tears flow frae your e'en,
Believe it for the best, and trow
There's good in store for you;
For ilka blade o' grass
Keeps its ain drap o' dew.

In lang, lang days o' simmer,
When the clear and cloudless sky
Refuses ae wee drap o' rain
To nature, parched and dry,
The genial night, with balmy breath,
Gars verdure spring anew,
An' ilka blade o' grass
Keeps its ain drap o' dew.

Sae lest 'mid fortune's sunshine
We should feel owre proud an' hie,
An' in our pride forget to wipe
The tear frae poortith's e'e,
Some wee dark clouds o' sorrow come,
We ken na whence nor hoo;
But ilka blade o' grass
Keeps its ain drap o' dew.

James Ballantine [1808–1877]

RESIGNATION

Why, why repine, my pensive friend,
At pleasures slipped away?
Some the stern Fates will never lend,
And all refuse to stay.

I see the rainbow in the sky,
The dew upon the grass;
I see them, and I ask not why
They glimmer or they pass.

With folded arms I linger not
To call them back; 'twere vain:
In this, or in some other spot,
I know they'll shine again.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

"EN VOYAGE"

Whichever way the wind doth blow,
Some heart is glad to have it so;
Then blow it east or blow it west,
The wind that blows, that wind is best.

My little craft sails not alone:
A thousand fleets from every zone
Are out upon a thousand seas;
And what for me were favoring breeze
Might dash another, with the shock
Of doom, upon some hidden rock.

And so I do not care to pray
For winds to waft me on my way,
But leave it to a Higher Will
To stay or speed me; trusting still
That all is well, and sure that He
Who launched my bark will sail with me
Through storm and calm, and will not fail,
Whatever breezes may prevail,
To land me, every peril past,
Within his sheltering haven at last.

Then, whatsoever wind doth blow,
My heart is glad to have it so;
And blow it east or blow it west,
The wind that blows, that wind is best.

Caroline Atwater Mason [1853–

THE HAPPIEST HEART

Who drives the horses of the sun
Shall lord it but a day;
Better the lowly deed were done,
And kept the humble way.

The rust will find the sword of fame,
The dust will hide the crown;
Ay, none shall nail so high his name
Time will not tear it down.

The happiest heart that ever beat
Was in some quiet breast
That found the common daylight sweet,
And left to Heaven the rest.

John Vance Cheney [1848–

GOOD-BYE

GOOD-BYE, proud world! I'm going home:
Thou art not my friend, and I'm not thine.
Long through thy weary crowds I roam;
A river-ark on the ocean brine,
Long I've been tossed like the driven foam;
But now, proud world! I'm going home.

Good-bye to Flattery's fawning face;
To Grandeur with his wise grimace;
To upstart Wealth's averted eye;
To supple Office, low and high;
To crowded halls, to court and street;
To frozen hearts and hasting feet;
To those who go, and those who come;
Good-bye, proud world! I'm going home.

I am going to my own hearth-stone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,—
A secret nook in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned;
Where arches green, the livelong day,
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,
And vulgar feet have never trod—
A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome;
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,
At the sophist schools, and the learned clan;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet?

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

SAPIENTIA LUNÆ

THE wisdom of the world said unto me:
"Go forth and run, the race is to the brave;
Perchance some honor tarrieth for thee!"
"As tarrieth," I said, "for sure, the grave."

For I had pondered on a rune of roses,
Which to her votaries the moon discloses.

The wisdom of the world said: "*There are bays:*
Go forth and run, for victory is good,
After the stress of the laborious days."
"Yet," said I, "shall I be the worms' sweet food,"
As I went musing on a rune of roses,
Which in her hour, the pale, soft moon discloses.

Then said my voices: "*Wherefore strive or run,*
On dusty highways ever, a vain race?
The long night cometh, starless, void of sun,
What light shall serve thee like her golden face?"
For I had pondered on a rune of roses,
And knew some secrets which the moon discloses.

"Yea," said I, "for her eyes are pure and sweet
As lilies, and the fragrance of her hair
Is many laurels; and it is not meet
To run for shadows when the prize is here";
And I went reading in that rune of roses
Which to her votaries the moon discloses.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

THE BEASTS

From "Song of Myself"

I THINK I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid
and self-contained;
I stand and look at them long and long.

They do not sweat and whine about their condition;
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins;
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God;
Not one is dissatisfied—not one is demented with the mania
of owning things;
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thou-
sands of years ago;
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth.

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

IMMORAL

I KEEP walking around myself, mouth open with amazement:
For by all the ethical rules of life, I ought to be solemn and sad,
But, look you, I am bursting with joy.

I scold myself:
I say: Boy, your work has gone to pot:
You have scarcely enough money to last out the week:
And think of your responsibilities!
Whereupon, my heart bubbles over,
I puff on my pipe, and think how solemnly the world goes by my window,
And how childish people are, wrinkling their foreheads over groceries and rent.

For here jets life fresh and stinging in the vivid air:
The winds laugh to the jovial Earth:
The day is keen with Autumn's fine flavor of having done the year's work:
Earth, in her festival, calls her children to the crimson revels.
The trees are a drunken riot: the sunshine is dazzling . . .

Yes, I ought, I suppose, to be saddened and tragic:
But joy drops from me like ripe apples.

James Oppenheim [1882-

DIOGENES

A HUT, and a tree,
And a hill for me,
And a piece of a weedy meadow.
I'll ask no thing,
Of God or king,
But to clear away his shadow.

Max Eastman [1883-

LEISURE

WHAT is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

William H. Davies [1870–

POOR KINGS

GOD'S pity on poor kings,
They know no gentle rest;
The North and South cry out,
Cries come from East and West—
"Come, open this new Dock,
Building, Bazaar or Fair."
Lord, what a wretched life
Such men must bear.

They're followed, watched and spied,
No liberty they know;
Some eye will watch them still,
No matter where they go.
When in green lanes I muse,
Alone, and hear birds sing,
God's pity then, say I,
On some poor king.

William H. Davies [1870–

FRIENDSHIP AND BROTHERHOOD

SALVE!

To live within a cave—it is most good;
But, if God make a day,
And some one come, and say,
"Lo! I have gathered fagots in the wood!"
E'en let him stay,
And light a fire, and fan a temporal mood!

So sit till morning! when the light is grown
That he the path can read,
Then bid the man God-speed!
His morning is not thine: yet must thou own
They have a cheerful warmth—those ashes on the stone.

Thomas Edward Brown [1830–1897]

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the Presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?"—The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

ENVOY

From "More Songs from Vagabondia"

I

Whose furthest footstep never strayed
Beyond the village of his birth,
Is but a lodger for the night
In this old wayside inn of earth.

To-morrow he shall take his pack,
And set out for the ways beyond,
On the old trail from star to star,
An alien and a vagabond.

II

If any record of our names
Be blown about the hills of time,
Let no one sunder us in death,—
The man of paint, the men of rhyme.

Of all our good, of all our bad,
This one thing only is of worth,—
We held the league of heart to heart
The only purpose of the earth.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

FRIENDS

You ask me "why I like him." Nay,
I cannot; nay, I would not, say.
I think it vile to pigeonhole
The pros and cons of a kindred soul.

You "wonder he should be my friend."
But then why should you comprehend?
Thank God for this—a new—surprise:
My eyes, remember, are not your eyes.

Cherish this one small mystery;
And marvel not that love can be
"In spite of all his many flaws."
In spite? Supposing I said "Because."

A truce, a truce to questioning:
"We two are friends" tells everything.
Yet if you *must* know, this is why:
Because he is he and I am I.

Edward Verrall Lucas [1868–

A FRIEND

All that he came to give,
He gave and went again:
I have seen one man live,
I have seen one man reign,
With all the graces in his train.

As one of us, he wrought
Things of the common hour:
Whence was the charmed soul brought,
That gave each act such power;
The natural beauty of a flower?

Magnificence and grace,
Excellent courtesy:
A brightness on the face,
Airs of high memory:
Whence came all these, to such as he?

Like young Shakespearean kings,
He won the adoring throng:
And as Apollo sings,
He triumphed with a song:
Triumphed, and sang, and passed along.

With a light word, he took
The hearts of men in thrall:
And, with a golden look,
Welcomed them, at his call
Giving their love, their strength, their all.

No man less proud than he,
Nor cared for homage less:
Only, he could not be
Far off from happiness:
Nature was bound to his success.

Weary, the cares, the jars,
The lets, of every day:
But the heavens filled with stars,
Chanced he upon the way:
And where he stayed, all joy would stay.

Now when the night draws down,
When the austere stars burn;
Roaming the vast live town,
My thoughts and memories yearn
Toward him, who never will return.

Yet have I seen him live,
And owned my friend, a king:
All that he came to give,
He gave and I, who sing
His praise, bring all I have to bring.

Lionel Johnson [1867–1902]

BILL AND JOE

Come, dear old comrade, you and I
Will steal an hour from days gone by,
The shining days when life was new,
And all was bright with morning dew,
The lusty days of long ago,
When you were Bill and I was Joe:

Your name may flaunt a titled trail,
Proud as a cockerel's rainbow tail;
And mine as brief appendix wear
As Tam O'Shanter's luckless mare;
To-day, old friend, remember still
That I am Joe and you are Bill.

You've won the great world's envied prize,
And grand you look in people's eyes,
With H O N. and L L. D.
In big brave letters, fair to see,—
Your fist, old fellow! off they go!—
How are you, Bill? How are you, Joe?

You've worn the judge's ermined robe;
You've taught your name to half the globe;
You've sung mankind a deathless strain;
You've made the dead past live again:
The world may call you what it will,
But you and I are Joe and Bill.

The chaffing young folks stare and say,
"See those old buffers, bent and gray,—
They talk like fellows in their teens!
Mad, poor old boys! That's what it means,"—
And shake their heads; they little know
The throbbing hearts of Bill and Joe!—

How Bill forgets his hour of pride,
While Joe sits smiling at his side;
How Joe, in spite of time's disguise,
Finds the old schoolmate in his eyes,—
Those calm, stern eyes that melt and fill
As Joe looks fondly up at Bill.

Ah, pensive scholar, what is fame?
A fitful tongue of leaping flame;
A giddy whirlwind's fickle gust,
That lifts a pinch of mortal dust;
A few swift years, and who can show
Which dust was Bill and which was Joe?

The weary idol takes his stand,
Holds out his bruised and aching hand,
While gaping thousands come and go,—
How vain it seems, this empty show!
Till all at once his pulses thrill;—
'Tis poor old Joe's "God bless you, Bill!"

And shall we breathe in happier spheres
The names that pleased our mortal ears;
In some sweet lull of harp and song,
For earth-born spirits none too long,
Just whispering of the world below
Where this was Bill and that was Joe?

No matter; while our home is here
No sounding name is half so dear;
When fades at length our lingering day,
Who cares what pompous tombstones say?
Read on the hearts that love us still,
Hic jacet Joe. *Hic jacet* Bill.

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

"AS TOILSOME I WANDERED VIRGINIA'S WOODS"

As toilsome I wandered Virginia's woods,
To the music of rustling leaves kicked by my feet, (for 'twas autumn,)
I marked at the foot of a tree the grave of a soldier;
Mortally wounded he and buried on the retreat, (easily all could I understand,)
The halt of a mid-day hour, when up! no time to lose—yet this sign left,
On a tablet scrawled and nailed on the tree by the grave,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

Long, long I muse, then on my way go wandering,
Many a changeful season to follow, and many a scene of life,
Yet at times through changeful season and scene, abrupt, alone, or in the crowded street,
Comes before me the unknown soldier's grave, comes the inscription rude in Virginia's woods,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

GONE

About the little chambers of my heart
Friends have been coming—going—many a year.
The doors stand open there.
Some, lightly stepping, enter; some depart.

Freely they come and freely go, at will.
The walls give back their laughter; all day long
They fill the house with song.
One door alone is shut, one chamber still.

Mary E. Coleridge [1861–1907]

COMRADES

Where are the friends that I knew in my Maying,
In the days of my youth, in the first of my roaming?
We were dear; we were leal; O, far we went straying;
Now never a heart to my heart comes homing!—
Where is he now, the dark boy slender
Who taught me bare-back, stirrup and reins?
I loved him; he loved me; my beautiful, tender
Tamer of horses on grass-grown plains.

Where is he now whose eyes swam brighter,
Softer than love, in his turbulent charms;
Who taught me to strike, and to fall, dear fighter,
And gathered me up in his boyhood arms;
Taught me the rifle, and with me went riding,
Suppled my limbs to the horseman's war;
Where is he now, for whom my heart's biding,
Biding, biding—but he rides far?

O love that passes the love of woman!
Who that hath felt it shall ever forget,
When the breath of life with a throb turns human,
And a lad's heart is to a lad's heart set?
Ever, forever, lover and rover—
They shall cling, nor each from other shall part
Till the reign of the stars in the heavens be over,
And life is dust in each faithful heart!—

They are dead, the American grasses under;
There is no one now who presses my side;
By the African chotts I am riding asunder,
And with great joy ride I the last great ride.
I am fey; I am fain of sudden dying;
Thousands of miles there is no one near;
And my heart—all the night it is crying, crying
In the bosoms of dead lads darling-dear.

Hearts of my music—them dark earth covers;
Comrades to die, and to die for, were they;—
In the width of the world there were no such rovers—
Back to back, breast to breast, it was ours to stay;
And the highest on earth was the vow that we cherished,
To spur forth from the crowd and come back never more,
And to ride in the track of great souls perished
Till the nests of the lark shall roof us o'er.

Yet lingers a horseman on Altai highlands,
Who hath joy of me, riding the Tartar glissade;
And one, far faring o'er orient islands
Whose blood yet glints with my blade's accolade;
North, west, east, I fling you my last hallooing,
Last love to the breasts where my own has bled;
Through the reach of the desert my soul leaps pursuing
My star where it rises a Star of the Dead.

George Edward Woodberry [1855–

COMRADES

At least, it was a life of swords,
Our life! nor lived in vain:
We fought the fight with mighty lords,
Nor dastards have we slain.

We stirred at morn, and through bright air
Swept to the trysting place:
Winds of the mountains in our hair,
And sunrise on each face.

No need to spur! our horses knew
The joy, to which we went:
Over the brightening lands they flew
Forward, and were content.

On each man's lips, an happy smile;
In each man's eyes, delight:
So, fired with foretaste, mile on mile,
We thundered to the fight.

Let death come now, and from the sun
Hide me away: what then?
My days have seen more prowess done,
Than years of other men.

Oh, warriors of the rugged heights,
We, where the eagles nest:
They, courtly soldiers, gentle knights,
By kings and dames caressed.

Not theirs, the passion of the sword,
The fire of living blades!
Like men, they fought: and found reward
In dance and feast, like maids.

We, on the mountain lawns encamped,
Close under the great stars,
Turned, when the horses hard by stamped,
And dreamed again, of wars:

Or, if one woke, he saw the gleam
Of moonlight, on each face,
Touch its tumultuary dream
With moments of mild grace.

We hated no man; but we fought
With all men: the fierce wind
Lashes the wide earth without thought:
Our tempest scourged mankind.

They cursed us, living without laws!
They, in their pride of peace:
Who bared no blade, but in just cause:
Nor grieved, that war should cease.

O spirit of the wild hill-side!
O spirit of the steel!
We answered nothing, when they cried,
But challenged with a peal.

And, when the battle blood had poured
To slake our souls' desire:
Oh, brave to hear, how torrents roared
Beside the pinewood fire!

My brothers, whom in warrior wise
The death of deaths hath stilled!
Ah, you would understand these eyes,
Although with strange tears filled!

Lionel Johnson [1867–1902]

COMRADES

I ROSE up when the battle was dead,
I, the most wounded man of us all!
From the slain that fell, to the living that fled,
Over the waste one name I call.

Thou whose strength was an oak that branched,
Thou whose voice was a fire that burned,
Thine the face that the fighting blanched,
Thine the heart that the tumult turned!

Had I, beloved, when swords swept measure,
Had I but reached thee, and slain thee then:
Then in thy death had my soul found pleasure,
Counting thee dead as a man with men.

Then with the peace, when the fight was ended,
Men would have asked, and I would have said,
"Yonder he lies whom once I befriended,
Sharing his rest in the ranks of the dead."

Ghosts of the riders, ghosts of the ridden,
Here keep tryst for the loves that died;
Thou alone of all loves art hidden,
Never again to be near my side.

Here, beloved, when the fight has slackened,
I rise up, and a sword is mine!
Over the mounds with dead men blackened,
Ever my soul makes haste for thine.

Though thou lurk in the caverns beneath,
Though thou crouch by the moaning sea,
I am a sword that leaps to its sheath,
Never at rest till I find out thee!

Oh, poor soul, all the night unstanched,
Poor heart, couched in a shameful breast,
Thou, whose face at the fighting blanched,
Out of the battle I bring thee—rest.

Laurence Housman [1867–

AT THE CROSSROADS

You to the left and I to the right,
For the ways of men must sever—
And it well may be for a day and a night,
And it well may be forever.
But whether we meet or whether we part
(For our ways are past our knowing),
A pledge from the heart to its fellow heart
On the ways we all are going!
Here's luck!
For we know not where we are going.

We have striven fair in love and war,
But the wheel was always weighted!
We have lost the prize that we struggled for,
We have won the prize that was fated.
We have met our loss with a smile and a song,

And our gains with a wink and a whistle,—
For, whether we're right or whether we're wrong,
There's a rose for every thistle.
Here's luck!
And a drop to wet your whistle!

Whether we win or whether we lose
With the hands that life is dealing,
It is not we nor the ways we choose
But the fall of the cards that's sealing.
There's a fate in love and a fate in fight,
And the best of us all go under—
And whether we're wrong or whether we're right,
We win, sometimes, to our wonder.
Here's luck!
That we may not yet go under!

With a steady swing and an open brow
We have tramped the ways together,
But we're clasping hands at the crossroads now
In the Fiend's own night for weather;
And whether we bleed or whether we smile
In the leagues that lie before us,
The ways of life are many a mile
And the dark of Fate is o'er us.
Here's luck!
And a cheer for the dark before us!

You to the left and I to the right,
For the ways of men must sever,
And it well may be for a day and a night
And it well may be forever!
But whether we live or whether we die
(For the end is past our knowing),
Here's two frank hearts and the open sky,
Be a fair or an ill wind blowing!
Here's luck!
In the teeth of all winds blowing.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

TWILIGHT SONG

THROUGH the shine, through the rain
We have shared the day's load;
To the old march again
We have tramped the long road;
We have laughed, we have cried,
And we've tossed the King's crown;
We have fought, we have died,
And we've trod the day down.
So it's lift the old song
Ere the night flies again,
Where the road leads along
Through the shine, through the rain.

Long ago, far away,
Came a sign from the skies;
And we feared then to pray
For the new sun to rise:
With the King there at hand,
Not a child stepped or stirred —
Where the light filled the land
And the light brought the word;
For we knew then the gleam
Though we feared then the day,
And the dawn smote the dream
Long ago, far away.

But the road leads us all,
For the King now is dead;
And we know, stand or fall,
We have shared the day's bread.
We can laugh down the dream,
For the dream breaks and flies;
And we trust now the gleam,
For the gleam never dies; —
So it's off now the load,
For we know the night's call,
And we know now the road
And the road leads us all.

Through the shine, through the rain,
We have wrought the day's quest;
To the old march again
We have earned the day's rest;
We have laughed, we have cried,
And we've heard the King's groans;
We have fought, we have died,
And we've burned the King's bones,
And we lift the old song
Ere the night flies again,
Where the road leads along
Through the shine, through the rain.

Edwin Arlington Robinson [1869-

THE ADVENTURERS

They sit at home and they dream and dally,
Raking the embers of long-dead years—
But ye go down to the haunted Valley,
Light-hearted pioneers.
They have forgotten they ever were young,
They hear your songs as an unknown tongue . . .
But the Flame of God through your spirit stirs,
Adventurers—O Adventurers!

They weigh and ponder, and shilly-shally,
Wielding the pen, who are past the sword—
But ye go down to the mystic Valley,
That never was yet explored.
They brood over obsolete ways and means,
Their eyes confusing the grays and greens, . . .
But no tradition your vision blurs,
Adventurers—O Adventurers!

They tithe their herbs and they count their tally,
Choosing their words that a phrase may live—
But ye cast down in the hungry Valley
All that a man can give.
They prophesy smoothly, with weary smile
Fulfilling their feeble appointed while,
But Death himself to your pride defers,
Adventurers—O Adventurers!

May Byron [1861-

"FAME IS A FOOD THAT DEAD MEN EAT"

Fame is a food that dead men eat,—
I have no stomach for such meat.
In little light and narrow room,
They eat it in the silent tomb,
With no kind voice of comrade near
To bid the feaster be of cheer.

But Friendship is a nobler thing,—
Of Friendship it is good to sing.
For truly, when a man shall end,
He lives in memory of his friend,
Who doth his better part recall
And of his fault make funeral.

Austin Dobson [1840–

JAFFÀR

Shelley, take this to thy dear memory;—
To praise the generous, is to think of thee.

Jaffàr, the Barmecide, the good Vizier,
The poor man's hope, the friend without a peer,
Jaffàr was dead, slain by a doom unjust;
And guilty Hàroun, sullen with mistrust
Of what the good, and e'en the bad, might say,
Ordained that no man living from that day
Should dare to speak his name on pain of death.
All Araby and Persia held their breath;
All but the brave Mondeer: he, proud to show
How far for love a grateful soul could go,
And facing death for very scorn and grief
(For his great heart wanted a great relief),
Stood forth in Bagdad daily, in the square
Where once had stood a happy house, and there
Harangued the tremblers at the scimitar
On all they owed to the divine Jaffàr.

"Bring me this man," the caliph cried. The man
Was brought, was gazed upon. The mutes began
To bind his arms. "Welcome, brave cords," cried he;
"From bonds far worse Jaffâr delivered me;
From wants, from shames, from loveless household fears;
Made a man's eyes friends with delicious tears;
Restored me, loved me, put me on a par
With his great self. How can I pay Jaffâr?"

Haroun, who felt that on a soul like this
The mightiest vengeance could but fall amiss,
Now deigned to smile, as one great lord of fate
Might smile upon another half as great.
He said, "Let worth grow frenzied if it will;
The caliph's judgment shall be master still.
Go: and since gifts so move thee, take this gem,
The richest in the Tartar's diadem,
And hold the giver as thou deemest fit!"

"Gifts!" cried the friend; he took, and holding it
High toward the heavens, as though to meet his star,
Exclaimed, "This, too, I owe to thee, Jaffâr!"

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

COUNSEL

If thou shouldst bid thy friend farewell,
But for one night though that farewell may be,
Press thou his hand in thine; thou canst not tell
How far from thee

Fate or caprice may lead his feet
Ere that to-morrow come. Men have been known
Lightly to turn the corner of a street,
And days have grown

To months, and months to lagging years,
Before they look on loving eyes again.
Parting, at best, is underlaid with tears,
With tears and pain,

Therefore, lest sudden death should come between,
Or time, or distance, clasp with pressure true
The palm of him who goeth forth; unseen,
Fate goeth too!

Yea, find thou always time to say
Some earnest word betwixt the idle talk,
Lest with thee henceforth ever, night and day,
Regret should walk.

Mary Evelyn Moore Davis [1852–1909]

TO A FRIEND

When we were idlers with the loitering rills,
The need of human love we little noted:
Our love was nature; and the peace that floated
On the white mist, and dwelt upon the hills,
To sweet accord subdued our wayward wills:
One soul was ours, one mind, one heart devoted,
That, wisely doting, asked not why it doted,
And ours the unknown joy, which knowing kills.
But now I find how dear thou wert to me;
That man is more than half of nature's treasure,
Of that fair beauty which no eye can see,
Of that sweet music which no ear can measure;
And now the streams may sing for others' pleasure,
The hills sleep on in their eternity.

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1849]

"FAREWELL! BUT WHENEVER"

Farewell!—but whenever you welcome the hour
That awakens the night-song of mirth in your bower,
Then think of the friend who once welcomed it too,
And forgot his own griefs, to be happy with you.
His griefs may return,—not a hope may remain
Of the few that have brightened his pathway of pain,—
But he ne'er will forget the short vision that threw
Its enchantment around him, while ling'ring with you!

And still on that evening, when Pleasure fills up
To the highest top sparkle each heart and each cup,
Where'er my path lies, be it gloomy or bright,
My soul, happy friends, shall be with you that night;

Shall join in your revels, your sports, and your wiles,
And return to me, beaming all o'er with your smiles,—
Too blest if it tell me that, 'mid the gay cheer,
Some kind voice had murmured, "I wish he were here!"

Let Fate do her worst, there are relics of joy,
Bright dreams of the past, which she cannot destroy;
Which come, in the night-time of sorrow and care,
And bring back the features that joy used to wear.
Long, long be my heart with such memories filled!
Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled,—
You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"AWAKE! AWAKE!"

From "Song of the Dawn"

AWAKE! awake! the stars are pale, the east is russet gray;
They fade, behold the phantoms fade, that keep the gates of Day;
Throw wide the burning valves, and let the golden streets be free,
The morning watch is past—the watch of evening shall not be.

Put off, put off your mail, ye kings, and beat your brands to dust;
A surer grasp your hands must know, your hearts a better trust;
Nay, bend aback the lance's point, and break the helmet bar,—
A noise is on the morning winds; but not the noise of war!

For aye, the time of wrath is past, and near the time of rest,
And honor binds the brow of man, and faithfulness his breast,
Behold, the time of wrath is past, and righteousness shall be,
And the Wolf is dead in Arcady and the Dragon in the sea!

John Ruskin [1819–1900]

THE VOICE OF TOIL

I HEARD men saying, Leave hope and praying.
All days shall be as all have been;
To-day and to-morrow bring fear and sorrow,
The never-ending toil between.

When Earth was young 'mid toil and hunger,
In hope we strove, and our hands were strong;
Then great men led us, with words they fed us,
And bade us right the earthly wrong.

Go read in story their deeds and glory,
Their names amidst the nameless dead;
Turn then from lying to us slow-dying
In that good world to which they led;

Where fast and faster our iron master,
The thing we made, for ever drives,
Bids us grind treasure and fashion pleasure
For other hopes and other lives;

Where home is a hovel and dull we grovel,
Forgetting that the world is fair;
Where no babe we cherish, lest its very soul perish;
Where mirth is crime, and love a snare.

Who now shall lead us, what god shall heed us
As we lie in the hell our hands have won?
For us are no rulers but fools and befoolers,
The great are fallen, the wise men gone.

I heard men saying, Leave tears and praying,
The sharp knife heedeth not the sheep;
Are we not stronger than the rich and the wronger,
When day breaks over dreams and sleep?

Come, shoulder to shoulder ere the world grows older!
Help lies in naught but thee and me;
Hope is before us, and the long years that bore us
Bore leaders more than men may be.

Let dead hearts tarry and trade and marry,
And trembling nurse their dreams of mirth,
While we the living our lives are giving
To bring the bright new world to birth.

Come, shoulder to shoulder ere earth grows older!
The Cause spreads over land and sea;
Now the world shaketh, and fear awaketh,
And joy at last for thee and me.

William Morris [1834–1896]

TOM DUNSTAN, OR, THE POLITICIAN

Now poor Tom Dunstan's cold,
  Our shop is duller;
Scarce a story is told,
And our chat has lost the old
  Red-republican color!
Though he was sickly and thin,
  'Twas a sight to see his face—
While, sick of the country's sin,
With bang of the fist, and chin
  Thrust out, he argued the case!
He prophesied folk should be free,
  And the money-bags be bled—
"She's coming, she's coming!" said he;
"Courage, boys! wait and see!
  Freedom's ahead!"

All day we sat in the heat,
  Like spiders spinning,
Stitching full fine and fleet,
While the old Jew on his seat
  Sat greasily grinning;
And there Tom said his say,
  And prophesied Tyranny's death,
And the tallow burnt all day,
And we stitched and stitched away
  In the thick smoke of our breath,
Wearily, wearily,

With hearts as heavy as lead—
But "Patience, she's coming!" said he;
"Courage, boys! wait and see!
Freedom's ahead!"

And at night, when we took here
The rest allowed to us,
The paper came with the beer,
And Tom read, sharp and clear,
The news out loud to us;
And then, in his witty way,
He threw the jests about—
The cutting things he'd say
Of the wealthy and the gay!
How he turned them inside out!
And it made our breath more free
To hearken to what he said—
"She's coming, she's coming!" said he;
"Courage, boys! wait and see!
Freedom's ahead!"

But grim Jack Hart, with a sneer,
Would mutter, "Master,
If Freedom means to appear,
I think she might step here
A little faster!"
Then it was fine to see Tom flame,
And argue and prove and preach,
Till Jack was silent for shame,
Or a fit of coughing came
O' sudden to spoil Tom's speech.
Ah! Tom had the eyes to see,
When Tyranny should be sped;
"She's coming, she's coming!" said he;
"Courage, boys! wait and see!
Freedom's ahead!"

But Tom was little and weak;
The hard hours shook him;
Hollower grew his cheek,
And when he began to speak

The coughing took him.
Ere long the cheery sound
Of his chat among us ceased,
And we made a purse all round,
That he might not starve, at least;
His pain was sorry to see,
Yet there, on his poor sick-bed,
"She's coming, in spite of me!
Courage, and wait!" cried he,
"Freedom's ahead!"

A little before he died,
To see his passion!
"Bring me a paper!" he cried,
And then to study it tried
In his old sharp fashion;
And with eyeballs glittering
His look on me he bent,
And said that savage thing
Of the lords of the Parliament.
Then, darkening, smiling on me,
"What matter if one be dead?
She's coming, at last!" said he;
"Courage, boys! wait and see!
Freedom's ahead!"

Ay, now Tom Dunstan's cold,
The shop feels duller;
Scarce a story is told,
And our talk has lost the old
Red-republican color.
But we see a figure gray,
And we hear a voice of death,
And the tallow burns all day,
And we stitch and stitch away,
In the thick smoke of our breath;
Ay, while in the dark sit we,
Tom seems to call from the dead—
"She's coming, she's coming!" says he;
"Courage, boys! wait and see!
"Freedom's ahead!"

How long, O Lord, how long
  Doth Thy handmaid linger?
She who shall right the wrong?
Make the oppressèd strong?—
  Sweet morrow, bring her!
Hasten her over the sea,
  O Lord, ere hope be fled—
Bring her to men and to me!
O slave, pray still on thy knee—
  "Freedom's ahead!"

Robert Buchanan [1841–1901]

THE COMMON STREET

The common street climbed up against the sky,
Gray meeting gray; and wearily to and fro
I saw the patient common people go,
Each, with his sordid burden, trudging by.
And the rain dropped; there was not any sigh
Or stir of a live wind; dull, dull and slow
All motion; as a tale told long ago
The faded world; and creeping night drew nigh.

Then burst the sunset, flooding far and fleet,
Leavening the whole of life with magic leaven.
Suddenly down the long wet glistening hill
Pure splendor poured—and lo! the common street,
A golden highway into golden heaven,
With the dark shapes of men ascending still.

Helen Gray Cone [1859–

TO A NEW YORK SHOP-GIRL DRESSED FOR SUNDAY

To-day I saw the shop-girl go
Down gay Broadway to meet her beau.

Conspicuous, splendid, conscious, sweet,
She spread abroad and took the street.

And all that niceness would forbid,
Superb, she smiled upon and did.

Let other girls, whose happier days
Preserve the perfume of their ways,

Go modestly. The passing hour
Adds splendor to their opening flower.

But from this child too swift a doom
Must steal her prettiness and bloom,

Toil and weariness hide the grace
That pleads a moment from her face.

So blame her not if for a day
She flaunts her glories while she may.

She half perceives, half understands,
Snatching her gifts with both her hands.

The little strut beneath the skirt
That lags neglected in the dirt,

The indolent swagger down the street—
Who can condemn such happy feet!

Innocent! vulgar—that's the truth!
But with the darling wiles of youth!

The bright, self-conscious eyes that stare
With such hauteur, beneath such hair!
Perhaps the men will find me fair!

Charming and charmed, flippant, arrayed,
Fluttered and foolish, proud, displayed,
Infinite pathos of parade!

The bangles and the narrowed waist—
The tinseled boa—forgive the taste!

Oh, the starved nights she gave for that,
And bartered bread to buy her hat!

She flows before the reproachful sage
And begs her woman's heritage.

Dear child, with the defiant eyes,
Insolent with the half surmise
We do not quite admire, I know
How foresight frowns on this vain show!

And judgment, wearily sad, may see
No grace in such frivolity.

Yet which of us was ever bold
To worship Beauty, hungry and cold!

Scorn famine down, proudly expressed
Apostle to what things are best.

Let him who starves to buy the food
For his soul's comfort find her good,

Nor chide the frills and furbelows
That are the prettiest things she knows.

Poet and prophet in God's eyes
Make no more perfect sacrifice.

Who knows before what inner shrine
She eats with them the bread and wine?

Poor waif! One of the sacred few
That madly sought the best they knew!

Dear—let me lean my cheek to-night
Close, close to yours. Ah, that is right.

How warm and near! At last I see
One beauty shines for thee and me.

So let us love and understand—
Whose hearts are hidden in God's hand.

And we will cherish your brief Spring
And all its fragile flowering.

God loves all prettiness, and on this
Surely his angels lay their kiss.

Anna Hempstead Branch [18 –

SATURDAY NIGHT

The lights of Saturday night beat golden, golden over the pillared street;
The long plate-glass of a Dream-World olden is as the foot-lights shining sweet.
Street-lamp—flambeau—glamor of trolley—comet-trail of the trains above,
Splash where the jostling crowds are jolly with echoing laughter and human love.

This is the City of the Enchanted, and these are her Enchanted People;
Far and far is Daylight, haunted with whistle of mill and bell of steeple.
The Eastern tenements loose the women, the Western flats release the wives
To touch, where all the ways are common, a glory to their sweated lives.

The leather of shoes in the brilliant casement sheds a luster over the heart;
The high-heaped fruit in the flaring basement glows with the tints of Turner's art.
Darwin's dream and the eye of Spencer saw not such a gloried race
As here, in copper light intenser than desert sun, glides face by face.

The drab washwoman dazed and breathless, ray-chiseled in the golden stream,
Is a magic statue standing deathless—her tub and soap-suds touched with Dream.

Yea, in this people, glamor-sunnied, democracy wins heaven again;
Here the unlearned and the unmoneyed laugh in the lights of Lover's Lane!

O Dream-World lights that lift through the ether millions of miles to the Milky Way!
To-night Earth rolls through a golden weather that lights the Pleiades where they play!
Yet . . . God? Does he lead these sons and daughters?
Yea, do they feel with a passion that stills,
God on the face of the moving waters, God in the quiet of the hills?

Yet . . . what if the million-mantled mountains, and what if the million-moving sea
Are here alone in façades and fountains—our deep stone-world of humanity—
We builders of cities and civilizations walled away from the sea and the sod
Must reach, dream-led, for our revelations through one another—as far as God.

Through one another—through one another—no more the gleam on sea or land
But so close that we see the Brother—and understand—and understand!
Till, drawn in swept crowd closer, closer, we see the gleam in the human clod,
And clerk and foreman, peddler and grocer, are in our Family of God!

James Oppenheim [1882–

THE BARREL-ORGAN

There's a barrel-organ caroling across a golden street,
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And fulfilled it with the sunset glow;

And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light;
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And now it's marching onward through the realms of old romance,
And trolling out a fond familiar tune,
And now it's roaring cannon down to fight the King of France,
And now it's prattling softly to the moon,
And all around the organ there's a sea without a shore
Of human joys and wonders and regrets;
To remember and to recompense the music evermore
For what the cold machinery forgets.

Yes; as the music changes,
Like a prismatic glass,
It takes the light and ranges
Through all the moods that pass;
Dissects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets,
And gives the world a glimpse of all
The colors it forgets.

And there *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song;
And there *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
And bolder knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance,
Than ever here on earth below
Have whirled into—*a dance!*—

Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

The cherry-trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume and sweet perfume,
The cherry-trees are seas of bloom (and oh, so near to London!)
And there they say, when dawn is high and all the world's a blaze of sky
The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a song for London.

The nightingale is rather rare and yet they say you'll hear him there
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!)
The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the long halloo
And golden-eyed *tu-whit, tu-whoo* of owls that ogle London.

Nor Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't heard
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!)
And when the rose begins to pout and all the chestnut spires are out
You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorusing for London:—

Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with Love in summer's wonderland;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

And then the troubadour begins to thrill the golden street,
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And in all the gaudy busses there are scores of weary feet
Marking time, sweet time, with a dull mechanic beat,
And a thousand hearts are plunging to a love they'll never meet,
Through the meadows of the sunset, through the poppies and the wheat,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

Verdi, Verdi, when you wrote *Il Trovatore* did you dream
Of the City when the sun sinks low
Of the organ and the monkey and the many-colored stream
On the Piccadilly pavement, of the myriad eyes that seem
To be litten for a moment with a wild Italian gleam
As *A che la morte* parodies the world's eternal theme
And pulses with the sunset-glow?

There's a thief, perhaps, that listens with a face of frozen stone
In the City as the sun sinks low;
There's a portly man of business with a balance of his own,
There's a clerk and there's a butcher of a soft reposeful tone,
And they're all of them returning to the heavens they have known:
They are crammed and jammed in busses and—they're each of them alone
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a very modish woman and her smile is very bland
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And her hansom jingles onward, but her little jeweled hand
Is clenched a little tighter and she cannot understand
What she wants or why she wanders to that undiscovered land,
For the parties there are not at all the sort of thing she planned,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's an Oxford man that listens and his heart is crying out
In the City as the sun sinks low;
For the barge, the eight, the Isis, and the coach's whoop and shout,
For the minute-gun, the counting and the long disheveled rout,
For the howl along the tow-path and a fate that's still in doubt,
For a roughened oar to handle and a race to think about
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a laborer that listens to the voices of the dead
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And his hand begins to tremble and his face to smoulder red
As he sees a loafer watching him and—there he turns his head
And stares into the sunset where his April love is fled,
For he hears her softly singing and his lonely soul is led
Through the land where the dead dreams go.

There's an old and hardened demi-rep, it's ringing in her ears,
In the City as the sun sinks low;
With the wild and empty sorrow of the love that blights and sears,
Oh, and if she hurries onward, then be sure, be sure she hears,
Hears and bears the bitter burden of the unforgotten years,
And her laugh's a little harsher and her eyes are brimmed with tears
For the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks low;
Though the music's only Verdi there's a world to make it sweet
Just as yonder yellow sunset where the earth and heaven meet
Mellows all the sooty City! Hark, a hundred thousand feet
Are marching on to glory through the poppies and the wheat
In the land where the dead dreams go.

So it's Jeremiah, Jeremiah,
What have you to say
When you meet the garland girls
Tripping on their way?

All around my gala hat
I wear a wreath of roses
(A long and lonely year it is
I've waited for the May!)

If any one should ask you,
The reason why I wear it is—
My own love, my true love
Is coming home to-day.

And it's buy a bunch of violets for the lady
(*It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!*)
Buy a bunch of violets for the lady
While the sky burns blue above:

On the other side the street you'll find it shady
(*It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!*)
But buy a bunch of violets for the lady,
And tell her she's your own true love.

There's a barrel-organ carolling across a golden street
In the City as the suns sinks glittering and slow;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And enriched it with the harmonies that make a song complete
In the deeper heavens of music where the night and morning meet,
As it dies into the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light;
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And there, as the music changes,
The song runs round again;
Once more it turns and ranges
Through all its joy and pain:
Dissects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets;
And the wheeling world remembers all
The wheeling song forgets.

Once more *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song:
Once more *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;

Once more the knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance,
Till once, once more, the shattered foe
Has whirled into—*a dance!*

Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with Love in summer's wonderland,
Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

Alfred Noyes [1880–

AMANTIUM IRÆ

From "The Paradise of Dainty Devices"

In going to my naked bed, as one that would have slept,
I heard a wife sing to her child, that long before had wept.
She sighèd sore, and sang full sweet to bring the babe to rest,
That would not cease, but crièd still, in sucking at her breast.
She was full weary of her watch, and grievèd with her child;
She rockèd it, and rated it, till that on her it smiled.
Then did she say, "Now have I found this proverb true to prove,
The falling out of faithful friends, renewing is of love."

Then took I paper, pen, and ink, this proverb for to write,
In register for to remain of such a worthy wight.
As she proceeded thus in song unto her little brat
Much matter uttered she of weight, in place whereas she sat:
And provèd plain there was no beast, nor creature bearing life
Could well be known to live in love, without discord and strife.
Then kissèd she her little babe, and sware, by God above,
The falling out of faithful friends, renewing is of love.

She said that neither king, nor prince, nor lord could live aright,
Until their puissance they did prove, their manhood, and their might,
When manhood shall be matchèd so, that fear can take no place,
Then weary works make warriors each other to embrace,
And leave their force that failèd them; which did consume the rout
That might before have lived their time, their strength and nature out.
Then did she sing, as one that thought no man could her reprove,
The falling out of faithful friends, renewing is of love.

She said she saw no fish, nor fowl, nor beast within her haunt
That met a stranger in their kind, but could give it a taunt.
Since flesh might not endure, but rest must wrath succeed,
And force the fight to fall to play, in pasture where they feed,
So noble Nature can well end the work she hath begun;
And bridle well that will not cease her tragedy in some.
Thus in her song she oft rehearsed, as did her well behove,
The falling out of faithful friends, renewing is of love.

"I marvel much, pardy," quoth she, "for to behold the rout,
To see man, woman, boy, and beast, to toss the world about;
Some kneel, some crouch, some beck, some check, and some can smoothly smile,
And some embrace others in arms, and there think many a wile.
Some stand aloof at cap and knee, some humble, and some stout,
Yet are they never friends in deed, until they once fall out."
Thus ended she her song, and said before she did remove,
"*The falling out of faithful friends, renewing is of love.*"

Richard Edwards [1523?–1566]

QUA CURSUM VENTUS

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so—but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered—
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides—
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze! and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there!

Arthur Hugh Clough [1819–1861]

"FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT"

Is there, for honest Poverty,
  That hangs his head, and a' that!
The coward slave, we pass him by,
  We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
  Our toil's obscure, and a' that;
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
  The Man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
  Wear hoddin gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
  A Man's a Man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
  Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
  Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
  Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Though hundreds worship at his word,
  He's but a coof for a' that;
For a' that, and a' that,
  His ribbon, star, and a' that;
The man o' independent mind,
  He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
  A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
  Guid faith, he maunna fa' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
  Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
  Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,—
As come it will for a' that,—
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that,—
That Man to Man, the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

"WE ARE BRETHREN A' "

A HAPPY bit hame this auld world would be
If men, when they're here, could make shift to agree,
An' ilk said to his neebor, in cottage an' ha',
"Come, gi'e me your hand,—we are brethren a'."

I ken na why ane wi' anither should fight,
When to 'gree would make a' body cosie an' right,
When man meets wi' man, 'tis the best way ava,
To say, "Gi'e me your hand,—we are brethren a'."

My coat is a coarse ane, an' yours may be fine,
And I maun drink water, while you may drink wine;
But we baith ha'e a leal heart, unspotted to shaw:
Sae gi'e me your hand,—we are brethren a'.

The knave ye would scorn, the unfaithfu' deride;
Ye would stand like a rock, wi' the truth on your side;
Sae would I, an' naught else would I value a straw:
Then gi'e me your hand,—we are brethren a'.

Ye would scorn to do fausely by woman or man;
I haud by the right aye, as well as I can;
We are ane in our joys, our affections, an' a':
Come, gi'e me your hand,—we are brethren a'.

Your mother has lo'ed you as mithers can lo'e;
An' mine has done for me what mithers can do;
We are ane high an' laigh, an' we shouldna be twa:
Sae gi'e me your hand,—we are brethren a'.

We love the same simmer day, sunny an' fair;
Hame! oh, how we love it, an' a' that are there!
Frae the pure air o' heaven the same life we draw:
Come, gi'e me your hand,—we are brethren a'.

Frail shakin' auld age will soon come o'er us baith,
An' creepin' alang at his back will be death;
Syne into the same mither-yird we will fa':
Come, gi'e me your hand,—we are brethren a'.

Robert Nicoll [1814–1837]

FRATERNITY

I KNOW not but in every leaf
That sprang to life along with me,
Were written all the joy and grief
Thenceforth my fate to be.

The wind that whispered to the earth,
The bird that sang its earliest lay,
The flower that blossomed at my birth—
My kinsmen all were they.

Ay, but for fellowship with these
I had not been—nay, might not be;
Nor they but vagrant melodies
Till harmonized by me.

John Banister Tabb [1845–1909]

SONNET

MOST men know love but as a part of life;
They hide it in some corner of the breast,
Even from themselves; and only when they rest
In the brief pauses of that daily strife,
Wherewith the world might else be not so rife,
They draw it forth (as one draws forth a toy
To soothe some ardent, kiss-exacting boy)
And hold it up to sister, child, or wife.

Ah me! why may not love and life be one?
Why walk we thus alone, when by our side,
Love, like a visible God, might be our guide?
How would the marts grow noble! and the street,
Worn like a dungeon-floor by weary feet,
Seem then a golden court-way of the Sun!

Henry Timrod [1829–1867]

SIC ITUR

As, at a railway junction, men
Who came together, taking then
One the train up, one down, again

Meet never! Ah, much more as they
Who take one street's two sides, and say
Hard parting words, but walk one way:

Though moving other mates between,
While carts and coaches intervene,
Each to the other goes unseen;

Yet seldom, surely, shall there lack
Knowledge they walk not back to back,
But with an unity of track,

Where common dangers each attend,
And common hopes their guidance lend
To light them to the self-same end.

Whether he then shall cross to thee,
Or thou go thither, or it be
Some midway point, yet ye shall see

Each other, yet again shall meet.
Ah, joy! when with the closing street,
Forgivingly at last ye greet!

Arthur Hugh Clough [1819–1861]

VERSES

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER SELKIRK DURING HIS SOLITARY ABODE ON THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ

I AM monarch of all I survey;
My right there is none to dispute;
From the center all round to the sea
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O Solitude! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech;
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain
My form with indifference see;
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, Friendship, and Love,
Divinely bestowed upon man,
O, had I the wings of a dove
How soon would I taste you again!
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheered by the sallies of youth.

Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Nor sighed at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a Sabbath appeared.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more:
My friends,—do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-wingèd arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair;
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There's mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace
And reconciles man to his lot.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

"BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND"

From "As You Like It"

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly!

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly!

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

THE HOUSE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

THERE are hermit souls that live withdrawn
In the place of their self-content;
There are souls like stars, that dwell apart,
In a fellowless firmament;
There are pioneer souls that blaze their paths
Where highways never ran—
But let me live by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

Let me live in a house by the side of the road
Where the race of men go by—
The men who are good and the men who are bad,
As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's seat
Or hurl the cynic's ban—
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

I see from my house by the side of the road,
By the side of the highway of life,
The men who press with the ardor of hope,
The men who are faint with the strife,
But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears,
Both parts of an infinite plan—
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

I know there are brook-gladdened meadows ahead,
And mountains of wearisome height;
That the road passes on through the long afternoon
And stretches away to the night.
And still I rejoice when the travelers rejoice
And weep with the strangers that moan,
Nor live in my house by the side of the road
Like a man who dwells alone.

Let me live in my house by the side of the road,
It's here the race of men go by—
They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong,
Wise, foolish—so am I.
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban?
Let me live in my house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

Sam Walter Foss [1858–1911]

THE MAN WITH THE HOE

WRITTEN AFTER SEEING MILLET'S WORLD-FAMOUS PAINTING

God made man in His own image, in the image of God made He him.
—GENESIS

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity?

Is this the Dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And marked their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the stretch of Hell to its last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this—
More tongued with censure of the world's blind greed—
More filled with signs and portents for the soul—
More fraught with menace to the universe.

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!
Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,
The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
Through this dread shape the suffering ages look;
Time's tragedy is in that aching stoop;
Through this dread shape humanity betrayed,
Plundered, profaned and disinherited,
Cries protest to the Judges of the World,
A protest that is also prophecy.

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?
How will you ever straighten up this shape;
Touch it again with immortality;
Give back the upward looking and the light;
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
How will the Future reckon with this Man?
How answer his brute question in that hour
When whirlwinds of rebellion shake the world?
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
When this dumb Terror shall reply to God,
After the silence of the centuries?

Edwin Markham [1852–

THE MAN WITH THE HOE

A REPLY

Let us a little permit Nature to take her own way: she better understands her own affairs than we.—MONTAIGNE

NATURE reads not our labels, "great" and "small";
Accepts she one and all

Who, striving, win and hold the vacant place;
All are of royal race.

Him, there, rough-cast, with rigid arm and limb,
The Mother molded him,

Of his rude realm ruler and demigod,
Lord of the rock and clod.

With Nature is no "better" and no "worse,"
On this bared head no curse.

Humbled it is and bowed; so is he crowned
Whose kingdom is the ground.

Diverse the burdens on the one stern road
Where bears each back its load;

Varied the toil, but neither high nor low.
With pen or sword or hoe,

He that has put out strength, lo, he is strong;
Of him with spade or song

Nature but questions,—"This one, shall he stay?"
She answers "Yea," or "Nay,"

"Well, ill, he digs, he sings"; and he bides on,
Or shudders, and is gone.

Strength shall he have, the toiler, strength and grace,
So fitted to his place

As he leaned, there, an oak where sea winds blow,
Our brother with the hoe.

No blot, no monster, no unsightly thing,
The soil's long-lineaged king;

His changeless realm, he knows it and commands;
Erect enough he stands,

Tall as his toil. Nor does he bow unblest:
Labor he has, and rest.

Need was, need is, and need will ever be
For him and such as he;

Cast for the gap, with gnarlèd arm and limb,
The Mother molded him,—

Long wrought, and molded him with mother's care,
Before she set him there.

And aye she gives him, mindful of her own,
Peace of the plant, the stone;

Yea, since above his work he may not rise,
She makes the field his skies.

See! she that bore him, and metes out the lot,
He serves her. Vex him not

To scorn the rock whence he was hewn, the pit
And what was digged from it;

Lest he no more in native virtue stand,
The earth-sword in his hand,

But follow sorry phantoms to and fro,
And let a kingdom go.

John Vance Cheney [1848–

THE SINGING MAN

He sang above the vineyards of the world.
And after him the vines with woven hands
Clambered and clung, and everywhere unfurled
Triumphing green above the barren lands;
Till high as gardens grow, he climbed, he stood,
Sun-crowned with life and strength, and singing toil,
And looked upon his work; and it was good:
The corn, the wine, the oil.

He sang above the noon. The topmost cleft
That grudged him footing on the mountain scars
He planted and despaired not; till he left
His vines soft breathing to the host of stars.
He wrought, he tilled; and even as he sang,
The creatures of his planting laughed to scorn
The ancient threat of deserts where there sprang
The wine, the oil, the corn!

He sang not for abundance.—Over-lords
Took of his tilth. Yet was there still to reap,
The portion of his labor; dear rewards
Of sunlit day, and bread, and human sleep.
He sang for strength; for glory of the light.
He dreamed above the furrows, "They are mine!"
When all he wrought stood fair before his sight
With corn, and oil, and wine.

Truly, the light is sweet
Yea, and a pleasant thing
It is to see the Sun.
And that a man should eat
His bread that he hath won;—
(So is it sung and said),
That he should take and keep,
After his laboring,
The portion of his labor in his bread,
His bread that he hath won;
Yea, and in quiet sleep,
When all is done.

He sang; above the burden and the heat,
  Above all seasons with their fitful grace;
Above the chance and change that led his feet
  To this last ambush of the Market-place.
" Enough for him," they said—and still they say—
  " A crust, with air to breathe, and sun to shine;
He asks no more!"—Before they took away
    The corn, the oil, the wine.

He sang. No more he sings now, anywhere.
  Light was enough, before he was undone.
They knew it well, who took away the air,
  —Who took away the sun;
Who took, to serve their soul-devouring greed,
  Himself, his breath, his bread—the goad of toil;—
Who have and hold, before the eyes of Need,
    The corn, the wine,—the oil!

Truly, one thing is sweet
Of things beneath the Sun;
This, that a man should earn his bread and eat,
Rejoicing in his work which he hath done.
What shall be sung or said
Of desolate deceit,
When others take his bread;
His and his children's bread?—
And the laborer hath none.
This, for his portion now, of all that he hath done.
He earns; and others eat.
He starves;—they sit at meat
Who have taken away the Sun.

II

Seek him now, that singing Man.
Look for him,
Look for him
In the mills,
In the mines;
Where the very daylight pines,—
He, who once did walk the hills!

You shall find him, if you scan
Shapes all unbefitting Man,
Bodies warped, and faces dim.
In the mines; in the mills
Where the ceaseless thunder fills
Spaces of the human brain
Till all thought is turned to pain.
Where the skirl of wheel on wheel,
Grinding him who is their tool,
Makes the shattered senses reel
To the numbness of the fool.
Perished thought, and halting tongue—
(Once it spoke;—once it sung!)
Live to hunger, dead to song.
Only heart-beats loud with wrong
Hammer on,—*How long?*
. . . *How long?—How long?*

Search for him;
Search for him;
Where the crazy atoms swim
Up the fiery furnace-blast.
You shall find him, at the last,—
He whose forehead braved the sun,—
Wrecked and tortured and undone.
Where no breath across the heat
Whispers him that life was sweet;
But the sparkles mock and flare,
Scattering up the crooked air.
(Blackened with that bitter mirk,—
Would God know His handiwork?)

Thought is not for such as he;
Naught but strength, and misery;
Since, for just the bite and sup,
Life must needs be swallowed up.
Only, reeling up the sky,
Hurtling flames that hurry by,
Gasp and flare, with *Why—Why,*
. . . *Why?* . . .

Why the human mind of him
Shrinks, and falters and is dim
When he tries to make it out:
What the torture is about.—
Why he breathes, a fugitive
Whom the World forbids to live.
Why he earned for his abode,
Habitation of the toad!
Why his fevered day by day
Will not serve to drive away
Horror that must always haunt:—
. . . *Want* . . . *Want!*
Nightmare shot with waking pangs;—
Tightening coil, and certain fangs,
Close and closer, always nigh . . .
. . . *Why?* . . . *Why?*

Why he labors under ban
That denies him for a man.
Why his utmost drop of blood
Buys for him no human good;
Why his utmost urge of strength
Only lets Them starve at length;—
Will not let him starve alone;
He must watch, and see his own
Fade and fail, and starve, and die.

. . . . . .

. . . *Why?* . . . *Why?*

. . . . . .

Heart-beats, in a hammering song,
Heavy as an ox may plod,
Goaded—goaded—faint with wrong,
Cry unto some ghost of God
. . . *How long?* . . . *How long?*
. . . . . *How long?*

III

Seek him yet. Search for him!
You shall find him, spent and grim;

In the prisons, where we pen
These unsightly shards of men.
Sheltered fast;
Housed at length;
Clothed and fed, no matter how!—
Where the householders, aghast,
Measure in his broken strength
Naught but power for evil, now.
Beast-of-burden drudgeries
Could not earn him what was his:
He who heard the world applaud
Glories seized by force and fraud,
He must break,—he must take!—
Both for hate and hunger's sake.
He must seize by fraud and force;
He must strike, without remorse!
Seize he might; but never keep.
Strike, his once!—Behold him here.
(Human life we buy so cheap,
Who should know we held it dear?)

No denial,—no defence
From a brain bereft of sense,
Any more than penitence.
But the heart-beats now, that plod
Goaded—goaded—dumb with wrong,
Ask not even a ghost of God
. . . . . *How long?*

When the Sea gives up its dead,
Prison caverns, yield instead
This, rejected and despised;
This, the Soiled and Sacrificed!
Without form or comeliness;
Shamed for us that did transgress;
Bruised, for our iniquities,
With the stripes that are all his!
Face that wreckage, you who can.
It was once the Singing Man.

IV

Must it be?—Must we then
Render back to God again
This His broken work, this thing,
For His man that once did sing?
Will not all our wonders do?
Gifts we stored the ages through,
(Trusting that He had forgot)—
Gifts the Lord requirèd not?

Would the all-but-human serve!
Monsters made of stone and nerve;
Towers to threaten and defy
Curse or blessing of the sky;
Shafts that blot the stars with smoke;
Lightnings harnessed under yoke;
Sea-things, air-things, wrought with steel,
That may smite, and fly, and feel!
Oceans calling each to each;
Hostile hearts, with kindred speech.
Every work that Titans can;
Every marvel: save a man,
Who might rule without a sword.—
  Is a man more precious, Lord?

Can it be?—Must we then
Render back to Thee again
Million, million wasted men?
Men, of flickering human breath,
Only made for life and death?

Ah, but see the sovereign Few,
Highly favored, that remain!
These, the glorious residue,
Of the cherished race of Cain.
These, the magnates of the age,
High above the human wage,
Who have numbered and possessed
All the portion of the rest!

What are all despairs and shames,
What the mean, forgotten names
Of the thousand more or less,
For one surfeit of success?

For those dullest lives we spent,
Take these Few magnificent!
For that host of blotted ones,
Take these glittering central suns.
Few;—but how their lustre thrives
On the million broken lives!
Splendid, over dark and doubt,
For a million souls gone out!
These, the holders of our hoard,—
Wilt thou not accept them, Lord?

V

Oh, in the wakening thunders of the heart,
—The small lost Eden, troubled through the night,
Sounds there not now,—forboded and apart,
Some voice and sword of light?

Some voice and portent of a dawn to break?—
Searching like God, the ruinous human shard
Of that lost Brother-man Himself did make,
And Man himself hath marred?

It sounds!—And may the anguish of that birth
Seize on the world; and may all shelters fail,
Till we behold new Heaven and new Earth
Through the rent Temple-vail!

When the high-tides that threaten near and far
To sweep away our guilt before the sky,—
Flooding the waste of this dishonored Star,
Cleanse, and o'erwhelm, and cry!—

Cry, from the deep of world-accusing waves,
With longing more than all since Light began,
Above the nations,—underneath the graves,—
"Give back the Singing Man!"

Josephine Preston Peabody [1874–

"SCUM O' THE EARTH"

I

At the gate of the West I stand,
On the isle where the nations throng.
We call them "scum o' the earth";

Stay, are we doing you wrong,
Young fellow from Socrates' land?—
You, like a Hermes so lissome and strong
Fresh from the master Praxiteles' hand?
So you're of Spartan birth?
Descended, perhaps, from one of the band—
Deathless in story and song—
Who combed their long hair at Thermopylæ's pass? . . .
Ah, I forgot the straits, alas!
More tragic than theirs, more compassion-worth,
That have doomed you to march in our "immigrant class"
Where you're nothing but "scum o' the earth."

II

You Pole with a child on your knee,
What dower bring you to the land of the free?
Hark! does she croon
That sad little tune
That Chopin once found on his Polish lea
And mounted in gold for you and for me?
Now a ragged young fiddler answers
In wild Czeck melody
That Dvořak took whole from the dancers.
And the heavy faces bloom
In the wonderful Slavic way;
The little, dull eyes, the brows a-gloom,
Suddenly dawn like the day.
While, watching these folks and their mystery,
I forget that they're nothing worth;
That Bohemians, Slovaks, Croatians,
And men of all Slavic nations
Are "polacks"—and "scum o' the earth."

III

Genoese boy of the level brow,
Lad of the lustrous, dreamy eyes
Astare at Manhattan's pinnacles now
In the first, sweet shock of a hushed surprise;
Within your far-rapt seer's eyes
I catch the glow of the wild surmise
That played on the Santa Maria's prow
In that still gray dawn,
Four centuries gone,
When a world from the wave began to rise.
Oh, it's hard to foretell what high emprise
Is the goal that gleams
When Italy's dreams
Spread wing and sweep into the skies.
Cæsar dreamed him a world ruled well;
Dante dreamed Heaven out of Hell;
Angelo brought us there to dwell;
And you, are you of a different birth?—
You're only a "dago,"—and "scum o' the earth"!

IV

Stay, are we doing you wrong
Calling you "scum o' the earth,"
Man of the sorrow-bowed head,
Of the features tender yet strong,—
Man of the eyes full of wisdom and mystery
Mingled with patience and dread?
Have not I known you in history,
Sorrow-bowed head?
Were you the poet-king, worth
Treasures of Ophir unpriced?
Were you the prophet, perchance, whose art
Foretold how the rabble would mock
That shepherd of spirits, erelong,
Who should carry the lambs on his heart
And tenderly feed his flock?
Man—lift that sorrow-bowed head.
Lo! 'tis the face of the Christ!

The vision dies at its birth.
You're merely a butt for our mirth.
You're a "sheeny"—and therefore despised
And rejected as "scum o' the earth."

V

Countrymen, bend and invoke
Mercy for us blasphemers,
For that we spat on these marvelous folk,
Nations of darers and dreamers,
Scions of singers and seers,
Our peers, and more than our peers.
"Rabble and refuse," we name them
And "scum o' the earth," to shame them.
Mercy for us of the few, young years,
Of the culture so callow and crude,
Of the hands so grasping and rude,
The lips so ready for sneers
At the sons of our ancient more-than-peers.
Mercy for us who dare despise
Men in whose loins our Homer lies;
Mothers of men who shall bring to us
The glory of Titian, the grandeur of Huss;
Children in whose frail arms shall rest
Prophets and singers and saints of the West.

Newcomers all from the eastern seas,
Help us incarnate dreams like these.
Forget, and forgive, that we did you wrong.
Help us to father a nation, strong
In the comradeship of an equal birth,
In the wealth of the richest bloods of earth.

Robert Haven Schauffler [1879–

THE SECOND COMING

The Saviour came. With trembling lips
He counted Europe's battleships.
"Yet millions lack their daily bread.
So much for Calvary!" He said.

Norman Gale [1862–

THE NIGHT COURT

"Call Rose Costara!"
Insolent she comes.
The watchers, practised, keen, turn down their thumbs.
The walk, the talk, the face,—that sea-shell tint,—
It is old stuff; they read her like coarse print.
Here is no hapless innocence waylaid.
This is a stolid worker at her trade.
Listening, she yawns, half smiling, undismayed,
Shrugging a little at the law's delay,
Bored and impatient to be on her way.
It is her eighth conviction. Out beyond the rail
A lady novelist in search of types turns pale.
She meant to write of them just as she found them,
And with no tears or maudlin glamor round them,
In forceful, virile words, harsh, true words, without shame,
Calling an ugly thing, boldly, an ugly name;
Sympathy, velvet glove, on purpose, iron hand.
But *eighth conviction!* All the phrases she had planned
Fail; "sullen," "vengeful," no, she isn't that.
No, the pink face beneath the hectic hat
Gives back her own aghast and sickened stare
With a detached and rather cheerful air,
And then the little novelist sees red.
From her chaste heart all clemency is fled.
"Oh, loathsome! venomous! Off with her head!
Call Rose Costara!" But before you stop,
And shelve your decent rage,
Let's call the cop.

Let's call the plain-clothes cop who brought her in.
The weary-eyed night watchman of the law,
A shuffling person with a hanging jaw,
Loose-lipped and sallow, rather vague of chin,
Comes rubber-heeling at His Honor's rap.
He set and baited and then sprung the trap—
The *trap*—by his unsavory report.
Let's ask him why—but first
Let's call the court.

Not only the grim figure in the chair,
Sphinx-like above the waste and wreckage there,
Skeptical, tired of a retold tale,
But the whole humming hive, the false, the frail,—
An old young woman with a weasel face,
A lying witness waiting in his place,
Two ferret lawyers nosing out a case,
Reporters questioning a Mexican,
Sobbing her silly heart out for her man,
Planning to feature her, "lone, desperate, pretty,"—
Yes, call the court. But wait!
Let's call the city.

Call the community! Call up, call down,
Call all the speeding, mad, unheeding town!
Call rags and tags and then call velvet gown!
Go, summon them from tenements and clubs,
On office floors and over steaming tubs!
Shout to the boxes and behind the scenes,
Then to the push-carts and the limousines!
Arouse the lecture-room, the cabaret!
Confound them with a trumpet blast and say,
"Are you so dull, so deaf and blind indeed,
That you mistake the harvest for the seed?"
Condemn them for—but stay!
Let's call the code—

That facile thing they've fashioned to their mode:
Smug sophistries that smother and befool,
That numb and stupefy; that clumsy thing
That measures mountains with a three-foot rule,
And plumbs the ocean with a pudding string—
The little, brittle code. Here is the root,
Far out of sight and buried safe and deep,
And Rose Costara is the bitter fruit.
On every limb and leaf, death, ruin, creep.

So, lady novelist, go home again.
Rub biting acid on your little pen.
Look back and out and up and in, and then

Write that it is no job for pruning-shears.
Tell them to dig for years and years and years
The twined and twisted roots. Blot out the page;
Invert the blundering order of the age;
Reverse the scheme: the last shall be the first.
Summon the system, starting with the worst—
The lying, dying code! On, down the line,
The city and the court, the cop. Assign
The guilt, the blame, the shame! Sting, lash, and spur!
Call each and all! Call us! And *then* call her!

Ruth Comfort Mitchell [18

THE FACTORIES

I HAVE shut my little sister in from life and light
(For a rose, for a ribbon, for a wreath across my hair),
I have made her restless feet still until the night,
Locked from sweets of summer and from wild spring air;
I who ranged the meadowlands, free from sun to sun,
Free to sing and pull the buds and watch the far wings fly,
I have bound my sister till her playing-time was done—
Oh, my little sister, was it I? Was it I?

I have robbed my sister of her day of maidenhood
(For a robe, for a feather, for a trinket's restless spark),
Shut from Love till dusk shall fall, how shall she know good,
How shall she go scatheless through the sin-lit dark?
I who could be innocent, I who could be gay,
I who could have love and mirth before the light went by,
I have put my sister in her mating-time away—
Sister, my young sister, was it I? Was it I?

I have robbed my sister of the lips against her breast,
(For a coin, for the weaving of my children's lace and lawn),
Feet that pace beside the loom, hands that cannot rest—
How can she know motherhood, whose strength is gone?
I who took no heed of her, starved and labor-worn,
I, against whose placid heart my sleepy gold-heads lie,
Round my path they cry to me, little souls unborn—
God of Life! Creator! It was I! It was I!

Margaret Widdemer [18

BLACK SHEEP

From their folded mates they wander far,
Their ways seem harsh and wild;
They follow the beck of a baleful star,
Their paths are dream beguiled.

Yet haply they sought but a wider range,
Some loftier mountain-slope,
And little recked of the country strange
Beyond the gates of hope.

And haply a bell with a luring call
Summoned their feet to tread
Midst the cruel rocks, where the deep pitfall
And the lurking snare are spread.

Maybe, in spite of their tameless days
Of outcast liberty,
They're sick at heart for the homely ways
Where their gathered brothers be.

And oft at night, when the plains fall dark
And the hills loom large and dim,
For the Shepherd's voice they mutely hark,
And their souls go out to him.

Meanwhile, "Black sheep! black sheep!" we cry,
Safe in the inner fold;
And maybe, they hear, and wonder why,
And marvel, out in the cold.

Richard Burton [1859-

THE DREAM-BEARER

Where weary folk toil, black with smoke,
And hear but whistles scream,
I went, all fresh from dawn and dew,
To carry them a dream.

I went to bitter lanes and dark,
Who once had known the sky,
To carry them a dream—and found
They had more dreams than I.

Mary Carolyn Davies [18

SUNDAY EVENING IN THE COMMON

Look—on the topmost branches of the world
The blossoms of the myriad stars are thick;
Over the huddled rows of stone and brick
A few sad wisps of empty smoke are curled
Like ghosts, languid and sick.

One breathless moment now the city's moaning
Fades, and the endless streets seem vague and dim;
There is no sound around the whole world's rim,
Save in the distance a small band is droning
Some desolate old hymn.

Van Wyck, how often have we been together
When this same moment made all mysteries clear—
The infinite stars that brood above us here,
And the gray city in the soft June weather,
So tawdry and so dear!

John Hall Wheelock [1859–

CALIBAN IN THE COAL MINES

God, we don't like to complain
We know that the mine is no lark—
But—there's the pools from the rain;
But—there's the cold and the dark.

God, You don't know what it is—
You, in Your well-lighted sky,
Watching the meteors whizz;
Warm, with the sun always by.

God, if You had but the moon
Stuck in Your cap for a lamp,
Even You'd tire of it soon,
Down in the dark and the damp.

Nothing but blackness above,
And nothing that moves but the cars—
God, if You wish for our love,
Fling us a handful of stars!

Louis Untermeyer [1885–

LANDSCAPES

The rain was over, and the brilliant air
Made every little blade of grass appear
Vivid and startling—everything was there
With sharpened outlines, eloquently clear,
As though one saw it in a crystal sphere.
The rusty sumac with its struggling spires;
The golden-rod with all its million fires;
(A million torches swinging in the wind)
A single poplar, marvellously thinned,
Half like a naked boy, half like a sword;
Clouds, like the haughty banners of the Lord;
A group of pansies with their shrewish faces
Little old ladies cackling over laces;
The quaint, unhurried road that curved so well;
The prim petunias with their rich, rank smell;
The lettuce-birds, the creepers in the field—
How bountifully were they all revealed!
How arrogantly each one seemed to thrive—
So frank and strong, so radiantly alive!

And over all the morning-minded earth
There seemed to spread a sharp and kindling mirth,
Piercing the stubborn stones until I saw
The toad face heaven without shame or awe,
The ant confront the stars, and every weed
Grow proud as though it bore a royal seed;
While all the things that die and decompose
Sent forth their bloom as richly as the rose . . .
Oh, what a liberal power that made them thrive
And keep the very dirt that died, alive.

And now I saw the slender willow-tree
No longer calm and drooping listlessly,
Letting its languid branches sway and fall
As though it danced in some sad ritual;
But rather like a young, athletic girl,
Fearless and gay, her hair all out of curl,
And flying in the wind—her head thrown back,
Her arms flung up, her garments flowing slack,

And all her rushing spirits running over. . . .
What made a sober tree seem such a rover—
Or made the staid and stalwart apple-trees,
That stood for years knee-deep in velvet peace,
Turn all their fruit to little worlds of flame,
And burn the trembling orchard there below.
What lit the heart of every golden-glow—
Oh, why was nothing weary, dull or tame? . . .
Beauty it was, and keen, compassionate mirth
That drives the vast and energetic earth.

And, with abrupt and visionary eyes,
I saw the huddled tenements arise.
Here where the merry clover danced and shone
Sprang agonies of iron and of stone;
There, where green Silence laughed or stood enthralled,
Cheap music blared and evil alleys sprawled.
The roaring avenues, the shrieking mills;
Brothels and prisons on those kindly hills—
The menace of these things swept over me;
A threatening, unconquerable sea. . . .

A stirring landscape and a generous earth!
Freshening courage and benevolent mirth—
And then the city, like a hideous sore. . . .
Good God, and what is all this beauty for?

Louis Untermeyer [1885–

STUPIDITY STREET

I saw with open eyes
Singing birds sweet
Sold in the shops
For the people to eat,
Sold in the shops of
Stupidity Street.

I saw in vision
The worm in the wheat,
And in the shops nothing
For people to eat;
Nothing for sale in
Stupidity Street.

Ralph Hodgson [18

A TROOP OF THE GUARD

[HARVARD CLASS POEM]

THERE'S trampling of hoofs in the busy street,
  There's clanking of sabres on floor and stair,
There's sound of restless, hurrying feet,
Of voices that whisper, of lips that entreat,
  Will they live, will they die, will they strive, will they dare?
The houses are garlanded, flags flutter gay,
For a Troop of the Guard rides forth to-day.

Oh, the troopers will ride and their hearts will leap,
  When it's shoulder to shoulder and friend to friend—
But it's some to the pinnacle, some to the deep,
And some in the glow of their strength to sleep,
  And for all it's a fight to the tale's far end.
And it's each to his goal, nor turn nor sway,
When the Troop of the Guard rides forth to-day.
The dawn is upon us, the pale light speeds
  To the zenith with glamor and golden dart.
On, up! Boot and saddle! Give spurs to your steeds!
There's a city beleaguered that cries for men's deeds,
  With the pain of the world in its cavernous heart.
    Ours be the triumph! Humanity calls!
      Life's not a dream in the clover!
    On to the walls, on to the walls,
      On to the walls, and over!

The wine is spent, the tale is spun,
The revelry of youth is done.
The horses prance, the bridles clink,
While maidens fair in bright array
With us the last sweet goblet drink,
Then bid us "Mount and ride away!"
Into the dawn, we ride, we ride,
Fellow and fellow, side by side;
Galloping over the field and hill,

Over the marshland, stalwart still;
Into the forest's shadowy hush,
Where spectres walk in sunless day,
And in dark pools and branch and bush
The treacherous will-o'-the-wisp lights play.
Out of the wood 'neath the risen sun,
Weary we gallop, one and one,
To a richer hope and a stronger foe
And a hotter fight in the fields below—
Each man his own slave, each his lord,
For the golden spurs and the victor's sword!

Friends of the great, the high, the perilous years,
Upon the brink of mighty things we stand—
Of golden harvests and of silver tears,
And griefs and pleasures that like grains of sand
Gleam in the hour-glass, yield their place, and die.
Like a dark sea our lives before us lie,
And we, like divers o'er a pearl-strewn deep,
Stand yet an instant in the warm, young sun,
Plunge, and are gone,
And over pearl and diver the restless breakers sweep.
On to the quest! To-day
In joyful revelry we still may play
With the last golden phantoms of dead years;
Hearing above the stir
The old protecting music in our ears
Of fluttering pinions and the voice of her,
The Mighty Mother, watching o'er her sons.
To-day we still may crouch beneath her wings,
Dreaming of unimagined things;
To-morrow we are part
Of the world's depthless, palpitating heart,
One with the living, striving millions
Whose lives beat out the ceaseless, rhythmic song
Of joy and pain and peace and love and wrong.
We may not dwell on solitary heights.
There is a force that draws men breast to breast
In the hot swirl of never-ending fights,
When man—enriched, despoiled, oppressed,

By the great titans of the earth who hold
The nations in their hands as boys a swallow's nest—
Leaps from the sodden mass through loves and feuds
And tumult of hot strife and tempest blast,
Until he stands, free of the depths at last,
A titan in his turn, to mould
The pliable clay of the world's multitudes.

An anxious generation sends us forth
On the far conquest of the thrones of might.
From West and East, from South and North,
Earth's children, weary-eyed with too much light,
Cry from their dream-forsaken vales of pain,
"Give us our gods, give us our gods again!"
A lofty and relentless century,
Gazing with Argus eyes,
Has pierced the very inmost halls of faith,
And left no shelter whither man may flee
From the cold storms of night and lovelessness and death.
Old gods have fallen and the new must rise!
Out of the dust of doubt and broken creeds,
The sons of those who cast men's idols low
Must build up for a hungry people's needs
New gods, new hopes, new strength to toil and grow;
Knowing that naught that ever lived can die,
No act, no dream but spreads its sails, sublime,
Sweeping across the visible seas of Time,
Into the treasure-haven of eternity.

The portals are open, the white road leads
  Through thicket and garden, o'er stone and sod.
On, up! Boot and saddle! Give spurs to your steeds!
There's a city beleaguered that cries for men's deeds,
  For the faith that is strength and the love that is God!
    On through the dawning! Humanity calls!
      Life's not a dream in the clover!
    On to the walls, on to the walls,
      On to the walls, and over!

Hermann Hagedorn [1882–

THE GOD-MAKER, MAN

Nevermore
Shall the shepherds of Arcady follow
Pan's moods as he lolls by the shore
Of the mere, or lies hid in the hollow;
Nevermore
Shall they start at the sound of his reed-fashioned flute;

Fallen mute
Are the strings of Apollo,
His lyre and his lute;
And the lips of the Memnons are mute
Evermore;
And the gods of the North,—are they dead or forgetful,
Our Odin and Baldur and Thor?
Are they drunk, or grown weary of worship and fretful,
Our Odin and Baldur and Thor?

And into what night have the Orient deities strayed?
Swart gods of the Nile, in dusk splendors arrayed,
Brooding Isis and somber Osiris,
You were gone ere the fragile papyrus,
(That bragged you eternal!) decayed.

The avatars
But illumine their limited evens
And vanish like plunging stars;
They are fixed in the whirling heavens
No firmer than falling stars;
Brief lords of the changing soul, they pass
Like a breath from the face of a glass,
Or a blossom of summer blown shallop-like over
The clover
And tossed tides of grass.

Sink to silence the psalms and the pæans,
The shibboleths shift, and the faiths,
And the temples that challenged the æons
Are tenanted only by wraiths;
Swoon to silence the cymbals and psalters,
The worships grow senseless and strange

And the mockers ask, "*Where be thy altars?*"
Crying, "*Nothing is changeless—but Change!*"

Yes, nothing seems changeless, but Change.
And yet, through the creed-wrecking years,
One story for ever appears;
The tale of a City Supernal—
The whisper of Something eternal—
A passion, a hope, and a vision
That peoples the silence with Powers;
A fable of meadows Elysian
Where Time enters not with his Hours;—
Manifold are the tale's variations,
Race and clime ever tinting the dreams,
Yet its essence, through endless mutations,
Immutable gleams.

Deathless, though godheads be dying,
Surviving the creeds that expire,
Illogical, reason-defying,
Lives that passionate, primal desire;
Insistent, persistent, forever
Man cries to the silences, "*Never*

Shall Death reign the lord of the soul,
Shall the dust be the ultimate goal—
I will storm the black bastions of Night!
I will tread where my vision has trod,
I will set in the darkness a light,
In the vastness, a god!"

As the forehead of Man grows broader, so do his creeds;
And his gods they are shaped in his image, and mirror his needs;
And he clothes them with thunders and beauty, he clothes them with music and fire;
Seeing not, as he bows by their altars, that he worships his own desire;
And mixed with his trust there is terror, and mixed with his madness is ruth,
And every man grovels in error, yet every man glimpses a truth.

For all of the creeds are false, and all of the creeds are true;
And low at the shrines where my brothers bow, there will I bow, too;
For no form of a god, and no fashion
Man has made in his desperate passion
But is worthy some worship of mine;—
Not too hot with a gross belief,
Nor yet too cold with pride,
I will bow me down where my brothers bow,
Humble—but open-eyed!

Don Marquis [1878–

THE FIELD OF GLORY

War shook the land where Levi dwelt,
And fired the dismal wrath he felt,
That such a doom was ever wrought
As his, to toil while others fought;
To toil, to dream—and still to dream,
With one day barren as another;
To consummate, as it would seem,
The dry despair of his old mother.

Far off one afternoon began
The sound of man destroying man;
And Levi, sick with nameless rage,
Condemned again his heritage,
And sighed for scars that might have come,
And would, if once he could have sundered
Those harsh, inhering claims of home
That held him while he cursed and wondered.

Another day, and then there came,
Rough, bloody, ribald, hungry, lame,
But yet themselves, to Levi's door,
Two remnants of the day before.
They laughed at him and what he sought;
They jeered him, and his painful acre;
But Levi knew that they had fought,
And left their manners to their Maker.

That night, for the grim widow's ears,
With hopes that hid themselves in fears,
He told of arms, and featly deeds,
Whereat one leaps the while he reads,
And said he'd be no more a clown,
While others drew the breath of battle.—
The mother looked him up and down,
And laughed—a scant laugh with a rattle.

She told him what she found to tell,
And Levi listened, and heard well
Some admonitions of a voice
That left him no cause to rejoice.—
He sought a friend, and found the stars,
And prayed aloud that they should aid him;
But they said not a word of wars,
Or of a reason why God made him.

And who's of this or that estate
We do not wholly calculate,
When baffling shades that shift and cling
Are not without their glimmering;
When even Levi, tired of faith,
Beloved of none, forgot by many,
Dismissed as an inferior wraith,
Reborn may be as great as any.

Edwin Arlington Robinson]1869–

THE CONQUERORS

I saw the Conquerors riding by
With trampling feet of horse and men:
Empire on empire like the tide
Flooded the world and ebbed again;

A thousand banners caught the sun,
And cities smoked along the plain,
And laden down with silk and gold
And heaped-up pillage groaned the wain.

I saw the Conquerors riding by,
Splashing through loathsome floods of war—

The Crescent leaning o'er its hosts,
And the barbaric scimitar,—

And continents of moving spears,
And storms of arrows in the sky,
And all the instruments sought out
By cunning men that men may die!

I saw the Conquerors riding by
With cruel lips and faces wan:
Musing on kingdoms sacked and burned
There rode the Mongol Ghengis Khan;

And Alexander, like a god,
Who sought to weld the world in one;
And Cæsar with his laurel wreath;
And like a thing from Hell the Hun;

And, leading like a star the van,
Heedless of upstretched arm and groan,
Inscrutable Napoleon went
Dreaming of empire, and alone. . . .

Then all they perished from the earth
As fleeting shadows from a glass,
And, conquering down the centuries,
Came Christ, the Swordless, on an ass!

Harry Kemp [1883–

THE ARSENAL AT SPRINGFIELD

This is the Arsenal. From floor to ceiling,
Like a huge organ, rise the burnished arms;
But from their silent pipes no anthem pealing
Startles the villages with strange alarms.

Ah! what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary,
When the death-angel touches those swift keys!
What loud lament and dismal Miserere
Will mingle with their awful symphonies!

I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan,

Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own.

On helm and harness rings the Saxon hammer,
Through Cimbric forest roars the Norseman's song,
And loud, amid the universal clamor,
O'er distant deserts sounds the Tartar gong.

I hear the Florentine, who from his palace
Wheels out his battle-bell with dreadful din,
And Aztec priests upon their teocallis
Beat the wild war-drums made of serpent's skin;

The tumult of each sacked and burning village;
The shout that every prayer for mercy drowns;
The soldiers' revels in the midst of pillage;
The wail of famine in beleaguered towns;

The bursting shell, the gateway wrenched asunder,
The rattling musketry, the clashing blade;
And ever and anon, in tones of thunder,
The diapason of the cannonade.

Is it, O man, with such discordant noises,
With such accursed instruments as these,
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices,
And jarrest the celestial harmonies?

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals or forts:

The warrior's name would be a name abhorrèd!
And every nation, that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Would wear forevermore the curse of Cain!

Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, "Peace!"

Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THE LITTLE SISTER OF THE PROPHET

"If there arise among you a prophet or dreamer . . . ."

I HAVE left a basket of dates
In the cool dark room that is under the vine,
Some curds set out in two little crimson plates
And a flask of amber wine,
And cakes most cunningly beaten
Of savory herbs, and spice, and the delicate wheaten
Flour that is best,
And all to lighten his spirit and sweeten his rest.

This morning he cried, "Awake,
And see what the wonderful grace of the Lord hath revealed!"
And we ran for his sake,
But 'twas only the dawn outspread o'er our father's field,
And the house of the potter white in the valley below.
But his hands were upraised to the east and he cried to us, "So
Ye may ponder and read
The strength and the beauty of God out-rolled in a fiery screed!"

Then the little brown mother smiled,
As one does on the words of a well-loved child,
And, "Son," she replied, "have the oxen been watered and fed?
For work is to do, though the skies be never so red,
And already the first sweet hours of the day are spent."
And he sighed, and went.

Will he come from the byre
With his head all misty with dreams, and his eyes on fire,
Shaking us all with the weight of the words of his passion?

I will give him raisins instead of dates,
And wreathe young leaves on the little red plates.
I will put on my new head-tyre,
And braid my hair in a comelier fashion.
Will he note? Will he mind?
Will he touch my cheek as he used to, and laugh and be kind? *Marjorie L. C. Pickthall* [1883–

THE SONS OF MARTHA

The Sons of Mary seldom bother,
For they have inherited that good part,
But the Sons of Martha favor their mother
Of the careful soul and the troubled heart;
And because she lost her temper once,
And because she was rude to the Lord, her Guest,
Her sons must wait upon Mary's sons—
World without end, reprieve, or rest.

It is their care in all the ages
To take the buffet and cushion the shock;
It is their care that the gear engages;
It is their care that the switches lock;
It is their care that the wheels run truly;
It is their care to embark and entrain,
Tally, transport, and deliver duly
The Sons of Mary by land and main.

They say to the mountains, "Be ye removed!"
They say to the lesser floods, "Run dry!"
Under their rods are the rocks reproved—
They are not afraid of that which is high.
Then do the hilltops shake to the summit;
Then is the bed of the deep laid bare,
That the Sons of Mary may overcome it,
Pleasantly sleeping and unaware.

They finger Death at their glove's end
When they piece and repiece the living wires.
He rears against the gates they tend;
They feed him hungry behind their fires.

Early at dawn, ere men see clear,
They stumble into his terrible stall,
And hale him forth like a haltered steer,
And goad and turn him till evenfall.

To these from birth is Belief forbidden;
From these till death is relief afar;—
They are concerned with matters hidden—
Under the earth line their altars are.
The secret fountains to follow up,
Waters withdrawn to restore to the mouth—
Yea, and gather the floods as in a cup,
And pour them again at a city's drouth.

They do not preach that their God will rouse them
A little before the nuts work loose;
They do not teach that His Pity allows them
To leave their work whenever they choose.
As in the thronged and the lightened ways,
So in the dark and the desert they stand,
Wary and watchful all their days,
That their brethren's days may be long in the land.

Lift ye the stone, or cleave the wood,
To make a path more fair or flat—
Lo! it is black already with blood
Some Sons of Martha spilled for that.
Not as a ladder from Earth to Heaven,
Not as an altar to any creed,
But simple service simply given
To his own kind, in their common need.

And the Sons of Mary smile and are blessed—
They know the angels are on their side.
They know in them is the Grace confessed,
And for them are the Mercies multiplied.
They sit at the Feet and they hear the Word—
They know how truly the Promise runs.
They have cast their burden upon the Lord,
And—the Lord He lays it on Martha's Sons.

Rudyard Kipling [1865-

THE TUFT OF FLOWERS

I WENT to turn the grass once after one
Who mowed it in the dew before the sun.

The dew was gone that made his blade so keen
Before I came to view the levelled scene.

I looked for him behind an isle of trees;
I listened for his whetstone on the breeze.

But he had gone his way, the grass all mown,
And I must be, as he had been,—alone,

"As all must be," I said within my heart,
"Whether they work together or apart."

But as I said it, swift there passed me by
On noiseless wing a 'wildered butterfly,

Seeking with memories grown dim o'er night
Some resting flower of yesterday's delight.

And once I marked his flight go round and round,
As where some flower lay withering on the ground.

And then he flew as far as eye could see,
And then on tremulous wing came back to me.

I thought of questions that have no reply,
And would have turned to toss the grass to dry;

But he turned first, and led my eye to look
At a tall tuft of flowers beside a brook,

A leaping tongue of bloom the scythe had spared
Beside a reedy brook the scythe had bared.

I left my place to know them by their name,
Finding them butterfly weed when I came.

The mower in the dew had loved them thus,
By leaving them to flourish, not for us,

Nor yet to draw one thought of ours to him,
But from sheer morning gladness at the brim.

The butterfly and I had lit upon,
Nevertheless, a message from the dawn,

That made me hear the wakening birds around,
And hear his long scythe whispering to the ground,

And feel a spirit kindred to my own;
So that henceforth I worked no more alone;

But glad with him, I worked as with his aid,
And weary, sought at noon with him the shade;

And dreaming, as it were, held brotherly speech
With one whose thought I had not hoped to reach.

"Men work together," I told him from the heart,
"Whether they work together or apart."

Robert Frost [1875–

MENDING WALL

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:

"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors."
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
"*Why* do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."

Robert Frost [1875–

FORBEARANCE

Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?
And loved so well a high behavior,
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
Nobility more nobly to repay?
O, be my friend, and teach me to be thine!

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803–1882]

THE MUSIC-MAKERS

ISRAFEL

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—KORAN

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
  Whose heart-strings are a lute;
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
  Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
  In her highest noon,
  The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
  While, to listen, the red levin
  (With the rapid Pleiads, even,
  Which were seven)
  Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
  And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
  By which he sits and sings,
The trembling living wire
  Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
  Where deep thoughts are a duty,
Where Love's a grown-up God,
Where the Houri glances are
  Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,
  Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
  Best bard, because the wisest:
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
  With thy burning measures suit:
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
  With the fervor of thy lute:
  Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
  Is a world of sweets and sours;
  Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
  Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
  Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
  A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
  From my lyre within the sky.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

PROEM

(WRITTEN TO INTRODUCE THE FIRST GENERAL COLLECTION OF HIS POEMS)

I LOVE the old melodious lays
Which softly melt the ages through,
  The songs of Spenser's golden days,
  Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours
To breathe their marvellous notes I try;
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers
In silence feel the dewy showers,
And drink with glad, still lips the blessing of the sky.

The rigor of a frozen clime,
The harshness of an untaught ear,
The jarring words of one whose rhyme
Beat often Labor's hurried time,
Or Duty's rugged march through storm and strife, are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
No rounded art the lack supplies;
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
Or softer shades of Nature's face,
I view her common forms with unanointed eyes.

Nor mine the seer-like power to show
The secrets of the heart and mind;
To drop the plummet-line below
Our common world of joy and woe,
A more intense despair or brighter hope to find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense
Of human right and weal is shown;
A hate of tyranny intense,
And hearty in its vehemence,
As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my own.

O Freedom! if to me belong
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,
Still with a love as deep and strong
As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on thy shrine!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

EMBRYO

I FEEL a poem in my heart to-night,
A still thing growing,—
As if the darkness to the outer light
A song were owing:

A something strangely vague, and sweet, and sad,
Fair, fragile, slender;
Not tearful, yet not daring to be glad,
And oh, so tender!

It may not reach the outer world at all,
Despite its growing;
Upon a poem-bud such cold winds fall
To blight its blowing.
But, oh, whatever may the thing betide,
Free life or fetter,
My heart, just to have held it till it died,
Will be the better!

Mary Ashley Townsend [1832–1901]

THE SINGER'S PRELUDE

From "The Earthly Paradise"

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears,
Or hope again for aught that I can say,
The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,
Grudge every minute as it passes by,
Made the more mindful that the sweet days die,—
Remember me a little then, I pray,
The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care
That weighs us down who live and earn our bread,
These idle verses have no power to bear;
So let me sing of names remembered,
Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,
Or long time take their memory quite away
From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did show,
That through one window men beheld the spring,
And through another saw the summer glow,
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,
Piped the drear wind of that December day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be;
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall slay,
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

William Morris [1834–1896]

A PRELUDE

Spirit that moves the sap in spring,
When lusty male birds fight and sing,
Inform my words, and make my lines
As sweet as flowers, as strong as vines.

Let mine be the freshening power
Of rain on grass, of dew on flower;
The fertilizing song be mine,
Nut-flavored, racy, keen as wine.

Let some procreant truth exhale
From me, before my forces fail;
Or ere the ecstatic impulse go,
Let all my buds to blossoms blow.

If quick, sound seed be wanting where
The virgin soil feels sun and air,
And longs to fill a higher state,
There let my meanings germinate.

Let not my strength be spilled for naught,
But, in some fresher vessel caught,
Be blended into sweeter forms,
And fraught with purer aims and charms.

Let bloom-dust of my life be blown
To quicken hearts that flower alone;
Around my knees let scions rise
With heavenward-pointed destinies.

And when I fall, like some old tree,
And subtile change makes mould of me,
There let earth show a fertile line
Whence perfect wild-flowers leap and shine!

Maurice Thompson [1844–1901]

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE ODYSSEY

As one that for a weary space has lain
Lulled by the song of Circe and her wine
In gardens near the pale of Proserpine,
Where that Ææan isle forgets the main,
And only the low lutes of love complain,
And only shadows of wan lovers pine,
As such an one were glad to know the brine
Salt on his lips, and the large air again,—
So gladly, from the songs of modern speech
Men turn, and see the stars, and feel the free
Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers,
And through the music of the languid hours,
They hear like ocean on a western beach
The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

HOMERIC UNITY

The sacred keep of Ilion is rent
With trench and shaft; foiled waters wander slow
Through plains where Simois and Scamander went
To war with Gods and heroes long ago.
Not yet to tired Cassandra, lying low
In rich Mycenae, do the Fates relent:
The bones of Agamemnon are a show,
And ruined is his royal monument.
The dust and awful treasures of the Dead,
Hath Learning scattered wide, but vainly thee,
Homer, she meteth with her tool of lead,
And strives to rend thy songs; too blind to see
The crown that burns on thine immortal head
Of indivisible supremacy!

Andrew Lang [1844–1912]

"ENAMORED ARCHITECT OF AIRY RHYME"

Enamored architect of airy rhyme,
Build as thou wilt, heed not what each man says:
Good souls, but innocent of dreamers' ways,
Will come, and marvel why thou wastest time;

Others, beholding how thy turrets climb
'Twixt theirs and heaven, will hate thee all thy days;
But most beware of those who come to praise.
O Wondersmith, O worker in sublime
And heaven-sent dreams, let art be all in all;
Build as thou wilt, unspoiled by praise or blame,
Build as thou wilt, and as thy light is given;
Then, if at last the airy structure fall,
Dissolve, and vanish—take thyself no shame.
They fail, and they alone, who have not striven.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1839–1907]

DIVINA COMMEDIA

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an indistinguishable roar.
So, as I enter here from day to day,
And leave my burden at this minster gate,
Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
While the eternal ages watch and wait.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

"A MAN CALLED DANTE, I HAVE HEARD"

A man called Dante, I have heard,
Once ranged the country-side,
He knew to dawn's mysterious word
What drowsy birds replied;

He knew the deep sea's voice, its gleams
And tremulous lights afar.
When he lay down at night, in dreams
He tramped from star to star.

Georgiana Goddard King [1871–

THE SONGS I SING

THE songs I sing at morning
I never sing at eve;
Oh, not through any scorning,
For tears regret may leave;
But that our radiant pleasures
Suit not the shadowed hour,
For which I have such measures
As mourn the withered flower.

The songs I sing at twilight
I never sing at morn;
I would not mar the highlight
With any note forlorn;
My path made gay and sunny,
With joy I fill my heart;
The hyssop from the honey—
I keep them wide apart.

Charles G. Blanden [1857–

THE DEAREST POETS

WERE I to name, out of the times gone by,
The poets dearest to me, I should say,
Pulci for spirits, and a fine, free way;
Chaucer for manners, and close, silent eye;
Milton for classic taste, and harp strung high;
Spenser for luxury, and sweet, sylvan play;
Horace for chatting with, from day to day;
Shakespeare for all, but most, society.
But which take with me, could I take but one?
Shakespeare,—as long as I was unoppressed
With the world's weight, making sad thoughts intenser;
But did I wish, out of the common sun
To lay a wounded heart in leafy rest,
And dream of things far off and healing,—Spenser.

Leigh Hunt [1784–1859]

FALSE POETS AND TRUE

LOOK how the lark soars upward and is gone,
Turning a spirit as he nears the sky!
His voice is heard, but body there is none
To fix the vague excursions of the eye.

So, poets' songs are with us, though they die
Obscured, and hid by death's oblivious shroud,
And Earth inherits the rich melody
Like raining music from the morning cloud.
Yet few there be who pipe so sweet and loud
Their voices reach us through the lapse of space:
The noisy day is deafened by a crowd
Of undistinguished birds, a twittering race;
But only lark and nightingale forlorn
Fill up the silences of night and morn.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

A SINGING LESSON

FAR-FETCHED and dear bought, as the proverb rehearses,
Is good, or was held so, for ladies: but naught
In a song can be good if the turn of the verse is
Far-fetched and dear bought.

As the turn of a wave should it sound, and the thought
Ring smooth, and as light as the spray that disperses
Be the gleam of the words for the garb thereof wrought.

Let the soul in it shine through the sound as it pierces
Men's hearts with possession of music unsought;
For the bounties of song are no jealous god's mercies,
Far-fetched and dear bought.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

POETRY

I AM the reality of things that seem;
The great transmuter, melting loss to gain,
Languor to love, and fining joy from pain.
I am the waking, who am called the dream;
I am the sun, all light reflects my gleam;
I am the altar-fire within the fane;
I am the force of the refreshing rain;
I am the sea to which flows every stream;
I am the utmost height there is to climb;

I am the truth, mirrored in fancy's glass;
I am stability, all else will pass;
I am eternity, encircling time;
Kill me, none may; conquer me, nothing can—
I am God's soul, fused in the soul of man.

Ella Heath [18 –

THE INNER VISION

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
While a fair region round the traveller lies
Which he forbears again to look upon;
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
Of meditation, slipping in between
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
—If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
Let us break off all commerce with the Muse:
With Thought and Love companions of our way—
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,—
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

ON AN OLD SONG

Little snatch of ancient song,
What has made thee live so long?
Flying on thy wings of rhyme
Lightly down the depths of time,
Telling nothing strange or rare,
Scarce a thought or image there,
Nothing but the old, old tale
Of a hapless lover's wail;
Offspring of an idle hour,
Whence has come thy lasting power?
By what turn of rhythm or phrase,
By what subtle careless grace,
Can thy music charm our ears
After full three hundred years?

Landmarks of the human mind
One by one are left behind,
And a subtle change is wrought
In the mould and cast of thought;
Modes of reasoning pass away,
Types of beauty lose their sway;
Creeds and causes that have made
Many noble lives must fade,
And the words that thrilled of old
Now seem hueless, dead, and cold;
Fancy's rainbow tints are flying,
Thoughts, like men, are slowly dying;
All things perish, and the strongest
Often do not last the longest;
The stately ship is seen no more,
The fragile skiff attains the shore;
And while the great and wise decay,
And all their trophies pass away,
Some sudden thought, some careless rhyme,
Still floats above the wrecks of Time.

William Edward Hartpole Lecky [1838–1903]

TO SONG

HERE shall remain all tears for lovely things
And here enshrined the longing of great hearts,
Caught on a lyre whence waking wonder starts,
To mount afar upon immortal wings;
Here shall be treasured tender wonderings,
The faintest whisper that the soul imparts,
All silent secrets and all gracious arts,
Where nature murmurs of her hidden springs.

O magic of a song! here loveliness
May sleep unhindered of life's mortal toll,
And noble things stand towering o'er the tide;
Here mid the years, untouched by time or stress,
Shall sweep on every wind that stirs the soul
The music of a voice that never died!

Thomas S. Jones, Jr. [1882–

VERSE

Past ruined Ilion Helen lives,
  Alcestis rises from the shades;
Verse calls them forth; 'tis verse that gives
  Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil
  Hide all the peopled hills you see,
The gay, the proud, while lovers hail
  These many summers you and me.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

AN OLD-FASHIONED POET

In simpler verse than triolets,
  Rondeau, or deft quatrain,
[illegible] With breath of morning violets
  In every dewy strain,
He sang from overflowing heart
His sweet old songs unspoiled by art.

Progressive years have passed since then—
  The Muse has changed her ways;
No more through flowery mead and glen
  A rustic maid she strays;
Amid the traffic of the town
We catch the flutter of her gown.

But one who knows her virgin grace
  Gives back the songs she sung
And brings with glimpses of her face
  The days when love was young.
O Muse immortal, singer true,
What harmonies unite the two!

Ada Foster Murray [18 –

POET AND LARK

When leaves turn outward to the light,
  And all the roads are fringed with green,
When larks are pouring, high, unseen,
  The joy they find in song and flight,

Then I, too, with the lark would wing
My little flight, and, soaring, sing

When larks drop downward to the nest,
And day drops downward to the sea,
And song and wing are fain to rest,
The lark's dear wisdom guideth me,
And I too turn within my door,
Content to dream, and sing no more.

Mary Ainge de Vere [1844–

A HINT FROM HERRICK

No slightest golden rhyme he wrote
That held not something men must quote;
Thus by design or chance did he
Drop anchors to posterity.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1836–1907]

TO THE POETS

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new?
Yes, and those of heaven commune
With the spheres of sun and moon;
With the noise of fountains wondrous
And the parle of voices thund'rous;
With the whisper of heaven's trees
And one another, in soft ease
Seated on Elysian lawns,
Browsed by none but Dian's fawns;
Underneath large blue-bells tented,
Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not,
Where the nightingale doth sing,
Not a senseless, trancèd thing,
But divine, melodious truth,
Philosophic numbers smooth;
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you,
Where your other souls are joying,
Never slumbered, never cloying.
Here, your earth-born souls still speak
To mortals, of their little week;
Of their sorrows and delights;
Of their passions and their spites;
Of their glory and their shame;
What doth strengthen and what maim.
Thus ye teach us, every day,
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Ye have souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new!

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE PROGRESS OF POESY

A PINDARIC ODE

Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:
The laughing flowers, that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along
Deep, majestic, smooth and strong,
Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

O Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.

On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curbed the fury of his car,
And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptered hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing:
Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Tempered to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crownèd Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day,
With antic Sports, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet:
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare:
Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

Man's feeble race what ills await!
Labor, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of fate!
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
Her specters wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky:
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat
In loose numbers wildly sweet
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the Goddess roves,
Glory pursue and generous Shame,
The unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles, that crown the Ægean deep,
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of anguish?
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around:
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, O Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

Far from the sun and summer gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed,
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless child
Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.
This pencil take (she said), whose colors clear
Richly paint the vernal year:
Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!
This can unlock the gates of joy;

Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears.

Nor second he, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,
The secrets of the abyss to spy.
He passed the flaming bounds of place and time:
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where Angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
But ah, 'tis heard no more!
O Lyre divine! what daring Spirit
Wakes thee now? Though he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban Eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air:
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,
With orient hues, unborrowed of the Sun:
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great.

Thomas Gray [1716–1771]

SEAWEED

When descends on the Atlantic
The gigantic
Storm-wind of the equinox,

Landward in his wrath he scourges
The toiling surges,
Laden with seaweed from the rocks:

From Bermuda's reefs; from edges
Of sunken ledges,
In some far-off, bright Azore;
From Bahama, and the dashing,
Silver-flashing
Surges of San Salvador;

From the tumbling surf, that buries
The Orkneyan skerries,
Answering the hoarse Hebrides;
And from wrecks of ships, and drifting
Spars, uplifting
On the desolate, rainy seas,—

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless main;
Till in sheltered coves, and reaches
Of sandy beaches,
All have found repose again.

So when storms of wild emotion
Strike the ocean
Of the poet's soul, ere long,
From each cave and rocky fastness
In its vastness,
Floats some fragment of a song:

From the far-off isles enchanted
Heaven has planted
With the golden fruit of Truth;
From the flashing surf, whose vision
Gleams Elysian
In the tropic clime of Youth;

From the strong Will, and the Endeavor
That for ever
Wrestles with the tides of Fate;

From the wreck of Hopes far-scattered,
Tempest-shattered,
Floating waste and desolate;—

Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
On the shifting
Currents of the restless heart;
Till at length in books recorded,
They, like hoarded
Household words, no more depart.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

TO THE MUSES

WHETHER on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the Sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove;
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoyed in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sound is forced, the notes are few.

William Blake [1757–1827]

"WHITHER IS GONE THE WISDOM AND THE POWER"

WHITHER is gone the wisdom and the power
That ancient sages scattered with the notes
Of thought-suggesting lyres? The music floats
In the void air; e'en at this breathing hour,

In every cell and every blooming bower
The sweetness of old lays is hovering still:
But the strong soul, the self-constraining will,
The rugged root which bare the winsome flower
Is weak and withered. Were we like the fays
That sweetly nestle in the fox-glove bells,
Or lurk and murmur in the rose-lipped shells
Which Neptune to the earth for quit-rent pays,
Then might our pretty modern Philomels
Sustain our spirits with their roundelays.

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1849]

THE MUSES

Of old the Muses sat on high,
And heard and judged the songs of men;
On one they smiled, who loitered by;
Of toiling ten, they slighted ten.

"They lightly serve who serve us best,
Nor know they how the task was done;
We Muses love a soul at rest,
But violence and toil we shun."

If men say true, the Muses now
Have changed their ancient habitude,
And would be served with knitted brow,
And stress and toil each day renewed.

So each one with the other vies,
Of those who weave romance or song:
"On us, O Muse, bestow thy prize,
For we have striven well and long!"

And yet methinks I hear the hest
Come murmuring down from Helicon:
"They lightly serve who serve us best,
Nor know they how the task was done!"

Edith M. Thomas [1854–

EVOE!

"Many are the wand-bearers, few are the true bacchanals."

MANY are the wand-bearers;
Their windy shouts I hear
Along the hillside vineyard,
And where the wine runs clear;
They show the vine-leaf chaplet,
The ivy-wreathen spear,
But the god, the true Iacchus,
He does not hold them dear.

Many are the wand-bearers,
And bravely are they clad;
Yes, they have all the tokens
His early lovers had.
They sing the master passions,
Themselves unsad, unglad;
And the god, the true Iacchus—
He knows they are not mad!

Many are the wand-bearers;
The fawn-skin bright they wear;
There are among them mænads
That rave with unbound hair.
They toss the harmless firebrand—
It spends itself in air:
And the god, the true Iacchus,
He smiles—and does not care.

Many are the wand-bearers,
And who (ye ask) am I?
One who was born in madness,
"Evoe!" my first cry—
Who dares, before your spear-points,
To challenge and defy;
And the god, the true Iacchus,
So keep me till I die!

Many are the wand-bearers.
I bear with me no sign;
Yet, I was mad, was drunken,
Ere yet I tasted wine;
Nor bleeding grape can slacken
The thirst wherewith I pine;
And the god, the true Iacchus,
Hears now this song of mine.

Edith M. Thomas [1854–

AN INVOCATION

I NEVER prayed for Dryads, to haunt the woods again;
More welcome were the presence of hungering, thirsting men,
Whose doubts we could unravel, whose hopes we could fulfil,
Our wisdom tracing backward, the river to the rill;
Were such beloved forerunners one summer day restored,
Then, then we might discover the Muse's mystic hoard.

Oh, dear divine Comatas, I would that thou and I
Beneath this broken sunlight this leisure day might lie;
Where trees from distant forests, whose names were strange to thee,
Should bend their amorous branches within thy reach to be,
And flowers thine Hellas knew not, which art hath made more fair,
Should shed their shining petals upon thy fragrant hair.

Then thou shouldst calmly listen with ever-changing looks
To songs of younger minstrels and plots of modern books,
And wonder at the daring of poets later born,
Whose thoughts are unto thy thoughts as noon-tide is to morn;
And little shouldst thou grudge them their greater strength of soul,
Thy partners in the torch-race, though nearer to the goal.

As when ancestral portraits look gravely from the walls
Upon the youthful baron who treads their echoing halls;

And whilst he builds new turrets, the thrice ennobled heir
Would gladly wake his grandsire his home and feast to share;
So from Ægean laurels that hide thine ancient urn
I fain would call thee hither, my sweeter lore to learn.

Or in thy cedarn prison thou waitest for the bee:
Ah, leave that simple honey, and take thy food from me!
My sun is stooping westward. Entrancèd dreamer, haste:
There's fruitage in my garden, that I would have thee taste.
Now lift the lid a moment: now, Dorian shepherd, speak:
Two minds shall flow together, the English and the Greek.

William Johnson-Cory [1823–1892]

INVENTION

I ENVY not the Lark his song divine,
Nor thee, O Maid, thy beauty's faultless mould.
Perhaps the chief felicity is mine,
Who hearken and behold.

The joy of the Artificer Unknown
Whose genius could devise the Lark and thee—
This, or a kindred rapture, let me own,
I covet ceaselessly!

William Watson [1858–

JOY OF THE MORNING

I HEAR you, little bird,
Shouting aswing above the broken wall.
Shout louder yet: no song can tell it all.
Sing to my soul in the deep still wood:
'Tis wonderful beyond the wildest word:
I'd tell it, too, if I could.

Oft when the white, still dawn
Lifted the skies and pushed the hills apart,
I've felt it like a glory in my heart—
(The world's mysterious stir)
But had no throat like yours, my bird,
Nor such a listener.

Edwin Markham [1852–

CRICKET

Cricket, chirring in the autumn twilight,
Little kinsman,
I, like you, the unknown path must follow
Into darkness,—
One day into darkness.
Would I might, with your ecstatic buoyance,
Fare forth singing!

Clinton Scollard [1860–

TO A POET A THOUSAND YEARS HENCE

I who am dead a thousand years,
And wrote this sweet archaic song,
Send you my words for messengers
The way I shall not pass along.

I care not if you bridge the seas,
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still,
And statues and a bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
And prayers to them that sit above?

How shall we conquer? Like a wind
That falls at eve our fancies blow,
And old Mæonides the blind
Said it three thousand years ago.

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night, alone:
I was a poet, I was young.

Since I can never see your face,
And never shake you by the hand,
I send my soul through time and space
To greet you. You will understand.

James Elroy Flecker [1884–1915]

THE MOODS

(AFTER READING CERTAIN OF THE IRISH POETS)

THE Moods have laid their hands across my hair:
The Moods have drawn their fingers through my heart;
My hair shall nevermore lie smooth and bright,
But stir like tide-worn sea-weed, and my heart
Shall nevermore be glad of small, sweet things,—
A wild rose, or a crescent moon,—a book
Of little verses, or a dancing child.
My heart turns crying from the rose and brook,
My heart turns crying from the thin bright moon,
And weeps with useless sorrow for the child.
The Moods have loosed a wind to vex my hair,
And made my heart too wise, that was a child.

Now I shall blow like smitten candle-flame;
I shall desire all things that may not be:
The years, the stars, the souls of ancient men,
All tears that must, and smiles that may not be,—
Yes, glimmering lights across a windy ford,
And vagrant voices on a darkened plain,
And holy things, and outcast things, and things
Far too remote, frail-bodied, to be plain.

My pity and my joy are grown alike;
I cannot sweep the strangeness from my heart.
The Moods have laid swift hands across my hair:
The Moods have drawn swift fingers through my heart.

Fannie Stearns Davis [1884–

THE PASSIONATE READER TO HIS POET

DOTH it not thrill thee, Poet,
Dead and dust though thou art,
To feel how I press thy singing
Close to my heart?

Take it at night to my pillow,
Kiss it before I sleep,
And again when the delicate morning
Beginneth to peep?

See how I bathe thy pages
Here in the light of the sun;
Through thy leaves, as a wind among roses,
The breezes shall run.

Feel how I take thy poem
And bury within it my face,
As I pressed it last night in the heart of a flower,
Or deep in a dearer place.

Think, as I love thee, Poet,
A thousand love beside,
Dear women love to press thee too
Against a sweeter side.

Art thou not happy, Poet?
I sometimes dream that I
For such a fragrant fame as thine
Would gladly sing and die.

Say, wilt thou change thy glory
For this same youth of mine?
And I will give my days i' the sun
For that great song of thine.

Richard Le Gallienne [1366–

THE FLIGHT OF THE GODDESS

A MAN should live in a garret aloof,
And have few friends, and go poorly clad,
With an old hat stopping the chink in the roof,
To keep the Goddess constant and glad.

Of old, when I walked on a rugged way,
And gave much work for but little bread,
The Goddess dwelt with me night and day,
Sat at my table, haunted my bed.

The narrow, mean attic, I see it now!
Its window o'erlooking the city's tiles,
The sunset's fires, and the clouds of snow,
And the river wandering miles and miles.

Just one picture hung in the room,
The saddest story that Art can tell—
Dante and Virgil in lurid gloom
Watching the Lovers float through Hell.

Wretched enough was I sometimes,
Pinched, and harassed with vain desires;
But thicker than clover sprung the rhymes
As I dwelt like a sparrow among the spires.

Midnight filled my slumbers with song;
Music haunted my dreams by day.
Now I listen and wait and long,
But the Delphian airs have died away.

I wonder and wonder how it befell:
Suddenly I had friends in crowds;
I bade the house-tops a long farewell;
"Good-by," I cried, "to the stars and clouds!

"But thou, rare soul, thou hast dwelt with me,
Spirit of Poesy! thou divine
Breath of the morning, thou shalt be,
Goddess! for ever and ever mine."

And the woman I loved was now my bride,
And the house I wanted was my own;
I turned to the Goddess satisfied—
But the Goddess had somehow flown.

Flown, and I fear she will never return;
I am much too sleek and happy for her,
Whose lovers must hunger and waste and burn,
Ere the beautiful heathen heart will stir.

I call—but she does not stoop to my cry;
I wait—but she lingers, and ah! so long!
It was not so in the years gone by,
When she touched my lips with chrism of song.

I swear I will get me a garret again,
And adore, like a Parsee, the sunset's fires,
And lure the Goddess, by vigil and pain,
Up with the sparrows among the spires.

For a man should live in a garret aloof,
And have few friends, and go poorly clad,
With an old hat stopping the chink in the roof,
To keep the Goddess constant and glad.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

THE SOVEREIGNS

THEY who create rob death of half its stings;
Their life is given for the Muse's sake;
Of thought they build their palaces, and make
Enduring entities and beauteous things;
They are the Poets—they give airy wings
To shapes marmorean; or they overtake
The Ideal with the brush, or, soaring, wake
Far in the rolling clouds their glorious strings.
The Poet is the only potentate;
His sceptre reaches o'er remotest zones;
His thought remembered and his golden tones
Shall, in the ears of nations uncreate,
Roll on for ages and reverberate
When Kings are dust beside forgotten thrones.

Lloyd Mifflin [1846–

THE ARGUMENT OF HIS BOOK

I SING of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
Of April, May, of June, and July flowers;
I sing of May-poles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes,
Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal cakes.
I write of Youth, of Love, and have access
By these, to sing of cleanly wantonness;
I sing of dews, of rains, and, piece by piece,
Of balm, of oil, of spice, and ambergris.
I sing of times trans-shifting; and I write
How roses first came red, and lilies white;

I write of groves, of twilights, and I sing
The court of Mab, and of the Fairy King.
I write of Hell; I sing, and ever shall,
Of Heaven, and hope to have it after all.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

ENVOY

Go, little book, and wish to all
Flowers in the garden, meat in the hall,
A bit of wine, a spice of wit,
A house with lawns enclosing it,
A living river by the door,
A nightingale in the sycamore!

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

ENVOY

Go, songs, for ended is our brief, sweet play;
Go, children of swift joy and tardy sorrow:
And some are sung, and that was yesterday,
And some unsung, and that may be to-morrow.

Go forth; and if it be o'er stony way,
Old joy can lend what newer grief must borrow:
And it was sweet, and that was yesterday,
And sweet is sweet, though purchased with sorrow.

Go, songs, and come not back from your far way:
And if men ask you why ye smile and sorrow,
Tell them ye grieve, for your hearts know To-day,
Tell them ye smile, for your eyes know To-morrow.

Francis Thompson [1859?–1907]

THE SONNET'S VOICE

A METRICAL LESSON BY THE SEASHORE

Yon silvery billows breaking on the beach
Fall back in foam beneath the star-shine clear,
The while my rhymes are murmuring in your ear
A restless lore like that the billows teach;
For on these sonnet-waves my soul would reach

From its own depths, and rest within you, dear,
As, through the billowy voices yearning here,
Great nature strives to find a human speech.
A sonnet is a wave of melody:
From heaving waters of the impassioned soul
A billow of tidal music one and whole
Flows, in the "octave"; then, returning free,
Its ebbing surges in the "sestet" roll
Back to the deeps of Life's tumultuous sea.

Theodore Watts-Dunton [1836–1914]

THE SONNET

A SONNET is a moment's monument,—
Memorial from the Soul's eternity
To one dead deathless hour. Look that it be,
Whether for lustral rite or dire portent,
Of its own arduous fulness reverent:
Carve it in ivory or in ebony,
As Day or Night may rule; and let Time see
Its flowering crest impearled and orient.
A Sonnet is a coin: its face reveals
The soul,—its converse, to what Power 'tis due:—
Whether for tribute to the august appeals
Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,
It serve; or, 'mid the dark wharf's cavernous breath,
In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

THE SONNET

WHAT is a sonnet? 'Tis the pearly shell
That murmurs of the far-off murmuring sea;
A precious jewel carved most curiously;
It is a little picture painted well.
What is a sonnet? 'Tis the tear that fell
From a great poet's hidden ecstasy;
A two-edged sword, a star, a song,—ah me!
Sometimes a heavy-tolling funeral bell.
This was the flame that shook with Dante's breath,
The solemn organ whereon Milton played,

And the clear glass where Shakespeare's shadow falls;
A sea this is,—beware who ventureth!
For like a fiord the narrow floor is laid
Mid-ocean deep sheer to the mountain walls.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

THE SONNET

I

The Sonnet is a fruit which long hath slept
And ripened on life's sun-warmed orchard-wall;
A gem which, hardening in the mystical
Mine of man's heart, to quenchless flame hath leapt;
A medal of pure gold art's nympholept
Stamps with love's lips and brows imperial;
A branch from memory's briar, whereon the fall
Of thought-eternalizing tears hath wept:
A star that shoots athwart star-steadfast heaven;
A fluttering aigrette of tossed passion's brine;
A leaf from youth's immortal missal torn;
A bark across dark seas of anguish driven;
A feather dropped from breast-wings aquiline;
A silvery dream shunning red lips of morn.

II

There is no mood, no heart-throb fugitive,
No spark from man's imperishable mind,
No moment of man's will, that may not find
Form in the Sonnet; and thenceforward live
A potent elf, by art's imperative
Magic to crystal spheres of song confined:
As in the moonstone's orb pent spirits wind
'Mid dungeon depths day-beams they take and give.
Spare thou no pains; carve thought's pure diamond
With fourteen facets, scattering fire and light:—
Uncut, what jewel burns but darkly bright?
And Prospero vainly waves his runic wand,
If, spurning art's inexorable law,
In Ariel's prison-sphere he leave one flaw.

III

The Sonnet is a world, where feelings caught
In webs of phantasy, combine and fuse
Their kindred elements 'neath mystic dews
Shed from the ether round man's dwelling wrought;
Distilling heart's content, star-fragrance fraught
With influences from the breathing fires
Of heaven in everlasting endless gyres
Enfolding and encircling orbs of thought.
Our Sonnet's world hath two fixed hemispheres:
This, where the sun with fierce strength masculine
Pours his keen rays and bids the noonday shine;
That, where the moon and the stars, concordant powers,
Shed milder rays, and daylight disappears
In low melodious music of still hours.

John Addington Symonds [1840–1893]

"SCORN NOT THE SONNET"

Scorn not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honors; with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow; a glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land
To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

VENDOR'S SONG

My songs to sell, good sir!
I pray you buy.
Here's one will win a lady's tears,
Here's one will make her gay,

Here's one will charm your true love true
  Forever and a day;
Good sir, I pray you buy!

Oh, no, he will not buy.

My songs to sell, sweet maid!
  I pray you buy.
This one will teach you Lilith's lore,
  And this what Helen knew,
And this will keep your gold hair gold,
  And this your blue eyes blue;
Sweet maid, I pray you buy!

Oh, no, she will not buy.

If I'd as much money as I could tell,
I never would cry my songs to sell,
I never would cry my songs to sell.

Adelaide Crapsey [1878–1914]

THUNDERSTORMS

My mind has thunderstorms,
  That brood for heavy hours:
Until they rain me words;
  My thoughts are drooping flowers
And sulking, silent birds.

Yet come, dark thunderstorms,
  And brood your heavy hours;
For when you rain me words,
  My thoughts are dancing flowers
And joyful singing birds.

William H. Davies [1870–

GENIUS LOCI

Peace, Shepherd, peace! What boots it singing on?
  Since long ago grace-giving Phœbus died,
  And all the train that loved the stream-bright side
Of the poetic mount with him are gone

Beyond the shores of Styx and Acheron,
In unexplorèd realms of night to hide.
The clouds that strew their shadows far and wide
Are all of Heaven that visits Helicon.
Yet here, where never muse or god did haunt,
Still may some nameless power of Nature stray,
Pleased with the reedy stream's continual chant
And purple pomp of these broad fields in May.
The shepherds meet him where he herds the kine,
And careless pass him by whose is the gift divine.

Margaret Woods [1856–

THE RONDEAU

You bid me try, Blue Eyes, to write
A Rondeau. What! Forthwith?—To-night?
Reflect. Some skill I have, 'tis true;
But thirteen lines!—and rhymed on two!—
"Refrain," as well. Ah, hapless plight!

Still, there are five lines—ranged aright.
These Gallic bonds, I feared, would fright
My easy Muse. They did, till you—
You bid me try!

That makes them eight.—The port's in sight:
'Tis all because your eyes are bright!
Now just a pair to end in "oo,"—
When maids command, what can't we do!
Behold!—the Rondeau, tasteful, light,
You bid me try!

After the French of Voiture by Austin Dobson [1840–

METRICAL FEET

LESSON FOR A BOY

Trochee trips from long to short;
From long to long in solemn sort

Slow Spondee stalks; strong foot! yet ill able
Ever to come up with dactyl trisyllable.
Iambics march from short to long;—
With a leap and a bound the swift Anapæsts throng;
One syllable long, with one short at each side,
Amphibrachys hastes with a stately stride;—
First and last being long, middle short, Amphimacer
Strikes his thundering hoofs like a proud highbred racer.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

ACCIDENT IN ART

WHAT painter has not with a careless smutch
Accomplished his despair?—one touch revealing
All he had put of life, thought, vigor, feeling,
Into the canvas that without that touch
Showed of his love and labor just so much
Raw pigment, scarce a scrap of soul concealing!
What poet has not found his spirit kneeling
A-sudden at the sound of such or such
Strange verses staring from his manuscript,
Written he knows not how, but which will sound
Like trumpets down the years? So Accident
Itself unmasks the likeness of Intent,
And even in blind Chance's darkest crypt
The shrine-lamp of God's purposing is found.

Richard Hovey [1864–1900]

A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1687

FROM harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
When nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
"Arise, ye more than dead!"
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.

From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound:
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger,
And mortal alarms.
The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries Hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat!

The soft complaining flute,
In dying notes, discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

But O, what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?

Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race;
And trees uprooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre;
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared
Mistaking Earth for Heaven.

GRAND CHORUS

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the Blest above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky!

John Dryden [1631–1700]

ALEXANDER'S FEAST, OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC; AN ODE IN HONOR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1697

I

'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son—
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound,
(So should desert in arms be crowned);
The lovely Thais by his side
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride
In flower of youth and beauty's pride:—

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave
None but the brave
None but the brave deserves the fair!

CHORUS—*Happy, happy, happy pair!*
None but the brave
None but the brave
None but the brave deserves the fair!

II

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful choir,
With flying fingers touched the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove
Who left his blissful seats above—
Such is the power of mighty love!
A dragon's fiery form belied the god;
Sublime on radiant spires he rode
When he to fair Olympia pressed,
And while he sought her snowy breast,
Then round her slender waist he curled,
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
—The listening crowd admire the lofty sound!
A present deity! they shout around:
A present deity! the vaulted roofs rebound:
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS—*With ravished ears*
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod
And seems to shake the spheres.

III

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young:
The jolly god in triumph comes!
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums!
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes!
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS—*Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,*
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

IV

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again,
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain!
The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And, while he Heaven and Earth defied,
Changed his hand and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful Muse
Soft pity to infuse:
He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed;

On the bare earth exposed he lies
With not a friend to close his eyes.
—With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving, in his altered soul,
The various turns of Chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS—*Revolving, in his altered soul,*
The various turns of Chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

V

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
War, he sung, is toil and trouble,
Honor but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying;
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee!
—The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS—*The prince, unable to conceal his pain,*
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,

And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

VI

Now strike the golden lyre again:
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain!
Break his bands of sleep asunder
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark! the horrid sound
Has raised up his head:
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed he stares around.
Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,
See the Furies arise!
See the snakes that they rear
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew!
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
—The princes applaud with a furious joy:
And the King seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy!

CHORUS—*And the King seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;*
Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy!

VII

—Thus, long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
—Let old Timotheus yield the prize
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down!

GRAND CHORUS—*At last divine Cecilia came,*
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast from her sacred store
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
—Let old Timotheus yield the prize
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down!

John Dryden [1631–1700]

THE PASSIONS

AN ODE FOR MUSIC

WHEN Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Thronged around her magic cell,

Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possessed beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturbed, delighted, raised, refined:
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Filled with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for madness ruled the hour),
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,
And back recoiled, he knew not why,
Even at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rushed; his eyes, on fire,
In lightnings owned his secret stings;
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair
Low, sullen sounds his grief beguiled;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air;
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delightful measure?
Still it whispered promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong,
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She called on Echo still, through all the song;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden hair.

And longer had she sung,—but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose;
He threw his blood-stained sword in thunder down
And, with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe.
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat;
And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to naught were fixed,
Sad proof of thy distressful state;
Of differing themes the veering song was mixed,
And now it courted Love, now raving called on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sate retired,
And from her wild sequestered seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Poured through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And, dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels joined the sound;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole;
Or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of Peace and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But oh, how altered was its sprightlier tone,
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemmed with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call to faun and dryad known!

The oak-crowned sisters, and their chaste-eyed queen,
Satyrs, and sylvan boys, were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green;
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear,
And Sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial.
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addressed;
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best.
They would have thought, who heard the strain,
They saw in Tempe's vale her native maids
Amidst the vestal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kissed the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round;
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound,
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odors from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess, why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As, in that loved Athenian bower,
You learned an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endeared,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording sister's page.—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;

Even all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled world of sound.
O bid our vain endeavors cease,
Revive the just designs of Greece:
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

William Collins [1721–1759]

TO MUSIC, TO BECALM HIS FEVER

CHARM me asleep, and melt me so
With thy delicious numbers,
That, being ravished, hence I go
Away in easy slumbers.
Ease my sick head,
And make my bed,
Thou power that canst sever
From me this ill,
And quickly still,
Though thou not kill
My fever.

Thou sweetly canst convert the same
From a consuming fire
Into a gentle-licking flame,
And make it thus expire.
Then make me weep
My pains asleep;
And give me such reposes
That I, poor I,
May think thereby
I live and die
'Mongst roses.

Fall on me like a silent dew,
Or like those maiden showers
Which, by the peep of day, do strew
A baptism o'er the flowers.
Melt, melt my pains
With thy soft strains;

That, having ease me given,
With full delight
I leave this light,
And take my flight
For Heaven.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river;
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river!)
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river.

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan,
(Laughed while he sat by the river,)
"The only way, since gods began

To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious Sisters, Voice and Verse!
Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce,
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbèd Song of pure consent
Aye sung before the sapphire-colored throne
To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow;
And the Cherubic host in thousand choirs
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns dévout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly:
That we on earth, with undiscording voice
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportioned sin
Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din

Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O may we soon again renew that Song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To his celestial concert us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light!

John Milton [1608–1674]

WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE

Ariel to Miranda:—Take
This slave of Music, for the sake
Of him who is the slave of thee,
And teach it all the harmony
In which thou can'st, and only thou,
Make the delighted spirit glow,
Till joy denies itself again,
And, too intense, is turned to pain;
For by commission and command
Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,
Poor Ariel sends this silent token
Of more than ever can be spoken;
Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who,
From life to life, must still pursue
Your happiness;—for thus alone
Can Ariel ever find his own.
From Prospero's enchanted cell,
As the mighty verses tell,
To the throne of Naples, he
Lit you o'er the trackless sea,
Flitting on, your prow before,
Like a living meteor.
When you die, the silent Moon,
In her interlunar swoon,
Is not sadder in her cell
Than deserted Ariel.
When you live again on earth,
Like an unseen star of birth,

Ariel guides you o'er the sea
Of life from your nativity.
Many changes have been run
Since Ferdinand and you begun
Your course of love, and Ariel still
Has tracked your steps and served your will.
Now, in humbler, happier lot,
This is all remembered not;
And now, alas! the poor sprite is
Imprisoned, for some fault of his,
In a body like a grave;—
From you he only dares to crave,
For his service and his sorrow,
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought
To echo all harmonious thought,
Felled a tree, while on the steep
The woods were in their winter sleep,
Rocked in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine;
And dreaming, some of Autumn past,
And some of Spring approaching fast,
And some of April buds and showers,
And some of songs in July bowers,
And all of love; and so this tree—
Oh, that such our death may be!—
Died in sleep, and felt no pain,
To live in happier form again:
From which, beneath Heaven's fairest star,
The artist wrought this loved Guitar;
And taught it justly to reply
To all who question skilfully,
In language gentle as thine own;
Whispering in enamoured tone
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,
And summer winds in sylvan cells.
For it had learnt all harmonies
Of the plains and of the skies,

Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voicèd fountains;
The clearest echoes of the hills,
The softest notes of falling rills,
The melodies of birds and bees,
The murmuring of summer seas,
And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
And airs of evening; and it knew
That seldom-heard, mysterious sound
Which, driven on its diurnal round,
As it floats through boundless day,
Our world enkindles on its way.—
All this it knows; but will not tell
To those who cannot question well
The Spirit that inhabits it.
It talks according to the wit
Of its companions; and no more
Is heard than has been felt before,
By those who tempt it to betray
These secrets of an elder day:
But sweetly as its answers will
Flatter hands of perfect skill,
It keeps its highest, holiest tone
For our belovèd Jane alone.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

ODE

We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,

And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample an empire down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself with our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation;
A wondrous thing of our dreaming
Unearthly, impossible seeming—
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present,
And their work in the world be done.

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising;
They had no divine foreshowing
Of the land to which they are going:
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
A light that doth not depart;
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore to-day is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling;
And the multitudes are enlisted
In the faith that their fathers resisted.

And, scorning the dream of tomorrow,
  And bringing to pass, as they may,
In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
  The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
  Ceaseless and sorrowless we!
The glory about us clinging
  Of the glorious futures we see,
Our souls with high music ringing:
  O men! it must ever be
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,
  A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning
  And the suns that are not yet high,
And out of the infinite morning
  Intrepid you hear us cry—
How, spite of your human scorning,
  Once more God's future draws nigh,
And already goes forth the warning
  That ye of the past must die.

Great hail! we cry to the comers
  From the dazzling unknown shore;
Bring us hither your sun and your summers,
  And renew our world as of yore;
You shall teach us your song's new numbers,
  And things that we dreamed not before:
Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers.
  And a singer who sings no more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844–1881]

MUSIC

The God of Music dwelleth out of doors.
All seasons through his minstrelsy we meet,
Breathing by field and covert haunting-sweet:
From organ-lofts in forests old he pours
A solemn harmony: on leafy floors

To smooth Autumnal pipes he moves his feet,
Or with the tingling plectrum of the sleet
In Winter keen beats out his thrilling scores.
Leave me the reed unplucked beside the stream,
And he will stoop and fill it with the breeze;
Leave me the viol's frame in secret trees,
Unwrought, and it shall make a druid theme;
Leave me the whispering shell on Nereid shores:
The God of Music dwelleth out of doors.

Edith M. Thomas [1854–

ON MUSIC

MANY love music but for music's sake,
Many because her touches can awake
Thoughts that repose within the breast half-dead,
And rise to follow where she loves to lead.
What various feelings come from days gone by!
What tears from far-off sources dim the eye!
Few, when light fingers with sweet voices play
And melodies swell, pause, and melt away,
Mind how at every touch, at every tone,
A spark of life hath glistened and hath gone.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

MUSIC AT TWILIGHT

O TWILIGHT, Twilight! evermore to hear
The wounded viols pleading to thy heart!
To dream we watch thy purple wings depart;
To wake, and know thy presence always near!

What dost thou on the pathway of the sun?
Abide thy sister Night, while grief so pure
Makes heaven and all its beauty seem too sure,
And all too certain her oblivion.

One star awakes to turn thee from the South.
Oh, linger in the shadows thou hast drawn,
Ere Night cast dew before the feet of Dawn,
Or Silence lay her kiss on Music's mouth!

George Sterling [1869–

THE KEY-BOARD

Five-and-thirty black slaves,
  Half-a-hundred white,
All their duty but to sing
  For their Queen's delight,
Now with throats of thunder,
  Now with dulcet lips,
While she rules them royally
  With her finger-tips!

When she quits her palace,
  All the slaves are dumb—
Dumb with dolor till the Queen
  Back to Court is come:
Dumb the throats of thunder,
  Dumb the dulcet lips,
Lacking all the sovereignty
  Of her finger-tips.

Dusky slaves and pallid,
  Ebon slaves and white,
When the Queen was on her throne
  How you sang to-night!
Ah, the throats of thunder!
  Ah, the dulcet lips!
Ah, the gracious tyrannies
  Of her finger-tips!

Silent, silent, silent,
  All your voices now;
Was it then her life alone
  Did your life endow?
Waken, throats of thunder!
  Waken, dulcet lips!
Touched to immortality
  By her finger-tips.

William Watson [1858–

A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S

Oh Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to find!
I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove me deaf and blind;
But although I take your meaning, 'tis with such a heavy mind!

Here you come with your old music, and here's all the good it brings.
What, they lived once thus at Venice where the merchants were the kings,
Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used to wed the sea with rings?

Ay, because the sea's the street there; and 'tis arched by . . . what you call
. . . Shylock's bridge with houses on it, where they kept the carnival:
I was never out of England—it's as if I saw it all.

Did young people take their pleasure when the sea was warm in May?
Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning ever to mid-day,
When they made up fresh adventures for the morrow, do you say?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round and lips so red,—
On her neck the small face buoyant, like a bell-flower on its bed,
O'er the breast's superb abundance where a man might base his head?

Well, and it was graceful of them—they'd break talk off and afford
—She, to bite her mask's black velvet—he, to finger on his sword,
While you sat and played Toccatas, stately at the clavichord?

What? Those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,
Told them something? Those suspensions, those solutions —"Must we die?"
Those commiserating sevenths—"Life might last! we can but try!"

"Were you happy?"—"Yes"—"And are you still as happy?" —"Yes. And you?"
—"Then, more kisses!"—"Did *I* stop them, when a million seemed so few?"
Hark! the dominant's persistence, till it must be answered to!

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh, they praised you, I dare say!
"Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike at grave and gay!
I can always leave off talking, when I hear a master play."

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in due time, one by one,
Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds as well undone,
Death came tacitly and took them where they never see the sun.

But when I sit down to reason, think to take my stand nor swerve,
While I triumph o'er a secret wrung from nature's close reserve,
In you come with your cold music, till I creep through every nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking where a house was burned:
"Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice spent what Venice earned!
The soul, doubtless, is immortal—where a soul can be discerned.

"Yours for instance: you know physics, something of geology,
Mathematics are your pastime; souls shall rise in their degree;
Butterflies may dread extinction,—you'll not die, it cannot be!

"As for Venice and her people, merely born to bloom and drop,
Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth and folly were the crop:
What of soul was left, I wonder, when the kissing had to stop?

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and I want the heart to scold.
Dear dead women, with such hair, too—what's become of all the gold
Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel chilly and grown old.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

ABT VOGLER

(AFTER HE HAS BEEN EXTEMPORIZING UPON THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OF HIS INVENTION)

WOULD that the structure brave, the manifold music I build,
Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys to their work,
Claiming each slave of the sound, at a touch, as when Solomon willed
Armies of angels that soar, legions of demons that lurk,
Man, brute, reptile, fly,—alien of end and of aim,
Adverse, each from the other heaven-high, hell-deep removed,—
Should rush into sight at once as he named the ineffable Name,
And pile him a palace straight, to pleasure the princess he loved!

Would it might tarry like his, the beautiful building of mine,
This which my keys in a crowd pressed and importuned to raise!
Ah, one and all, how they helped, would dispart now and now combine,
Zealous to hasten the work, heighten their master his praise!
And one would bury his brow with a blind plunge down to hell,
Burrow awhile and build, broad on the roots of things,
Then up again swim into sight, having based me my palace well,
Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on the nether springs.

And another would mount and march, like the excellent minion he was,
Ay, another and yet another, one crowd but with many a crest,
Raising my rampired walls of gold as transparent as glass,
Eager to do and die, yield each his place to the rest:
For higher still and higher (as a runner tips with fire,
When a great illumination surprises a festal night—
Outlining round and round Rome's dome from space to spire)
Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and the pride of my soul was in sight.

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it was certain, to match man's birth,
Nature in turn conceived, obeying an impulse as I;
And the emulous heaven yearned down, made effort to reach the earth,
As the earth had done her best, in my passion, to scale the sky:
Novel splendors burst forth, grew familiar and dwelt with mine,
Not a point nor peak but found and fixed its wandering star;
Meteor-moons, balls of blaze: and they did not pale nor pine,
For earth had attained to heaven, there was no more near nor far.

Nay more; for there wanted not who walked in the glare and glow,
Presences plain in the place; or, fresh from the Protoplast,
Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier wind should blow,
Lured now to begin and live, in a house to their liking at last;
Or else the wonderful Dead who have passed through the body and gone,
But were back once more to breathe in an old world worth their new:
What never had been, was now; what was, as it shall be anon;
And what is,—shall I say, matched both? for I was made perfect too.

All through my keys that gave their sounds to a wish of my soul,
All through my soul that praised as its wish flowed visibly forth,
All through music and me! For think, had I painted the whole,
Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the process so wonder-worth.
Had I written the same, made verse—still, effect proceeds from cause,
Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the tale is told;
It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws,
Painter and poet are proud, in the artist-list enrolled:—

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
Existent behind all laws, that made them, and, lo, they are!
And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
That out of three sounds he frame not a fourth sound but a star.
Consider it well: each tone of our scale in itself is naught:
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is said:
Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my thought:
And there! Ye have heard and seen: consider and bow the head!

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I reared;
Gone! and the good tears start, the praises that come too slow;
For one is assured at first, one scarce can say that he feared,
That he even gave it a thought, the gone thing was to go.
Never to be again! But many more of the kind
As good, nay, better perchance: is this your comfort to me?
To me, who must be saved because I cling with my mind
To the same, same self, same love, same God: ay, what was, shall be.

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable Name?
Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with hands!
What, have fear of change from thee who art ever the same?
Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy power expands?
There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live as before;
The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound;
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more;
On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by and by.

And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence
For the fullness of the days? Have we withered or agonized?
Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing might issue thence?
Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should be prized?

Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear,
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal and woe:
But God has a few of us whom he whispers in the ear;
The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know.

Well, it is earth with me; silence resumes her reign:
I will be patient and proud, and soberly acquiesce.
Give me the keys. I feel for the common chord again,
Sliding by semitones till I sink to the minor,—yes,
And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand on alien ground,
Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from into the deep;
Which, hark, I have dared and done, for my resting-place is found,
The C Major of this life: so, now I will try to sleep.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

HACK AND HEW

Hack and Hew were the sons of God
In the earlier earth than now:
One at his right hand, one at his left,
To obey as he taught them how.

And Hack was blind, and Hew was dumb,
But both had the wild, wild heart;
And God's calm will was their burning will,
And the gist of their toil was art.

They made the moon and the belted stars,
They set the sun to ride;
They loosed the girdle and veil of the sea,
The wind and the purple tide.

Both flower and beast beneath their hands
To beauty and speed outgrew,—
The furious, fumbling hand of Hack,
And the glorying hand of Hew.

Then, fire and clay, they fashioned a man,
And painted him rosy brown;
And God himself blew hard in his eyes:
"Let them burn till they smoulder down!"

And "There!" said Hack, and "There!" thought Hew,
"We'll rest, for our toil is done."
But "Nay," the Master Workman said,
"For your toil is just begun.

"And ye who served me of old as God
Shall serve me anew as man,
Till I compass the dream that is in my heart,
And perfect the vaster plan."

And still the craftsman over his craft,
In the vague white light of dawn,
With God's calm will for his burning will,
While the mounting day comes on,

Yearning, wind-swift, indolent, wild,
Toils with those shadowy two,—
The faltering, restless hand of Hack,
And the tireless hand of Hew.

Bliss Carman [1861–

ARS VICTRIX *

IMITATED FROM THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

YES; when the ways oppose—
When the hard means rebel,
Fairer the work out-grows,—
More potent far the spell.

O POET, then, forbear
The loosely-sandalled verse,
Choose rather thou to wear
The buskin—strait and terse;

Leave to the tyro's hand
The limp and shapeless style;
See that thy form demand
The labor of the file.

* For the original of this poem see page 3842.

Sculptor, do thou discard
The yielding clay,—consign
To Paros marble hard
The beauty of thy line;—

Model thy Satyr's face
For bronze of Syracuse;
In the veined agate trace
The profile of thy Muse.

Painter, that still must mix
But transient tints anew,
Thou in the furnace fix
The firm enamel's hue;

Let the smooth tile receive
Thy dove-drawn Erycine;
Thy Sirens blue at eve
Coiled in a wash of wine.

All passes. Art alone
Enduring stays to us:
The Bust out-lasts the throne,—
The Coin, Tiberius;

Even the gods must go;
Only the lofty Rhyme
Not countless years o'erthrow,—
Not long array of time.

Paint, chisel, then, or write;
But, that the work surpass,
With the hard fashion fight,—
With the resisting mass.

Austin Dobson [1840–

FLOWER O' THE MIND

FANCIES

Fancies are but streams
Of vain pleasure;
They who by their dreams
True joys measure,
Feasting, starve, laughing, weep,
Playing, smart; whilst in sleep
Fools, with shadows smiling,
Wake and find
Hopes like wind,
Idle hopes, beguiling.
Thoughts fly away; Time hath passed them;
Wake now, awake! see and taste them!

John Ford (*?*) [*fl.* 1639]

TOM O' BEDLAM

The morn's my constant mistress,
And the lovely owl my marrow;
The flaming drake,
And the night-crow, make
Me music to my sorrow.

I know more than Apollo;
For oft, when he lies sleeping,
I behold the stars
At mortal wars,
And the rounded welkin weeping.

The moon embraces her shepherd,
And the Queen of Love her warrior;
While the first does horn
The stars of the morn,
And the next the heavenly farrier.

With a heart of furious fancies,
Whereof I am commander:
With a burning spear,
And a horse of air,
To the wilderness I wander;

With a Knight of ghosts and shadows,
I summoned am to Tourney:
Ten leagues beyond
The wild world's end;
Methinks it is no journey.

Unknown

L'ALLEGRO

HENCE loathèd Melancholy
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian Cave forlorn
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-Raven sings;
There, under Ebon shades, and low-browed Rocks,
As ragged as thy Locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To Ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as some Sager sing)
The frolic Wind that breathes the Spring,
Zephir with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There, on Beds of Violets blue,
And fresh-blown Roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,

Quips and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods, and Becks, and Wreathèd Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as ye go
On the light fantastic toe,
And in thy right hand lead with thee,
The Mountain Nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprovèd pleasures free;
To hear the Lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the Sweet-Briar, or the Vine,
Or the twisted Eglantine.
While the Cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the Barn-door,
Stoutly struts his Dames before,
Oft listening how the Hounds and horn
Clearly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some Hoar Hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill.
Some time walking not unseen
By Hedge-row Elms, on Hillocks green,
Right against the Eastern gate,
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames, and Amber light,
The clouds in thousand Liveries dight.
While the Plowman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the Furrowed Land,
And the Milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the Mower whets his scythe,

And every Shepherd tells his tale
Under the Hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the Landscape round it measures,
Russet Lawns, and Fallows Gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
Mountains on whose barren breast
The laboring clouds do often rest:
Meadows trim with Daisies pied,
Shallow Brooks, and Rivers wide.
Towers, and Battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted Trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighboring eyes.
Hard by a Cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged Oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met.
Are at their savory dinner set
Of Herbs, and other Country Messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her Bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the Sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned Haycock in the Mead.
Sometimes with secure delight
The up-land Hamlets will invite,
When the merry Bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the Chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a Sunshine Holyday,
Till the live-long day-light fail;
Then to the Spicy Nut-brown Ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
She was pinched, and pulled she said;
And he, by Friar's Lantern led,
Tells how the drudging Goblin sweat,
To earn his Cream-bowl duly set,

When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy Flail hath threshed the Corn
That ten day-laborers could not end,
Then lies him down, the Lubbar Fiend,
And stretched out all the Chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And Crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first Cock his Matin rings.
Thus done the Tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering Winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered Cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of Knights and Barons bold,
In weeds of Peace high triumphs hold,
With store of Ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of Wit, or Arms, while both contend
To win her Grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In Saffron robe, with Taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique Pageantry,
Such sights as youthful Poets dream
On Summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnèd Sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native Wood-notes wild;
And ever, against eating Cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian Airs,
Married to immortal verse
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running;
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed

Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights, if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

John Milton [1608–1674]

IL PENSEROSO

Hence vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bestead,
Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys;
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,
Or likest hovering dreams
The fickle Pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou Goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose Saintly visage is too bright
To hit the Sense of human sight;
And therefore to our weaker view,
O'er-laid with black, staid Wisdom's hue.
Black, but such as in esteem,
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that Starred Ethiope Queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The Sea Nymphs, and their powers offended.
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she (in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain).
Oft in glimmering Bowers, and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of Cypress Lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thy self to Marble, till
With a sad Leaden downward cast,
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring,
Aye round about Jove's Altar sing.
And add to these retirèd Leisure,
That in trim Gardens takes his pleasure;
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The Cherub Contemplation,
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a Song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her Dragon yoke,
Gently o'er th' accustomed Oak;
Sweet Bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, Chauntress, oft the Woods among,
I woo to hear thy even-song;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven Green,
To behold the wandering Moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the Heaven's wide pathless way;

And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a Plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off Curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or if the Air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing Embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the Cricket on the hearth,
Or the Bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm:
Or let my Lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely Tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato to unfold
What Worlds, or what vast Regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
And of those Dæmons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With Planet, or with Element.
Some time let Gorgeous Tragedy
In Sceptered Pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age,
Ennoblèd hath the Buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew Iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what Love did seek.
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,

Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous Ring and Glass,
And of the wondrous Horse of Brass,
On which the Tartar King did ride;
And if aught else great Bards beside,
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of Tourneys and of Trophies hung;
Of Forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced as she was wont,
With the Attic Boy to hunt,
But Kerchiefed in a comely Cloud,
While rocking Winds are Piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling Leaves,
With minute-drops from off the Eaves.
And when the Sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of Pine, or monumental Oak,
Where the rude Ax with heavèd stroke,
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There in close covert by some Brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from Day's garish eye,
While the Bee with Honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the Waters murmuring
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream,
Wave at his Wings, in Airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eye-lids laid.

And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or th' unseen Genius of the Wood.
But let my due feet never fail,
To walk the studious Cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd Roof,
With antique Pillars massy proof,
And storied Windows richly dight
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing Organ blow,
To the full voiced choir below,
In Service high, and Anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The Hairy Gown and Mossy Cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every Star that Heaven doth shew,
And every Herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like Prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

John Milton [1608–1674]

KILMENY

From "The Queen's Wake"

Bonny Kilmeny gaed up the glen;
But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
It was only to hear the yorlin sing,
And pu' the cress-flower round the spring;—
The scarlet hypp, and the hind-berrye,
And the nut that hung frae the hazel-tree;
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.

But lang may her minny look o'er the wa',
And lang may she seek i' the green-wood shaw;
Lang the laird o' Duneira blame,
And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame!

When many a day had come and fled,
When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
When mass for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,
When the bedesman had prayed, and the dead-bell rung;
Late, late in a gloamin', when all was still,
When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,
The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,
The reek o' the cot hung over the plain,
Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane;
When the ingle lowed wi' an eiry leme,
Late, late in the gloamin' Kilmeny came hame!

"Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?
Lang hae we sought baith holt and den;
By burn, by ford, by green-wood tree,
Yet you are halesome and fair to see.
Where gat ye that joup o' the lily sheen?
That bonny snood o' the birk sae green?
And those roses, the fairest that ever was seen?
Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?"

Kilmeny looked up wi' a lovely grace,
But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face;
As still was her look, and as still was her e'e,
As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,
Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
For Kilmeny had been she knew not where,
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare;
Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,
Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew;
But it seemed as the harp of the sky had rung,
And the airs of heaven played round her tongue,
When she spake of the lovely forms she had seen,
And a land where sin had never been;
A land of love, and a land of light,
Withouten sun, or moon, or night;

Where the river swa'd a living stream,
And the light a pure celestial beam;
The land of vision, it would seem,
A still, an everlasting dream.

In yon green-wood there is a waik,
And in that waik there is a wene,
And in that wene there is a maike,
That neither has flesh, nor blood, nor bane;
And down in yon green-wood he walks his lane

In that green wene Kilmeny lay,
Her bosom happed wi' the flowerets gay;
But the air was soft, and the silence deep,
And bonny Kilmeny fell sound asleep;
She kenned nae mair, nor opened her e'e,
Till waked by the hymns of a far countrye.

She woke on a couch of silk sae slim,
All striped wi' the bars of the rainbow's rim;
And lovely beings around were rife,
Who erst had travelled mortal life;
And aye they smiled, and 'gan to spier:
"What spirit has brought this mortal here?"

"Lang have I ranged the world wide,"
A meek and reverend fere replied;
"Baith night and day I have watched the fair
Eident a thousand years and mair.
Yes, I have watched o'er ilk degree,
Wherever blooms femenitye;
But sinless virgin, free of stain,
In mind and body, fand I nane.
Never, since the banquet of time,
Found I a virgin in her prime,
Till late this bonny maiden I saw,
As spotless as the morning snaw:
Full twenty years she has lived as free
As the spirits that sojourn in this countrye.
I have brought her away frae the snares of men,
That sin or death she never may ken."

They clasped her waist, and her hands sae fair;
They kissed her cheeks, and they kemmed her hair;
And round came many a blooming fere,
Saying, "Bonny Kilmeny, ye're welcome here!
Women are freed of the littand scorn;
O, blest be the day Kilmeny was born!
Now shall the land of the spirits see,
Now shall it ken, what a woman may be!
Many a lang year, in sorrow and pain,
Many a lang year through the world we've gane,
Commissioned to watch fair woman-kind,
For it's they who nurse the immortal mind.
We have watched their steps as the dawning shone,
And deep in the green-wood walks alone;
By lily bower and silken bed,
The viewless tears have been o'er them shed;
Have soothed their ardent minds to sleep,
Or left the couch of love to weep.
We have seen! we have seen! but the time maun come,
And the angels will weep at the day of doom!

"O, would the fairest of mortal kind
Aye keep these holy truths in mind,
That kindred spirits their motions see,
Who watch their ways with anxious e'e,
And grieve for the guilt of humanitye!
O, sweet to Heaven the maiden's prayer,
And the sigh that heaves a bosom sae fair!
And dear to Heaven the words of truth,
And the praise of virtue frae beauty's mouth!
And dear to the viewless forms of air
The minds that kythes as the body fair!

"O bonny Kilmeny! free frae stain,
If ever you seek the world again,
That world of sin, of sorrow and fear,
O, tell of the joys that are waiting here;
And tell of the signs you shall shortly see;
Of the times that are now, and the times that shall be."

They lifted Kilmeny, they led her away,
And she walked in the light of a sunless day;
The sky was a dome of crystal bright,
The fountain of vision, and fountain of light;
The emerald fields were of dazzling glow,
And the flowers of everlasting blow.
Then deep in the stream her body they laid,
That her youth and beauty never might fade;
And they smiled on Heaven, when they saw her lie
In the stream of life that wandered by.
And she heard a song,—she heard it sung,
She kenned not where; but sae sweetly it rung,
It fell on her ear like a dream of the morn,—
"O, blest be the day Kilmeny was born!
Now shall the land of the spirits see,
Now shall it ken, what a woman may be!
The sun that shines on the world sae bright,
A borrowed gleid frae the fountain of light;
And the moon that sleeks the sky sae dun,
Like a gouden bow, or a beamless sun,
Shall wear away, and be seen nae mair;
And the angels shall miss them, travelling the air.
But lang, lang after, baith night and day,
When the sun and the world have fled away,
When the sinner has gane to his waesome doom,
Kilmeny shall smile in eternal bloom!"

They bore her away, she wist not how,
For she felt not arm nor rest below;
But so swift they wained her through the light,
'Twas like the motion of sound or sight;
They seemed to split the gales of air,
And yet nor gale nor breeze was there.
Unnumbered groves below them grew;
They came, they passed, and backward flew,
Like floods of blossoms gliding on,
A moment seen, in a moment gone.
Ah, never vales to mortal view
Appeared like those o'er which they flew,

That land to human spirits given,
The lowermost vales of the storied heaven;
From thence they can view the world below,
And heaven's blue gates with sapphires glow,—
More glory yet unmeet to know.

They bore her far to a mountain green,
To see what mortal never had seen;
And they seated her high on a purple sward,
And bade her heed what she saw and heard,
And note the changes the spirits wrought;
For now she lived in the land of thought.—
She looked, and she saw nor sun nor skies,
But a crystal dome of a thousand dyes;
She looked, and she saw nae land aright,
But an endless whirl of glory and light;
And radiant beings went and came,
Far swifter than wind or the linkèd flame;
She hid her e'en frae the dazzling view;
She looked again, and the scene was new.

She saw a sun in a summer sky,
And clouds of amber sailing by;
A lovely land beneath her lay,
And that land had lakes and mountains gray:
And that land had valleys and hoary piles,
And marlèd seas, and a thousand isles;
Its fields were speckled, its forests green,
And its lakes were all of the dazzling sheen,
Like magic mirrors, where slumbering lay
The sun and the sky and the cloudlet gray,
Which heaved and trembled, and gently swung;
On every shore they seemed to be hung;
For there they were seen on their downward plain
A thousand times and a thousand again;
In winding lake and placid firth,
Little peaceful heavens in the bosom of earth.

Kilmeny sighed and seemed to grieve,
For she found her heart to that land did cleave:

She saw the corn wave on the vale;
She saw the deer run down the dale;
She saw the plaid and the broad claymore,
And the brows that the badge of freedom bore;
And she thought she had seen the land before.

She saw a lady sit on a throne,
The fairest that ever the sun shone on:
A lion licked her hand of milk,
And she held him in a leish of silk,
And a leifu' maiden stood at her knee,
With a silver wand and melting e'e;
Her sovereign shield, till love stole in,
And poisoned all the fount within.

Then a gruff, untoward bedesman came,
And hundit the lion on his dame;
And the guardian maid wi' the dauntless e'e,
She dropped a tear, and left her knee;
And she saw till the queen frae the lion fled,
Till the bonniest flower o' the world lay dead;
A coffin was set on a distant plain,
And she saw the red blood fall like rain.
Then bonny Kilmeny's heart grew sair,
And she turned away, and could look nae mair.

Then the gruff, grim carle girned amain,
And they trampled him down, but he rose again;
And he baited the lion to deeds of weir,
Till he lapped the blood to the kingdom dear;
And weening his head was danger-proof
When crowned with the rose and clover leaf,
He gowled at the carle, and chased him away
To feed wi' the deer on the mountain gray.
He gowled at the carle, and he gecked at heaven;
But his mark was set, and his arles given.
Kilmeny a while her e'en withdrew;
She looked again, and the scene was new.

She saw below her, fair unfurled,
One half of all the glowing world,

Where oceans rolled and rivers ran,
To bound the aims of sinful man.
She saw a people fierce and fell,
Burst frae their bounds like fiends of hell;
There lilies grew, and the eagle flew;
And she herked on her ravening crew,
Till the cities and towers were wrapped in a blaze,
And the thunder it roared o'er the lands and the seas.
The widows they wailed, and the red blood ran,
And she threatened an end to the race of man.
She never lened, nor stood in awe,
Till caught by the lion's deadly paw.
O, then the eagle swinked for life,
And brainzelled up a mortal strife;
But flew she north, or flew she south,
She met wi' the gowl of the lion's mouth.

With a mooted wing and waefu' maen,
The eagle sought her eiry again;
But lang may she cower in her bloody nest,
And lang, lang sleek her wounded breast,
Before she sey another flight,
To play wi' the norland lion's might.

But to sing the sights Kilmeny saw,
So far surpassing nature's law,
The singer's voice wad sink away,
And the string of his harp wad cease to play.
But she saw till the sorrows of man were by
And all was love and harmony;
Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,
Like the flakes of snaw on a winter's day.

Then Kilmeny begged again to see
The friends she had left in her ain countrie,
To tell of the place where she had been,
And the glories that lay in the land unseen;
To warn the living maidens fair,
The loved of heaven, the spirits' care,
That all whose minds unmeled remain
Shall bloom in beauty when time is gane.

With distant music, soft and deep,
They lulled Kilmeny sound asleep;
And when she awakened, she lay her lane,
All happed wi' flowers in the green-wood wene.
When seven long years had come and fled,
When grief was calm, and hope was dead,
When scarce was remembered Kilmeny's name,
Late, late in a gloamin', Kilmeny came hame!
And O, her beauty was fair to see,
But still and steadfast was her e'e!
Such beauty bard may never declare,
For there was no pride nor passion there;
And the soft desire of maidens' e'en,
In that mild face could never be seen.
Her seymar was the lily flower,
And her cheek the moss-rose in the shower;
And her voice like the distant melody
That floats along the twilight sea.
But she loved to raike the lanely glen,
And keep afar frae the haunts of men;
Her holy hymns unheard to sing,
To suck the flowers and drink the spring.
But wherever her peaceful form appeared,
The wild beasts of the hills were cheered;
The wolf played blithely round the field;
The lordly byson lowed and kneeled;
The dun deer wooed with manner bland,
And cowered aneath her lily hand.
And when at eve the woodlands rung,
When hymns of other worlds she sung
In ecstasy of sweet devotion,
O, then the glen was all in motion!
The wild beasts of the forest came,
Broke from their bughts and faulds the tame,
And goved around, charmed and amazed;
Even the dull cattle crooned, and gazed,
And murmured, and looked with anxious pain
For something the mystery to explain.
The buzzard came with the throstle-cock,
The corby left her houf in the rock;

The blackbird alang wi' the eagle flew;
The hind came tripping o'er the dew;
The wolf and the kid their raike began;
And the kid, and the lamb, and the leveret ran;
The hawk and the hern attour them hung,
And the merle and the mavis forhooyed their young;
And all in a peaceful ring were hurled:
It was like an eve in a sinless world!

When a month and day had come and gane,
Kilmeny sought the green-wood wene;
There laid her down on the leaves sae green,
And Kilmeny on earth was never mair seen.
But O the words that fell frae her mouth
Were words of wonder, and words of truth!
But all the land were in fear and dread,
For they kendna whether she was living or dead.
It wasna her hame, and she couldna remain;
She left this world of sorrow and pain,
And returned to the land of thought again.

James Hogg [1770–1835]

KUBLA KHAN

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But O! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!

And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this Earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced,
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

HYMN OF PAN

From the forests and highlands
We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
Where loud waves are dumb,
Listening my sweet pipings.
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening my sweet pipings.

Liquid Penëus was flowing,
And all dark Tempe lay
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
The light of the dying day,
Speeded by my sweet pipings.
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,
And the Nymphs of the woods and waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow,
Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,
With envy of my sweet pipings.

I sang of the dancing Stars,
I sang of the dædal Earth,
And of Heaven, and the giant wars,
And Love, and Death, and Birth.
And then I changed my pipings—
Singing how down the vale of Mænalus
I pursued a maiden, and clasped a reed:
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus;
It breaks in our bosom, and then we bleed.
All wept—as I think both ye now would,
If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
  Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
  A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
  Of deities or mortals, or of both,
    In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
  What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
    What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
  Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
  Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
  Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
    Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
    She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
  For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
  Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearièd,
  For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
  For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
  For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
  That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
    A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
  To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
  And all her silken flanks with garlands dressed?

What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul, to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity. Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

John Keats [1795–1821]

ODE TO PSYCHE

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung
By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,
And pardon that thy secrets should be sung
Even into thine own soft-conchèd ear:
Surely I dreamed to-day, or did I see
The wingèd Psyche with awakened eyes?
I wandered in a forest thoughtlessly,
And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,
Saw two fair creatures, couchèd side by side
In deepest grass, beneath the whispering roof
Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran
A brooklet, scarce espied:
'Mid hushed, cool-rooted flowers fragrant-eyed,
Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,
They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass;
Their arms embracèd, and their pinions too;
Their lips touched not, but had not bade adieu,
As if disjoinèd by soft-handed slumber,
And ready still past kisses to outnumber

At tender eye-dawn of aurorean love:
The wingèd boy I knew;
But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?
His Psyche true!

O latest-born and loveliest vision far
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!
Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-regioned star,
Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky;
Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,
Nor altar heaped with flowers;
Nor Virgin-choir to make delicious moan
Upon the midnight hours;
No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet
From chain-swung censer teeming;
No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat
Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.

O brightest! though too late for antique vows,
Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,
When holy were the haunted forest boughs,
Holy the air, the water, and the fire;
Yet even in these days so far retired
From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,
Fluttering among the faint Olympians,
I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.
So let me be thy choir, and make a moan
Upon the midnight hours!
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet
From swingèd censer teeming:
Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat
Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branchèd thoughts, new-grown with pleasant pain,
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind:
Far, far around shall those dark-clustered trees
Fledge the wild-ridgèd mountains steep by steep;
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to sleep;

And in the midst of this wide quietness
A rosy sanctuary will I dress
With the wreathed trellis of a working brain,
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
Who, breeding flowers, will never breed the same;
And there shall be for thee all soft delight
That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
To let the warm Love in!

John Keats [1795–1821]

TO FANCY

Ever let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let wingèd Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the cakèd snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overawed,

Fancy, high-commissioned:—send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heapèd Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it:—thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear;
Rustle of the reapèd corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And, in the same moment—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearlèd with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its cellèd sleep;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Every thing is spoilt by use:
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
Too much gazed at? Where's the maid
Whose lip mature is ever new?
Where's the eye, however blue,
Doth not weary? Where's the face
One would meet in every place?
Where's the voice, however soft,
One would hear so very oft?
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.
Let, then, wingèd Fancy find
Thee a mistress to thy mind:
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,
Ere the God of Torment taught her
How to frown and how to chide;
With a waist and with a side
White as Hebe's, when her zone
Slipped its golden clasp, and down
Fell her kirtle to her feet,
While she held the goblet sweet,
And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh
Of the Fancy's silken leash;
Quickly break her prison-string,
And such joys as these she'll bring.—
Let the wingèd Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home.

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE HAUNTED PALACE

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
It stood there;
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago),
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingèd odor went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
(Porphyrogene),
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home, the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travelers now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;

While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

THE RAVEN

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door:
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore,
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore:
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door:
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door:—
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore!"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore;
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;
'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door,
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door:
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,—
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore:
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door,
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered, not a feather then he fluttered,
Till I scarcely more than muttered,—"Other friends have flown before;
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore:
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore,
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet still, if bird or devil!
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate, yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore:
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us, by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore:
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting·
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken! quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

THE BELLS

I

Hear the sledges with the bells,
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!

How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the future; how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III

Hear the loud alarum bells—
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells

In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire.
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor
Now, now to sit, or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells;
Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV

Hear the tolling of the bells,
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their melody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!

For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats,
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people,
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone.
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman,
They are neither brute nor human,
They are ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells,
Of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells;
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells;
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

THE LOTOS-EATERS

"Courage!" he said, and pointed toward the land,
"This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."
In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemèd always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
And, like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
And some through wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumberous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of agèd snow,
Stood sunset-flushed; and, dewed with showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmèd sunset lingered low adown
In the red West: through mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Bordered with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale;
A land where all things always seemed the same!
And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
To each, but whoso did receive of them
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far, far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep-asleep he seemed, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore
Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no more;"
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Matched with an agèd wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Through scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vexed the dim sea. I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known,—cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honored of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrough
Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As though to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved

From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and through soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Though much is taken, much abides; and though
We are not now that strength which in old days

Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;—
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle rolled
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Though Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten through the helm,
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I rowed across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:

And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In after time, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten through the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the ruined shrine he stepped
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewelery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it seemed
Better to leave Excalibur concealed
There in the many-knotted water-flags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded king.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou performed my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betrayed thy nature and thy name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseemed
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had followed, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."
Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,
"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The king is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the lake;
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence;
But now much honor and much fame were lost."
So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur, the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded king.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:

"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."
To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widowed of the power in his eye
That bowed the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou would'st betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."
Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutched the sword,
And strongly wheeled and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirled in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipped the surface, rose an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the king.
Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not though I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I looked again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."
And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."
So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded through his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him through the place of tombs.
But, as he walked, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sighed the king,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walked,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armèd heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.
Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,

Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmured Arthur, " Place me in the barge,"
And to the barge they came. There those three queens
Put forth their hands, and took the king, and wept.
But she that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shattered casque, and chafed his hands,
And called him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colorless, and like the withered moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dashed with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parched with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shattered column lay the king;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot through the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
" Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.

But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."
And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
" The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
For all my mind is clouded with a doubt—
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."
So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And through the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Through the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle embowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
Slide the heavy barges trailed
By slow horses; and unhailed
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed
Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to towered Camelot:

And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often through the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot:

Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling through the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot;
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jeweled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot;
As often through the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed;
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.

From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces through the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me!" cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse—
Like some bold seër in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Through the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot:

And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turned to towered Camelot;
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in His mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott."

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

SONG

From "Paracelsus."

Over the sea our galleys went,
With cleaving prows in order brave
To a speeding wind and a bounding wave—
A gallant armament:

Each bark built out of a forest-tree
  Left leafy and rough as first it grew,
And nailed all over the gaping sides,
Within and without, with black bull-hides,
Seethed in fat and suppled in flame,
To bear the playful billows' game;
So, each good ship was rude to see,
Rude and bare to the outward view,
  But each upbore a stately tent
Where cedar pales in scented row
Kept out the flakes of the dancing brine,
And an awning drooped the mast below,
In fold on fold of the purple fine,
That neither noontide nor star-shine
Nor moonlight cold which maketh mad,
  Might pierce the regal tenement.
When the sun dawned, oh, gay and glad
We set the sail and plied the oar;
But when the night-wind blew like breath,
For joy of one day's voyage more,
We sang together on the wide sea,
Like men at peace on a peaceful shore;
Each sail was loosed to the wind so free,
Each helm made sure by the twilight star,
And in a sleep as calm as death,
We, the voyagers from afar,
  Lay stretched along, each weary crew
In a circle round its wondrous tent
Whence gleamed soft light and curled rich scent,
  And with light and perfume, music too:
So the stars wheeled round, and the darkness passed,
And at morn we started beside the mast,
And still each ship was sailing fast!

Now, one morn, land appeared—a speck
Dim trembling betwixt sea and sky:
"Avoid it," cried our pilot, "check
  The shout, restrain the eager eye!"
But the heaving sea was black behind
For many a night and many a day,

And land, though but a rock, drew nigh;
So we broke the cedar pales away,
Let the purple awning flap in the wind,
And a statue bright was on every deck!
We shouted, every man of us,
And steered right into the harbor thus,
With pomp and pæan glorious.

A hundred shapes of lucid stone!
All day we built its shrine for each,
A shrine of rock for every one,
Nor paused till in the westering sun
We sat together on the beach
To sing because our task was done;
When lo! what shouts and merry songs!
What laughter all the distance stirs!
A loaded raft with happy throngs
Of gentle islanders!
"Our isles are just at hand," they cried,
"Like cloudlets faint in even sleeping;
Our temple-gates are opened wide,
Our olive-groves thick shade are keeping
For these majestic forms"—they cried.
Oh, then we awoke with sudden start
From our deep dream, and knew, too late,
How bare the rock, how desolate,
Which had received our precious freight:
Yet we called out—"Depart!
Our gifts, once given, must here abide:
Our work is done; we have no heart
To mar our work,"—we cried.

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

THE SWIMMERS

We were eight fishers of the western sea,
Who sailed our craft beside a barren land,
Where harsh with pines the herdless mountains stand
And lonely beaches be.

There no man dwells, and ships go seldom past;
Yet sometimes there we lift our keels ashore,
To rest in safety 'mid the broken roar
And mist of surges vast.

One strand we know, remote from all the rest,
For north and south the cliffs are high and steep,
Whose naked leagues of rock repel the deep,
Insurgent from the west.

Tawny it lies, untrodden o'er by man,
Save when from storm we sought its narrow rift
To beach our craft and light a fire of drift
And sleep till day began.

Along its sands no flower nor bird has home.
Abrupt its breast, girt by no splendor save
The whorled and poising emerald of the wave
And scarves of rustling foam—

A place of solemn beauty; yet we swore,
By all the ocean stars' unhasting flight,
To seek no refuge for another night
Upon that haunted shore.

That year a sombre autumn held the earth.
At dawn we sailed from out our village bay;
We sang; a taut wind leapt along the day;
The sea-birds mocked our mirth.

Southwest we drave, like arrows to a mark;
Ere set of sun the coast was far to lee,
Where thundered over by the white-hooved sea
The reefs lie gaunt and dark.

But when we would have cast our hooks, the main
Grew wroth a-sudden, and our captain said:
"Seek we a shelter." And the west was red
God gave his winds the rein.

And eastward lay the sands of which I told;
Thither we fled, and on the narrow beach
Drew up our keels beyond the lessening reach
Of waters green and cold.

Then set the wounded sun. The wind blew clean
The skies. A wincing star came forth at last.
We heard like mighty tollings in the blast
The shock of waves unseen.

The wide-winged Eagle hovered overhead;
The Scorpion crept slowly in the south
To pits below the horizon; in its mouth
Lay a young moon that bled,

And from our fire the ravished flame swept back,
Like yellow hair of one who flies apace,
Compelled in lands barbarian to race
With lions on her track.

Then from the maelstroms of the surf arose
Wild laughter, mystical, and up the sands
Came Two that walked with intertwining hands
Amid those ocean snows.

Ghostly they gleamed before the lofty spray—
Fairer than gods and naked as the moon,
The foamy fillets at their ankles strewn
Less marble-white than they.

Laughing they stood, then to our beacon's flare
Drew nearer, as we watched in mad surprise
The scarlet-flashing lips, the sea-green eyes,
The red and tangled hair.

Then spoke the god (goddess and god they seemed),
In harp-like accents of a tongue unknown—
About his brows the dripping locks were blown;
Like wannest gold he gleamed.

Staring we sat; again the Vision spoke.
Beyond his form we saw the billows rave,—
The leap of those white leopards in the wave,—
The spume of seas that broke.

Yet sat we mute, for then a human word
Seemed folly's worst. And scorn began to trace
Its presence on the wild, imperious face;
Again the red lips stirred,

But spoke not. In an instant we were free
From that enchantment: fleet as deer they turned
And sudden amber leapt the sands they spurned;
We saw them meet the sea.

We heard the seven-chorded surf, unquelled,
Call in one thunder to the granite walls;
But over all, like broken clarion-calls,
Disdainful laughter welled.

Then silence, save for cloven wave and wind,
Our fire had faltered on its little dune.
Far out a fog-wall reared, and hid the moon.
The night lay vast and blind.

Silent, we waited the assuring morn,
Which rose on angered waters. But we set
Our hooded prows to sea, and, tempest-wet,
Beat up the coast forlorn.

And no man scorned our tale, for well they knew
Had mystery befallen: in our eyes
Were alien terrors and unknown surmise.
Men saw the tale was true.

And no man seeks a refuge on that shore,
Though tempests gather in impelling skies;
Unseen, unsolved, unhazarded it lies,
Forsaken evermore.

For on those sands immaculate and lone
Perchance They list the sea's immeasured lyre,
When sunset casts an evanescent fire
Through billows thunder-sown.

George Sterling [1869–

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service sweetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have not I prayed in Heaven?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! we two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
  Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
  Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
  Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
  And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
  Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
  Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
  Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
  Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
  My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
  To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
  Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
  To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
  Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
  With Love, only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
  Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
  Less sad of speech than mild,—
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
  The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
  Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

A SONG OF ANGIOLA IN HEAVEN

Flowers,—that have died upon my Sweet,
Lulled by the rhythmic dancing beat
Of her young bosom under you,—
Now will I show you such a thing
As never, through thick buds of Spring,
Betwixt the daylight and the dew,
The Bird whose being no man knows—
The voice that waketh all night through,
Tells to the Rose.

For lo,—a garden-place I found,
Well filled of leaves, and stilled of sound,
Well flowered, with red fruit marvelous;
And 'twixt the shining trunks would flit
Tall knights and silken maids, or sit
With faces bent and amorous;—
There, in the heart thereof, and crowned
With woodbine and amaracus,
My Love I found.

Alone she walked,—ah, well I wis,
My heart leapt up for joy of this!—
Then when I called to her her name,—
The name, that like a pleasant thing
Men's lips remember, murmuring,—
At once across the sward she came,—
Full fain she seemed, my own dear maid,
And askèd ever as she came,
"Where hast thou stayed?"

"Where hast thou stayed?" she asked, as though
The long years were an hour ago;
  But I spake not, nor answered,
For, looking in her eyes, I saw
A light not lit of mortal law;
  And in her clear cheek's changeless red,
And sweet, unshaken speaking found
  That in this place the Hours were dead,
    And Time was bound.

"This is well done," she said, "in thee,
O Love, that thou art come to me,
  To this green garden glorious;
Now truly shall our life be sped
In joyance and all goodlihed,
  For here all things are fair to us,
And none with burden is oppressed,
  And none is poor or piteous,—
    For here is Rest.

"No formless Future blurs the sky;
Men mourn not here, with dull dead eye,
  By shrouded shapes of Yesterday;
Betwixt the Coming and the Past
The flawless life hangs fixen fast
  In one unwearying To-Day,
That darkens not; for Sin is shriven,
  Death from the doors is thrust away,
    And here is Heaven."

At "Heaven" she ceased;—and lifted up
Her fair head like a flower-cup,
  With rounded mouth, and eyes aglow;
Then set I lips to hers, and felt,—
Ah, God,—the hard pain fade and melt,
  And past things change to painted show;
The song of quiring birds outbroke;
  The lit leaves laughed—sky shook, and lo,
    I swooned,—and woke.

And now, O Flowers,
  —Ye that indeed are dead,—

Now for all waiting hours,
Well am I comforted;
For of a surety, now, I see,
That, without dim distress
Of tears, or weariness,
My Lady, verily, awaiteth me;
So that until with Her I be,
For my dear Lady's sake
I am right fain to make
Out from my pain a pillow, and to take
Grief for a golden garment unto me;
Knowing that I, at last, shall stand
In that green garden-land,
And, in the holding of my dear Love's hand,
Forget the grieving and the misery.

Austin Dobson [1840–

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

I FLED Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat—and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet—
"All things betray thee, who betrayest Me."

I pleaded, outlaw-wise,
By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
Trellised with intertwining charities;
(For, though I knew His love Who followèd,
Yet was I sore adread

Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside);
But, if one little casement parted wide,
The gust of His approach would clash it to.
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.
Across the margent of the world I fled,
And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,
Smiting for shelter on their clangèd bars;
Fretted to dulcet jars
And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon.
I said to dawn, Be sudden; to eve, Be soon;
With thy young skiey blossoms heap me over
From this tremendous Lover!
Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!
I tempted all His servitors, but to find
My own betrayal in their constancy,
In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal deceit.
To all swift things for swiftness did I sue;
Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.
But whether they swept, smoothly fleet,
The long savannahs of the blue;
Or whether, Thunder-driven,
They clanged his chariot 'thwart a heaven
Plashy with flying lightnings round the spurn o' their feet:—
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.
Still with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following Feet,
And a Voice above their beat—
"Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me."

I sought no more that after which I strayed
In face of man or maid;
But still within the little children's eyes
Seems something, something that replies;
They at least are for me, surely for me!
I turned me to them very wistfully;
But, just as their young eyes grew sudden fair
With dawning answers there,

Their angel plucked them from me by the hair.
"Come then, ye other children, Nature's—share
With me" (said I) "your delicate fellowship;
Let me greet you lip to lip,
Let me twine you with caresses,
Wantoning
With our Lady-Mother's vagrant tresses,
Banqueting
With her in her wind-walled palace,
Underneath her azure daïs,
Quaffing, as your taintless way is,
From a chalice
Lucent-weeping out of the dayspring."
So it was done:
I in their delicate fellowship was one—
Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies.
I knew all the swift importings
On the wilful face of skies,
I knew how the clouds arise
Spumèd of the wild sea-snortings;
All that's born or dies
Rose and drooped with—made them shapers
Of mine own moods, or wailful or divine—
With them joyed and was bereaven.
I was heavy with the even,
When she lit her glimmering tapers
Round the day's dead sanctities.
I laughed in the morning's eyes.
I triumphed and I saddened with all weather,
Heaven and I wept together,
And its sweet tears were salt with mortal mine;
Against the red throb of its sunset-heart
I laid my own to beat,
And share commingling heat;
But not by that, by that, was eased my human smart.
In vain my tears were wet on Heaven's gray cheek.
For ah! we know not what each other says,
These things and I; in sound *I* speak—
Their sound is but their stir, they speak by silences.
Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drouth;

Let her, if she would owe me,
Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show me
The breasts o' her tenderness:
Never did any milk of hers once bless
My thirsting mouth.
Nigh and dry draws the chase,
With unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy;
And past those noisèd Feet
A voice comes yet more fleet—
"Lo! naught contents thee, who content'st not Me."

Naked I wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!
My harness piece by piece Thou hast hewn from me,
And smitten me to my knee;
I am defenseless utterly.
I slept, methinks, and woke,
And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in sleep.
In the rash lustihood of my young powers,
I shook the pillaring hours
And pulled my life upon me; grimed with smears
I stand amid the dust o' the mounded years—
My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap.
My days have crackled and gone up in smoke,
Have puffed and burst as sun-starts on a stream.
Yea, faileth now even dream
The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist;
Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossomy twist
I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,
Are yielding; cords of all too weak account
For earth with heavy griefs so overplussed.
Ah! is Thy love indeed
A weed, albeit an amaranthine weed,
Suffering no flowers except its own to mount?
Ah! must—
Designer infinite!—
Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst limn with it?
My freshness spent its wavering shower i' the dust:
And now my heart is as a broken fount,

Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt down ever
From the dank thoughts that shiver
Upon the sighful branches of my mind.
Such is; what is to be?
The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?
I dimly guess what Time in mists confounds:
Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds
From the hid battlements of Eternity;
Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then
Round the half-glimpsèd turrets slowly wash again.
But not ere him who summoneth
I first have seen, enwound
With glooming robes purpureal, cypress-crowned;
His name I know, and what his trumpet saith.
Whether man's heart or life it be which yields
Thee harvest, must Thy harvest fields
Be dunged with rotten death?

Now of that long pursuit
Comes on at hand the bruit;
That Voice is round me like a bursting sea:
"And is thy earth so marred,
Shattered in shard on shard?
Lo, all things fly thee, for thou flyest Me!
Strange, piteous, futile thing,
Wherefore should any set thee love apart?
Seeing none but I makes much of naught" (He said),
"And human love needs human meriting:
How hast thou merited—
Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
Alack, thou knowest not
How little worthy of any love thou art!
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
Save Me, save only Me?
All which I took from thee, I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!"

Halts by me that footfall:
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?
"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whom thou seekest!
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."

Francis Thompson [1859?–1907]

WILD EDEN

THERE is a garden enclosed
In the high places,
But never hath love reposed
In its bowery spaces;
And the cedars there like shadows
O'er the moonlit champaign stand
Till light like an angel's hand
Touches Wild Eden.

Who told me the name of the garden
That lieth remote, apart,
I know not, nor whence was the music
That sang it into my heart;
But just as the loud robin tosses
His notes from the elm tops high,
As the violets come in the mosses
When south winds wake and sigh,
So on my lips I found it,
This name that is made my cry.

There, under the stars and the dawns
Of the virginal valleys,
White lilies flood the low lawns
And the rose lights the alleys;
But never are heard there the voices
That sweeten on lovers' lips,
And the wild bee never sips
Sweets of Wild Eden.

But who hath shown me the vision
  Of the roses and lilies in ranks
I would that I knew, that forever
  To him I might render thanks;
For a maiden grows there in her blossom,
  In the place of her maidenhood,
Nor knows how her virgin bosom
  Is stored with the giving of good,
For the truth is hidden from her
  That of love is understood.

No bird with his mate there hovers,
  Nor beside her has trilled or sung;
No bird in the dewy covers
  Has built a nest for his young;
And over the dark-leaved mountains
  The voice in the laurel sleeps;
  And the moon broods on the deeps
    Shut in Wild Eden.

O Love, if thou in thy hiding
  Art he who above me stands,
If thou givest wings to my spirit,
  If thou art my heart and my hands,—
Through the morn, through the noon, through the even
  That burns with thy planet of light,
Through the moonlit space of heaven,
  Guide thou my flight
Till, star-like on the dark garden,
  I fall in the night!

Fly, song of my bosom, unto it
  Wherever the earth breathes spring;
Though a thousand years were to rue it,
  Such a heart beats under thy wing,
Thou shalt dive, thou shalt soar, thou shalt find it,
  And forever my life be blest,
  Such a heart beats in my breast,—
    Fly to Wild Eden!

George Edward Woodberry [1855–

THE AZTEC CITY

THERE is a clouded city, gone to rest
Beyond the crest
Where cordilleras mar the mystic west.

There suns unheeded rise and re-arise;
And in the skies
The harvest moon unnoticed lives and dies.

And yet this clouded city has no night—
Volcanic light
Compels eternal noontide, redly bright.

A thousand wells, whence cooling waters came,
No more the same,
Now send aloft a thousand jets of flame.

This clouded city is enchanting fair,
For rich and rare
From sculptured frieze the gilded griffins stare.

With level look—with loving, hopeful face,
Fixed upon space,
Stand caryatides of unknown race,

And colonnades of dark green serpentine,
Of strange design,
Carved on whose shafts queer alphabets combine.

And there are lofty temples, rich and great,
And at the gate,
Carved in obsidian, the lions wait.

And from triumphant arches, looking down
Upon the town,
In porphyry, sad, unknown statesmen frown.

And there are palace homes, and stately walls,
And open halls
Where fountains are, with voiceless waterfalls.

The ruddy fire incessantly illumes
Temples and tombs,
And in its blaze the stone-wrought cactus blooms.

From clouds congealed the mercury distils,
And, forming rills,
Adown the streets in double streamlet trills.

As rains from clouds, that summer skies eclipse,
From turret-tips
And spire and porch the mobile metal drips.

No one that visited this fiery hive
Ever alive
Came out but me—I, I alone, survive.

Eugene Fitch Ware [1841–1911]

BEFORE A STATUE OF ACHILLES

Behold Pelides with his yellow hair,
Proud child of Thetis, hero loved of Jove;
Above the frowning of his brows it wove
A crown of gold, well combed, with Spartan care.
Who might have seen him, sullen, great, and fair,
As with the wrongful world he proudly strove,
And by high deeds his wilder passion shrove,
Mastering love, resentment, and despair.
He knew his end, and Phoebus' arrow sure
He braved for fame immortal and a friend,
Despising life; and we, who know our end,
Know that in our decay he shall endure
And all our children's hearts to grief inure,
With whose first bitter battles his shall blend.

Who brought thee forth, immortal vision, who
In Pythia or in Tempe brought thee forth?
Out of the sunlight and the sapful earth
What god the simples of thy spirit drew?
A goddess rose from the green waves, and threw
Her arms about a king, to give thee birth;
A centaur, patron of thy boyish mirth,
Over the meadows in thy footsteps flew.
Now Thessaly forgets thee, and the deep
Thy keeled bark furrowed answers not thy prayer;
But far away new generations keep
Thy laurels fresh, where branching Isis hems

The lawns of Oxford round about, or where
Enchanted Eton sits by pleasant Thames.
I gaze on thee as Phidias of old
Or Polyclitus gazed, when first he saw
These hard and shining limbs, without a flaw,
And cast his wonder in heroic mould.
Unhappy me who only may behold,
Nor make immutable and fix in awe
A fair immortal form no worm shall gnaw,
A tempered mind whose faith was never told!
The godlike mien, the lion's lock and eye,
The well-knit sinew, utter a brave heart
Better than many words that part by part
Spell in strange symbols what serene and whole
In nature lives, nor can in marble die.
The perfect body is itself the soul.

George Santayana [1863–

"I FLUNG ME ROUND HIM"

From "The Water-nymph and the Boy"

I FLUNG me round him,
I drew him under;
I clung, I drowned him,
My own white wonder!

Father and mother,
Weeping and wild,
Came to the forest,
Calling the child,
Came from the palace,
Down to the pool,
Calling my darling,
My beautiful!
Under the water,
Cold and so pale!
Could it be love made
Beauty to fail?

Ah me! for mortals:
In a few moons,

If I had left him,
After some Junes
He would have faded,
Faded away,
He, the young monarch, whom
All would obey,
Fairer than day;
Alien to springtime,
Joyless and gray,
He would have faded,
Faded away,
Moving a mockery,
Scorned of the day!
Now I have taken him
All in his prime,
Saved from slow poisoning
Pitiless Time,
Filled with his happiness,
One with the prime,
Saved from the cruel
Dishonor of Time.
Laid him, my beautiful,
Laid him to rest,
Loving, adorable,
Softly to rest,
Here in my crystalline,
Here in my breast! *Roden Noel* [1834–1894]

THE QUEEN'S SONG

Had I the power
To Midas given of old
To touch a flower
And leave the petals gold,
I then might touch thy face,
Delightful boy,
And leave a metal grace,
A graven joy.

Thus would I slay,—
Ah, desperate device!

The vital day
That trembles in thine eyes,
And let the red lips close
Which sang so well,
And drive away the rose
To leave a shell.

Then I myself,
Rising austere and dumb,
On the high shelf
Of my half-lighted room
Would place the shining bust
And wait alone,
Until I was but dust,
Buried unknown.

Thus in my love
For nations yet unborn,
I would remove
From our two lives the morn,
And muse on loveliness
In mine arm-chair,
Content should Time confess
How sweet you were.

James Elroy Flecker [1884–1915]

BALKIS

From "Emblems of Love"

Balkis was in her marble town,
And shadow over the world came down.
Whiteness of walls, towers and piers,
That all day dazzled eyes to tears,
Turned from being white-golden flame,
And like the deep-sea blue became.
Balkis into her garden went;
Her spirit was in discontent
Like a torch in restless air.
Joylessly she wandered there,
And saw her city's azure white
Lying under the great night,
Beautiful as the memory
Of a worshipping world would be

In the mind of a god, in the hour
When he must kill his outward power;
And, coming to a pool where trees
Grew in double greeneries,
Saw herself, as she went by
The water, walking beautifully,
And saw the stars shine in the glance
Of her eyes, and her own fair countenance
Passing, pale and wonderful,
Across the night that filled the pool.
And cruel was the grief that played
With the queen's spirit; and she said:
"What do I hear, reigning alone?
For to be unloved is to be alone.
There is no man in all my land
Dare my longing understand;
The whole folk like a peasant bows
Lest its look should meet my brows
And be harmed by this beauty of mine.
I burn their brains as I were sign
Of God's beautiful anger sent
To master them with punishment
Of beauty that must pour distress
On hearts grown dark with ugliness.
But it is I am the punished one.
Is there no man, is there none,
In whom my beauty will but move
The lust of a delighted love;
In whom some spirit of God so thrives
That we may wed our lonely lives?
Is there no man, is there none?"
She said, "I will go to Solomon."

Lascelles Abercrombie [1884–

THE GATES OF DREAMLAND

It's a lonely road through bogland to the lake at Carrowmore,
And a sleeper there lies dreaming where the water laps the shore;

Though the moth-wings of the twilight in their purples are unfurled,
Yet his sleep is filled with music by the masters of the world.

There's a hand is white as silver that is fondling with his hair:
There are glimmering feet of sunshine that are dancing by him there:
And half-open lips of faery that were dyed a faery red
In their revels where the Hazel Tree its holy clusters shed.

"Come away," the red lips whisper, "all the world is weary now;
'Tis the twilight of the ages and it's time to quit the plough.
Oh, the very sunlight's weary ere it lightens up the dew,
And its gold is changed and faded before it falls to you.

"Though your colleen's heart be tender, a tenderer heart is near.
What's the starlight in her glances when the stars are shining clear?
Who would kiss the fading shadow when the flower-face glows above?
'Tis the Beauty of all Beauty that is calling for your love."

Oh, the great gates of the mountain have opened once again,
And the sound of song and dancing falls upon the ears of men,
And the Land of Youth lies gleaming, flushed with rainbow light and mirth,
And the old enchantment lingers in the honey-heart of earth.

A. E. (*George William Russell*) [1867–

EDITH

Edith, the silent stars are coldly gleaming,
The night wind moans, the leafless trees are still.
Edith, there is a life beyond this seeming,
So sleeps the ice-clad lake beneath thy hill.

So silent beats the pulse of thy pure heart,
  So shines the thought of thy unquestioned eyes.
O life! why wert thou helpless in thy art?
  O loveliness! why seem'st thou but surprise?

Edith, the streamlets laugh to leap again;
  There is a spring to which life's pulses fly;
And hopes that are not all the sport of pain,
  Like lustres in the veil of that gray eye.

They say the thankless stars have answering vision,
  That courage sings from out the frost-bound ways;
Edith, I grant that olden time's decision—
  Thy beauty paints with gold the icy rays.

As in the summer's heat her promise lies,
  As in the autumn's seed his vintage hides,
Thus might I shape my moral from those eyes,
  Glass of thy soul, where innocence abides.

Edith, thy nature breathes of answered praying;
  If thou dost live, then not my grief is vain;
Beyond the nerves of woe, beyond delaying,
  Thy sweetness stills to rest the winter's pain.

William Ellery Channing [1780–1842]

TENANTS

Suddenly, out of dark and leafy ways,
We came upon the little house asleep
In cold blind stillness, shadowless and deep,
In the white magic of the full moon-blaze:
Strangers without the gate, we stood agaze,
Fearful to break that quiet, and to creep
Into the house that had been ours to keep
Through a long year of happy nights and days.
So unfamiliar in the white moon-gleam,
So old and ghostly like a house of dream
It seemed, that over us there stole the dread
That even as we watched it, side by side,
The ghosts of lovers, who had lived and died
Within its walls, were sleeping in our bed.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson [1878–

THE LISTENERS

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,
  Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
  Of the forest's ferny floor:
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
  Above the Traveller's head:
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
  "Is there anybody there?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
  No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his gray eyes,
  Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
  That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
  To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
  That goes down to the empty hall,
Hearkening in an air stirred and shaken
  By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
  Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
  'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
  Louder, and lifted his head:—
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
  That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
  Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
  From the one man left awake:
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
  And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
  When the plunging hoofs were gone.

Walter de la Mare [1873–

"CARE-CHARMER SLEEP"

SLEEP

From "The Woman-Hater"

Come, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving
Lock me in delight awhile;
Let some pleasing dreams beguile
All my fancies; that from thence
I may feel an influence
All my powers of care bereaving!

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
Let me know some little joy!
We that suffer long annoy
Are contented with a thought
Through an idle fancy wrought:
O let my joys have some abiding!

John Fletcher [1579–1625]

"SLEEP, SILENCE' CHILD"

Sleep, Silence' child, sweet father of soft rest,
Prince, whose approach peace to all mortals brings,
Indifferent host to shepherds and to kings,
Sole comforter of minds with grief oppressed;
Lo, by thy charming rod all breathing things
Lie slumbering, with forgetfulness possessed,
And yet o'er me to spread thy drowsy wings
Thou sparest, alas! who cannot be thy guest.
Since I am thine, O come, but with that face
To inward light which thou art wont to show;
With feignèd solace ease a true-felt woe;
Or if, deaf god, thou do deny that grace,

Come as thou wilt, and what thou wilt bequeath:
I long to kiss the image of my death.

William Drummond [1585–1649]

TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky;
I've thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
Sleepless; and soon the small birds' melodies
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees;
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:
So do not let me wear to-night away:
Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth?
Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

VIXI

I HAVE lived and I have loved;
I have waked and I have slept;
I have sung and I have danced;
I have smiled and I have wept;
I have won and wasted treasure;
I have had my fill of pleasure;
And all these things were weariness,
And some of them were dreariness.
And all these things—but two things
Were emptiness and pain:
And Love—it was the best of them;
And Sleep—worth all the rest of them.

Unknown

SLEEP

O HAPPY Sleep! thou bear'st upon thy breast
The blood-red poppy of enchanting rest,
Draw near me through the stillness of this place
And let thy low breath move across my face,
As faint wind moves above a poplar's crest.

The broad seas darken slowly in the west;
The wheeling sea-birds call from nest to nest;
Draw near and touch me, leaning out of space,
O happy Sleep!

There is no sorrow hidden or confessed,
There is no passion uttered or suppressed,
Thou canst not for a little while efface;
Enfold me in thy mystical embrace,
Thou sovereign gift of God most sweet, most blest,
O happy Sleep!

Ada Louise Martin [18 –

THE QUIET NIGHTS

UNMINDFUL of my low desert
Who turn e'en blessings to my hurt,
God sends me graces o'er and o'er,
More than the sands on the seashore.

Among the blessings He doth give
My starveling soul that she may live,
I praise Him for my nights He kept
And all the quiet sleep I slept.

Since I was young, who now grow old,
For all those nights of heat, of cold,
I slept the sweet hours through, nor heard
Even the call of the first bird.

Nights when the darkness covered me
In a great peace like a great sea,
With waves of sweetness, who should lie
Wakeful for mine iniquity.

Cool nights of fragrance dripping sweet
After the sultriness of heat,
Amid gray meadows drenched with dew;
Sweet was the sleep my eyelids knew.

Surely some angel kept my bed
After I had knelt down and prayed;
Like a young child I slept until
The day stood at the window-sill.

I thank Him for the nights of stars,
Bright Saturn, with his rings, and Mars.
And overhead the Milky Way;
Nights when the Summer lightnings play.

How many a Milky Way I trod,
And through the mercy of my God
Drank milk and honey, wrapped in ease
Of darkness and sweet heaviness!

I thank Him for the wakening bird
And the struck hours I have not heard,
And for the morns so cool, so kind,
That found me fresh in heart and mind.

Among the gifts of His mercy,
More than the leaves upon the tree,
The sands upon the shore, I keep
And name my lovely nights of sleep.

Katharine Tynan [1861–

THE NIGHT

Most Holy Night, that still dost keep
The keys of all the doors of sleep,
To me when my tired eyelids close
Give thou repose.

And let the far lament of them
That chaunt the dead day's requiem
Make in my ears, who wakeful lie,
Soft lullaby.

Let them that guard the hornèd Moon
By my bedside their memories croon.
So shall I have new dreams and blest
In my brief rest.

Fold thy great wings about my face,
Hide day-dawn from my resting-place,
And cheat me with thy false delight,
Most Holy Night.

Hilaire Belloc [1870–

O SLEEP

Take me upon thy breast,
O river of rest.
Draw me down to thy side,
Slow-moving tide.
Carry out beyond reach
Of song or of speech
This body and soul forespent.
To thy still continent,
Where silence hath his home,
Where I would come,
Bear me now in thy deep
Bosom, Sleep,
O Sleep.

Grace Fallow Norton [18

THE WHARF OF DREAMS

Strange wares are handled on the wharves of sleep:
Shadows of shadows pass, and many a light
Flashes a signal fire across the night;
Barges depart whose voiceless steersmen keep

Their way without a star upon the deep;
And from lost ships, homing with ghostly crews,
Come cries of incommunicable news,
While cargoes pile the piers, a moon-white heap—
Budgets of dream-dust, merchandise of song,
Wreckage of hope and packs of ancient wrong,
Nepenthes gathered from a secret strand,
Fardels of heartache, burdens of old sins,
Luggage sent down from dim ancestral inns,
And bales of fantasy from No-Man's Land.

Edwin Markham [1852–

HOME AND FATHERLAND

HAME, HAME, HAME

HAME, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be—
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree!

When the flower is i' the bud and the leaf is on the tree,
The lark shall sing me hame in my ain countree;
Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be—
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree!

The green leaf o' loyaltie's beginning for to fa',
The bonnie White Rose it is withering an' a';
But I'll water 't wi' the blude of usurping tyrannie,
An' green it will graw in my ain countree.

O, there's nocht now frae ruin my country can save,
But the keys o' kind heaven, to open the grave;
That a' the noble martyrs wha died for loyaltie
May rise again an' fight for their ain countree.

The great now are gane, a' wha ventured to save,
The new grass is springing on the tap o' their grave;
But the sun through the mirk blinks blithe in my e'e,
"I'll shine on ye yet in your ain countree."

Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be—
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree!

Allan Cunningham [1784–1842]

HOME, SWEET HOME!

From "Clari, the Maid of Milan"

'MID pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home;
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home, Home, sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home! there's no place like Home!

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain;
O, give me my lowly thatched cottage again!
The birds singing gayly, that came at my call,—
Give me them,—and the peace of mind, dearer than all!
Home, Home, sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home! there's no place like Home!

How sweet 'tis to sit 'neath a fond father's smile,
And the cares of a mother to soothe and beguile!
Let others delight mid new pleasures to roam,
But give me, oh, give me, the pleasures of home!
Home! Home! sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home! there's no place like Home!

To thee I'll return, overburdened with care;
The heart's dearest solace will smile on me there;
No more from that cottage again will I roam;
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.
Home! Home! sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home! there's no place like Home!

John Howard Payne [1792–1852]

MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME

The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home;
'Tis summer, the darkeys are gay;
The corn-top's ripe, and the meadow's in the bloom,
While the birds make music all the day.
The young folks roll on the little cabin floor,
All merry, all happy and bright;
By-'n'-by hard times comes a-knocking at the door:—
Then my old Kentucky home, good-night!

Weep no more, my lady,
O, weep no more to-day!
We will sing one song for the old Kentucky home,
For the old Kentucky home, far away.

They hunt no more for the possum and the coon,
On the meadow, the hill, and the shore;
They sing no more by the glimmer of the moon,
On the bench by the old cabin door.

The day goes by like a shadow o'er the heart,
With sorrow, where all was delight;
The time has come when the darkeys have to part:—
Then my old Kentucky home, good-night!

The head must bow, and the back will have to bend,
Wherever the darkey may go;
A few more days and the troubles all will end,
In the field where the sugar-canes grow.
A few more days for to tote the weary load,—
No matter, 'twill never be light;
A few more days till we totter on the road:—
Then my old Kentucky home, good-night!

Weep no more, my lady,
O, weep no more to-day!
We will sing one song for the old Kentucky home,
For the old Kentucky home, far away.

Stephen Collins Foster [1826–1864]

THE OLD FOLKS AT HOME

WAY down upon de Suwanee Ribber,
Far, far away,
Dere's wha my heart is turning ebber,
Dere's wha de old folks stay.
All up and down de whole creation
Sadly I roam,
Still longing for de old plantation,
And for de old folks at home.

All de world am sad and dreary,
Eb'rywhere I roam;
Oh, darkeys, how my heart grows weary,
Far from de old folks at home!

All round de little farm I wandered
When I was young,
Den many happy days I squandered
Many de songs I sung.

When I was playing wid my brudder
Happy was I;
Oh, take me to my kind old mudder!
Dere let me live and die.

One little hut among de bushes,
One dat I love,
Still sadly to my memory rushes,
No matter where I rove.
When will I see de bees a-humming
All around de comb?
When will I hear de banjo tumming,
Down in my good old home?

Stephen Collins Foster [1826–1864]

HOME

O, FALMOUTH is a fine town with ships in the bay,
And I wish from my heart it's there I was to-day;
I wish from my heart I was far away from here,
Sitting in my parlor and talking to my dear.
For it's home, dearie, home—it's home I want to be.
Our topsails are hoisted, and we'll away to sea.
O, the oak and the ash and the bonnie birken tree
They're all growing green in the old countrie.

In Baltimore a-walking a lady I did meet
With her babe on her arm as she came down the street;
And I thought how I sailed, and the cradle standing ready
For the pretty little babe that has never seen its daddie.
And it's home, dearie, home,—

O, if it be a lass, she shall wear a golden ring;
And if it be a lad, he shall fight for his king;
With his dirk and his hat and his little jacket blue
He shall walk the quarter-deck as his daddie used to do.
And it's home, dearie, home,—

O, there's a wind a-blowing, a-blowing from the west,
And that of all the winds is the one I like the best,

For it blows at our backs, and it shakes our pennon free,
And it soon will blow us home to the old countrie.
For it's home, dearie, home—it's home I want to be.
Our topsails are hoisted, and we'll away to sea.
O, the oak and the ash and the bonnie birken tree
They're all growing green in the old countrie.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

HOT WEATHER IN THE PLAINS—INDIA

Far beyond the sky-line, where the steamers go,
There's a cool, green country, there's the land I know;
Where the gray mist rises from the hidden pool,
And the dew falls softly on the meadows cool.
When the exile's death has claimed me it is there my soul shall fly,
To the pleasant English country, when my time has come to die;
Where the west wind on the uplands echoes back the sea-bird's cry—
Oh! it's there my soul will hasten though it's here my bones must lie.

From the many temples, tinkling bells ring clear,
But a fairer music in my heart I hear—
Lilt of English skylark, plash of woodland streams,
Songs of thrush and blackbird fill my waking dreams.
In each pause from work and worry, it is there my thoughts will fly,
To the pleasant English country with the pearly, misty sky—
And the present's toil and trouble fade and cease and pass me by—
Oh! it's there I fain would wander, but it's here my bones must lie.

Hard and hot the sky spreads, one unchanging glare,
Far and wide the earth lies burnt and brown and bare,
Sunset brings no solace, night-time no redress,
Still the breathless silence mocks the land's distress.

So my thoughts recross the waters to the spring-times long gone by,
Passed 'mid English woods and pastures, 'neath a softer, sweeter sky;
For when death shall end my exile, thither will my spirit fly—
Oh! it's there my soul shall wander, though it's here my bones must lie.

E. H. Tipple [18 –

HEART'S CONTENT

"A SAIL! a sail! Oh, whence away,
And whither, o'er the foam?
Good brother mariners, we pray,
God speed you safely home!"
"Now wish us not so foul a wind,
Until the fair be spent;
For hearth and home we leave behind:
We sail for Heart's Content."

"For Heart's Content! And sail ye so,
With canvas flowing free?
But, pray you, tell us, if ye know,
Where may that harbor be?
For we that greet you, worn of time,
Wave-racked, and tempest-rent,
By sun and star, in every clime,
Have searched for Heart's Content.

"In every clime the world around,
The waste of waters o'er;
An El Dorado have we found,
That ne'er was found before.
The isles of spice, the lands of dawn,
Where East and West are blent—
All these our eyes have looked upon,
But where is Heart's Content?

"Oh, turn again, while yet ye may,
And ere the hearths are cold,
And all the embers ashen-gray,
By which ye sat of old,
And dumb in death the loving lips
That mourned as forth ye went
To join the fleet of missing ships,
In quest of Heart's Content;

"And seek again the harbor-lights,
Which faithful fingers trim,
Ere yet alike the days and nights
Unto your eyes are dim!
For woe, alas! to those that roam
Till time and tide are spent,
And win no more the port of home—
The only Heart's Content!"

Unknown

SONG

STAY, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care;
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt;
To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest;
The bird is safest in its nest;
Over all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky;
To stay at home is best.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

MY EARLY HOME

Here sparrows build upon the trees,
And stockdove hides her nest;
The leaves are winnowed by the breeze
Into a calmer rest:
The black-cap's song was very sweet,
That used the rose to kiss;
It made the Paradise complete:
My early home was this.

The red-breast from the sweetbrier bush
Dropped down to pick the worm;
On the horse-chestnut sang the thrush,
O'er the house where I was born;
The moonlight, like a shower of pearls,
Fell o'er this 'bower of bliss',
And on the bench sat boys and girls:
My early home was this.

The old house stooped just like a cave,
Thatched o'er with mosses green;
Winter around the walls would rave,
But all was calm within;
The trees are here all green again,
Here bees the flowers still kiss,
But flowers and trees seemed sweeter then:
My early home was this.

John Clare [1793–1864]

THE OLD HOME

An old lane, an old gate, an old house by a tree;
A wild wood, a wild brook—they will not let me be:
In boyhood I knew them, and still they call to me.

Down deep in my heart's core I hear them and my eyes
Through tear-mists behold them beneath the oldtime skies,
'Mid bee-boom and rose-bloom and orchard-lands arise.

I hear them; and heartsick with longing is my soul,
To walk there, to dream there, beneath the sky's blue bowl;
Around me, within me, the weary world made whole.

To talk with the wild brook of all the long ago;
To whisper the wood-wind of things we used to know
When we were old companions, before my heart knew woe.

To walk with the morning and watch its rose unfold;
To drowse with the noontide lulled in its heart of gold;
To lie with the night-time and dream the dreams of old.

To tell to the old trees, and to each listening leaf,
The longing, the yearning, as in my boyhood brief,
The old hope, the old love, would ease me of my grief.

The old lane, the old gate, the old house by the tree,
The wild wood, the wild brook—they will not let me be:
In boyhood I knew them, and still they call to me.

Madison Cawein [1865–1914]

THE AULD HOUSE

Oh, the auld house, the auld house,—
What though the rooms were wee?
Oh, kind hearts were dwelling there,
And bairnies fu' o' glee;
The wild rose and the jessamine
Still hang upon the wa':
How mony cherished memories
Do they sweet flowers reca'!

Oh, the auld laird, the auld laird,
Sae canty, kind, and crouse,—
How mony did he welcome to
His ain wee dear auld house;
And the leddy too, sae genty,
There sheltered Scotland's heir,
And clipped a lock wi' her ain hand,
Frae his lang yellow hair.

The mavis still doth sweetly sing,
The bluebells sweetly blaw,
The bonny Earn's clear winding still,
But the auld house is awa'.
The auld house, the auld house,—
Deserted though ye be,
There ne'er can be a new house
Will seem sae fair to me.

Still flourishing the auld pear-tree
The bairnies liked to see;
And oh, how often did they speir
When ripe they a' wad be!
The voices sweet, the wee bit feet
Aye rinnin' here and there,
The merry shout—oh! whiles we greet
To think we'll hear nae mair.

For they are a' wide scattered now;
Some to the Indies gane,
And ane, alas! to her lang hame;
Not here we'll meet again.
The kirkyard, the kirkyard!
Wi' flowers o' every hue,
Sheltered by the holly's shade
An' the dark sombre yew.

The setting sun, the setting sun!
How glorious it gaed doon;
The cloudy splendor raised our hearts
To cloudless skies aboon.
The auld dial, the auld dial!
It tauld how time did pass;
The wintry winds hae dung it doon,
Now hid 'mang weeds and grass.

Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]

THE ROWAN TREE

O ROWAN tree, O rowan tree! thou'lt aye be dear to me!
Intwined thou art wi' mony ties o' hame and infancy.
Thy leaves were aye the first o' spring, thy flowers the simmer's pride;
There wasna sic a bonnie tree in a' the country side.
O rowan tree!

How fair wert thou in simmer time, wi' a' thy clusters white,
How rich and gay thy autumn dress, wi' berries red and bright!
On thy fair stem were mony names which now nae mair I see,
But they're engraven on my heart—forgot they ne'er can be!
O rowan tree!

We sat aneath thy spreading shade, the bairnies round thee ran,
They pu'd thy bonnie berries red, and necklaces they strang.
My mother! O I see her still, she smiled our sports to see,
Wi' little Jeanie on her lap, and Jamie at her knee.
O rowan tree!

O there arose my father's prayer, in holy evening's calm;
How sweet was then my mother's voice in the Martyr's psalm!
Now a' are gane! we meet nae mair aneath the rowan tree!
But hallowed thoughts around thee twine o' hame and infancy,
O rowan tree!

Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]

THE FIRE OF DRIFT-WOOD

We sat within the farm-house old,
Whose windows, looking o'er the bay,
Gave to the sea-breeze damp and cold
An easy entrance, night and day.

Not far away we saw the port,
The strange, old-fashioned, silent town,
The lighthouse, the dismantled fort,
The wooden houses, quaint and brown.

We sat and talked until the night,
Descending, filled the little room;
Our faces faded from the sight,
Our voices only broke the gloom.

We spake of many a vanished scene,
Of what we once had thought and said,
Of what had been, and might have been,
And who was changed, and who was dead;

And all that fills the heart of friends,
When first they feel, with secret pain,
Their lives thenceforth have separate ends,
And never can be one again;

The first slight swerving of the heart,
That words are powerless to express,
And leave it still unsaid in part,
Or say it in too great excess.

The very tones in which we spake
Had something strange, I could but mark;
The leaves of memory seemed to make
A mournful rustling in the dark.

Oft died the words upon our lips,
As suddenly, from out the fire
Built of the wreck of stranded ships,
The flames would leap and then expire.

And, as their splendor flashed and failed,
We thought of wrecks upon the main,
Of ships dismasted, that were hailed,
And sent no answer back again.

The windows, rattling in their frames,
The ocean, roaring up the beach,
The gusty blast, the bickering flames,
All mingled vaguely in our speech;

Until they made themselves a part
Of fancies floating through the brain,
The long-lost ventures of the heart,
That send no answers back again.

O flames that glowed! O hearts that yearned!
They were indeed too much akin,
The drift-wood fire without that burned,
The thoughts that burned and glowed within.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

MY AIN FIRESIDE

I HAE seen great anes and sat in great ha's,
'Mang lords and fine ladies a' covered wi' braws,
At feasts made for princes wi' princes I've been,
When the grand shine o' splendor has dazzled my een;
But a sight sae delightfu' I trow I ne'er spied
As the bonny blithe blink o' my ain fireside.
My ain fireside, my ain fireside,
O, cheery's the blink o' my ain fireside;
My ain fireside, my ain fireside,
O, there's naught to compare wi' ane's ain fireside.

Ance mair, Gude be thankit, round my ain heartsome ingle
Wi' the friends o' my youth I cordially mingle;
Nae forms to compel me to seem wae or glad,
I may laugh when I'm merry, and sigh when I'm sad.
Nae falsehood to dread, and nae malice to fear,
But truth to delight me, and friendship to cheer;
Of a' roads to happiness ever were tried,
There's nane half so sure as ane's ain fireside.
My ain fireside, my ain fireside,
O, there's naught to compare wi' ane's ain fireside.

When I draw in my stool on my cozy hearthstane,
My heart loups sae light I scarce ken 't for my ain;
Care's down on the wind, it is clean out o' sight,
Past troubles they seem but as dreams o' the night.
I hear but kend voices, kend faces I see,
And mark saft affection glent fond frae ilk ee;
Nae fleechings o' flattery, nae boastings o' pride,
'Tis heart speaks to heart at ane's ain fireside.
My ain fireside, my ain fireside,
O, there's naught to compare wi' ane's ain fireside.

Elizabeth Hamilton [1758–1816]

THE INGLE-SIDE

It's rare to see the morning bleeze
Like a bonfire frae the sea,
It's fair to see the burnie kiss
The lip o' the flowery lea;
An' fine it is on green hillside,
Where hums the bonnie bee,
But rarer, fairer, finer far
Is the ingle-side for me.

Glens may be gilt wi' gowans rare,
The birds may fill the tree;
An' haughs hae a' the scented ware
The simmer-growth can gie:
But the canty hearth where cronies meet,
An' the darling o' our e'e,
That makes to us a warl' complete:
Oh, the ingle-side for me!

Hew Ainslee [1792–1878]

THE CANE-BOTTOMED CHAIR

In tattered old slippers that toast at the bars,
And a ragged old jacket perfumed with cigars,
Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
I've a snug little kingdom up four pair of stairs.

To mount to this realm is a toil, to be sure,
But the fire there is bright and the air rather pure;
And the view I behold on a sunshiny day
Is grand, through the chimney-pots over the way.

This snug little chamber is crammed in all nooks
With worthless old knicknacks and silly old books,
And foolish old odds and foolish old ends,
Cracked bargains from brokers, cheap keepsakes from friends.

Old armor, prints, pictures, pipes, china (all cracked),
Old rickety tables, and chairs broken-backed;
A twopenny treasury, wondrous to see;
What matter? 'tis pleasant to you, friend, and me.

No better divan need the Sultan require,
Than the creaking old sofa that basks by the fire,
And 'tis wonderful, surely, what music you get
From the rickety, ramshackle, wheezy spinet.

That praying-rug came from a Turcoman's camp;
By Tiber once twinkled that brazen old lamp;
A Mameluke fierce yonder dagger has drawn:
'Tis a murderous knife to toast muffins upon.

Long, long through the hours, and the night, and the chimes,
Here we talk of old books, and old friends, and old times:
As we sit in a fog made of rick Latakie,
This chamber is pleasant to you, friend, and me.

But of all the cheap treasures that garnish my nest,
There's one that I love and I cherish the best;
For the finest of couches that's padded with hair
I never would change thee, my cane-bottomed chair.

'Tis a bandy-legged, high-shouldered, worm-eaten seat,
With a creaking old back, and twisted old feet;
But since the fair morning when Fanny sat there,
I bless thee and love thee, old cane-bottomed chair.

If chairs have but feeling, in holding such charms,
A thrill must have passed through your withered old arms!

I looked, and I longed, and I wished in despair;
I wished myself turned to a cane-bottomed chair.

It was but a moment she sat in this place,
She'd a scarf on her neck, and a smile on her face!
A smile on her face, and a rose in her hair,
And she sat there, and bloomed in my cane-bottomed chair.

And so I have valued my chair ever since,
Like the shrine of a saint, or the throne of a prince;
Saint Fanny, my patroness sweet I declare,
The queen of my heart and my cane-bottomed chair.

When the candles burn low, and the company's gone,
In the silence of night as I sit here alone—
I sit here alone, but we yet are a pair—
My Fanny I see in my cane-bottomed chair.

She comes from the past, and revisits my room;
She looks as she then did, all beauty and bloom;
So smiling and tender, so fresh and so fair,
And yonder she sits in my cane-bottomed chair.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811–1863]

DUNA

When I was a little lad
With folly on my lips,
Fain was I for journeying
All the seas in ships.
But now across the southern swell,
Every dawn I hear
The little streams of Duna
Running clear.

When I was a young man,
Before my beard was gray,
All to ships and sailormen
I gave my heart away.
But I'm weary of the sea-wind,
I'm weary of the foam,
And the little stars of Duna
Call me home.

Marjorie L. C. Pickthall [1883-

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS

SOMEWHAT back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw;
And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Half-way up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

By day its voice is low and light;
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,
It echoes along the vacant hall,
Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say, at each chamber-door,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality;
His great fires up the chimney roared;
The stranger feasted at his board;

But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed;
O precious hours! O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold,
Those hours the ancient timepiece told,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night;
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
"Ah! when shall they all meet again?"
As in the days long since gone by,
The ancient timepiece makes reply,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Never here, forever there,
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death, and time shall disappear,—
Forever there, but never here!
The horologe of Eternity
Sayeth this incessantly,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

"MOTHER, HOME, HEAVEN"

THREE words fall sweetly on my soul,
As music from an angel's lyre,
That bid my spirit spurn control,
And upward to its source aspire;
The sweetest sounds to mortals given
Are heard in Mother, Home, and Heaven.

Dear Mother!—ne'er shall I forget
Thy brow, thine eye, thy pleasant smile;
Though in the sea of death hath set
Thy star of life, my guide awhile,
Oh, never shall thy form depart
From the bright pictures in my heart.

And like a bird that from the flowers,
Wing-weary seeks her wonted nest,
My spirit, e'en in manhood's hours,
Turns back in childhood's Home to rest;
The cottage, garden, hill, and stream,
Still linger like a pleasant dream.

And while to one engulfing grave
By Time's swift tide we're driven,
How sweet the thought that every wave
But bears us nearer Heaven!
There we shall meet, when life is o'er,
In that blest Home, to part no more.

William Goldsmith Brown [1812–1906]

THE HERO

MY hero is na decked wi' gowd,
He has nae glittering state;
Renown upon a field o' blood
In war he hasna met.
He has nae siller in his pouch,
Nae menials at his ca';
The proud o' earth frae him would turn,
And bid him stand awa'.

His coat is hame-spun hodden-gray,
  His shoon are clouted sair,
His garments, maist unhero-like,
  Are a' the waur o' wear:
His limbs are strong—his shoulders broad,
  His hands were made to plow;
He's rough without, but sound within;
  His heart is bauldly true.

He toils at e'en, he toils at morn,
  His wark is never through;
A coming life o' weary toil
  Is ever in his view.
But on he trudges, keeping aye
  A stout heart to the brae,
And proud to be an honest man
  Until his dying day.

His hame a hame o' happiness
  And kindly love may be;
And monie a nameless dwelling-place
  Like his we still may see.
His happy altar-hearth so bright
  Is ever bleezing there;
And cheerfu' faces round it set
  Are an unending prayer.

The poor man in his humble hame,
  Like God, who dwells aboon,
Makes happy hearts around him there,
  Sae joyfu' late and soon.
His toil is sair, his toil is lang;
  But weary nights and days,
Hame—happiness akin to his—
  A hunder-fauld repays.

Go, mock at conquerors and kings!
  What happiness give they?
Go, tell the painted butterflies
  To kneel them down and pray!

Go, stand erect in manhood's pride,
Be what a man should be,
Then come, and to my hero bend
Upon the grass your knee!

Robert Nicoll [1814–1837]

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

INSCRIBED TO ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ.

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.—GRAY

My loved, my honored, much-respected friend!
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end;
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise.
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequestered scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah! though his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween.

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The shortening winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh,
The blackening trains o' craws to their repose:
The toilworn cotter frae his labor goes,—
This night his weekly moil is at an end,—
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an agèd tree;
The expectant wee things, toddlin', stacher through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise an' glee.
His wee bit ingle, blinking bonnily,
His clean hearthstane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh and care beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labor and his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie rin
A cannie errand to a neibor town;
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeigned, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers:
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet;
Each tells the uncos that he sees or hears;
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother, wi' her needle and her shears,
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's and their mistress's command,
The younkers a' are warnèd to obey;
And mind their labors wi' an eydent hand,
And ne'er, though out o' sight, to jauk or play:
"And oh! be sure to fear the Lord alway!
And mind your duty, duly, morn and night!
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright!"

But, hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neibor lad cam o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck anxious care inquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins is afraid to speak;
Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild, worthless rake.

Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben;
A strappin' youth; he taks the mother's eye;
Blithe Jenny sees the visit's no ill-ta'en;
The father cracks of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate and lathefu', scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave;
Weel pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.

O happy love! where love like this is found!
O heartfelt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare:—
If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale.

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch, a villain, lost to love and truth,
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjured arts! dissembling smooth!
Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruined maid, and their distraction wild?

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food,
The soupe their only hawkie does afford,
That 'yont the hallan snugly chows her cood:
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hained kebbuck, fell,
And aft he's pressed, and aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
How 'twas a towmond auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride;
His bonnet reverently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim:
Perhaps "Dundee's" wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive "Martyrs," worthy of the name,
Or noble "Elgin" beets the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ear no heartfelt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,—
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme,—
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay his head:
How his first followers and servants sped
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land;
How he, who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Babylon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days:
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But, haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

Then homeward all take off their several way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He, who stills the raven's clamorous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flowery pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But, chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad;
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
"An honest man's the noblest work of God";
And certes, in fair Virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind:
What is a lordling's pomp?—a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And, oh, may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle.

O Thou! who poured the patriotic tide,
That streamed through Wallace's undaunted heart;
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part,
(The patriot's God peculiarly thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
O, never, never Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot bard,
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN, ANN BODHAM

O THAT those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine,—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child; chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it!) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear!
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bid'st me honor with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,

I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream that thou art she.

My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss:
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! It answers—Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day;
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away;
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more.
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learned at last submission to my lot;
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more;
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bawble coach, and wrapped
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,
'Tis now become a history little known
That once we called the pastoral house our own.

Short-lived possession! but the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm that has effaced
A thousand other themes, less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionery plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheek bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed;
All this, and, more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and brakes
That humor interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honors to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.

Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, the jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile),
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart,—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might,—
But no,—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark, from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed),
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile;
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,

While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached the shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,"
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchored by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed,—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tossed,
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost;
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet oh, the thought that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise,—
The son of parents passed into the skies!
And now, farewell!—Time, unrevoked, has run
His wonted course; yet what I wished is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again:
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;
And, while the wings of Fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft,—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

THE CROWING OF THE RED COCK

Across the Eastern sky has glowed
The flicker of a blood-red dawn,
Once more the clarion cock has crowed,
Once more the sword of Christ is drawn.
A million burning rooftrees light
The world-wide path of Israel's flight.

Where is the Hebrew's Fatherland?
The folk of Christ is sore bestead;
The Son of Man is bruised and banned,
Nor finds whereon to lay his head.
His cup is gall, his meat is tears,
His passion lasts a thousand years.

Each crime that wakes in man the beast,
Is visited upon his kind.
The lust of mobs, the greed of priest,
The tyranny of kings, combined
To root his seed from earth again;
His record is one cry of pain.

When the long roll of Christian guilt
Against his sires and kin is known,
The flood of tears, the life-blood spilt,
The agony of ages shown,
What oceans can the stain remove
From Christian law and Christian love?

Nay, close the book; not now, not here,
The hideous tale of sin narrate,
Re-echoing in the martyr's ear
Even he might nurse revengeful hate,
Even he might turn in wrath sublime,
With blood for blood and crime for crime.

Coward? Not he, who faces death,
Who singly against worlds has fought,
For what? A name he may not breathe,
For liberty of prayer and thought.
The angry sword he will not whet,
His nobler task is—to forget.

Emma Lazarus, [1849–1887]

THE WORLD'S JUSTICE

If the sudden tidings came
That on some far, foreign coast,
Buried ages long from fame,
Had been found a remnant lost

Of that hoary race who dwelt
By the golden Nile divine,
Spake the Pharaoh's tongue and knelt
At the moon-crowned Isis' shrine—
How at reverend Egypt's feet,
Pilgrims from all lands would meet!

If the sudden news were known,
That anigh the desert-place
Where once blossomed Babylon,
Scions of a mighty race
Still survived, of giant build,
Huntsmen, warriors, priest and sage,
Whose ancestral fame had filled,
Trumpet-tongued, the earlier age,
How at old Assyria's feet
Pilgrims from all lands would meet!

Yet when Egypt's self was young,
And Assyria's bloom unworn,
Ere the mythic Homer sung,
Ere the gods of Greece were born,
Lived the nation of one God,
Priests of freedom, sons of Shem,
Never quelled by yoke or rod,
Founders of Jerusalem—
Is there one abides to-day,
Seeker of dead cities, say!

Answer, now as then, *they are;*
Scattered broadcast o'er the lands,
Knit in spirit nigh and far,
With indissoluble bands.
Half the world adores their God,
They the living law proclaim,
And their guerdon is—the rod,
Stripes and scourgings, death and shame.
Still on Israel's head forlorn,
Every nation heaps its scorn.

Emma Lazarus [1849–1887]

DOVER CLIFFS

On these white cliffs, that calm above the flood
Uplift their shadowing heads, and at their feet
Hear not the surge that has for ages beat,
How many a lonely wanderer has stood;
And, whilst the lifted murmur met his ear
And o'er the distant billows the still eve
Sailed slow, has thought of all his heart must leave
To-morrow; of the friends he loved most dear;
Of social scenes from which he wept to part.
Oh! if, like me, he knew how fruitless all
The thoughts that would full fain the past recall,
Soon would he quell the risings of his heart,
And brave the wild winds and unhearing tide,—
The World his country, and his God his guide.

William Lisle Bowles [1762–1850]

THE BRIDGE

Across the foaming river
  The old bridge bends its bow;
My father's fathers built it
  In ages long ago.

They never left the farmstead
  Past which the waters curled,
Why should one ever wander
  When here is all the world:

Family, friends and garden;
  Small fields of rice and tea;
The cattle in the meadow;
  The birds in stream and tree;

The pageant of the seasons
  As the slow years go by;
Between the peaks above us
  An azure bridge of sky.

The dead they live and linger
  In each familiar place
With kindly thoughts to hearten
  The children of their race.

Frederick Peterson [1859–

THE EXILE'S SONG

Oh, why left I my hame?
  Why did I cross the deep?
Oh, why left I the land
  Where my forefathers sleep?
I sigh for Scotia's shore,
  And I gaze across the sea,
But I canna get a blink
  O' my ain countrie!

The palm-tree waveth high,
  And fair the myrtle springs;
And to the Indian maid
  The bulbul sweetly sings;
But I dinna see the broom
  Wi' its tassels on the lea,
Nor hear the lintie's sang
  O' my ain countrie!

Oh, here no Sabbath bell
  Awakes the Sabbath morn,
Nor song of reapers heard
  Amang the yellow corn:
For the tyrant's voice is here,
  And the wail o' slaverie;
But the sun of freedom shines
  In my ain countrie!

There's a hope for every woe,
  And a balm for every pain,
But the first joys o' our heart
  Come never back again.
There's a track upon the deep,
  And a path across the sea;
But the weary ne'er return
  To their ain countrie!

Robert Gilfillan [1798–1850]

"THE SUN RISES BRIGHT IN FRANCE"

THE sun rises bright in France,
  And fair sets he;
But he has tint the blithe blink he had
  In my ain countrie.

O, it's nae my ain ruin
  That saddens aye my e'e,
But the dear Marie I left behin'
  Wi' sweet bairnies three.

My lanely hearth burned bonnie,
  An' smiled my ain Marie;
I've left a' my heart behin'
  In my ain countrie.

The bird comes back to summer,
  And the blossom to the bee;
But I'll win back, O never,
  To my ain countrie.

O, I am leal to high Heaven,
  Which aye was leal to me,
An' there I'll meet ye a' soon
  Frae my ain countrie!

Allan Cunningham [1784–1842]

FATHER LAND AND MOTHER TONGUE

OUR Father Land! and wouldst thou know
  Why we should call it Father Land?
It is that Adam here below
  Was made of earth by Nature's hand;
And he, our father made of earth,
  Hath peopled earth on every hand;
And we, in memory of his birth,
  Do call our country Father Land.

At first, in Eden's bowers, they say,
No sound of speech had Adam caught,
But whistled like a bird all day,—
And maybe 'twas for want of thought:
But Nature, with resistless laws,
Made Adam soon surpass the birds;
She gave him lovely Eve because
If he'd a wife they must *have words*.

And so the native land, I hold,
By male descent is proudly mine;
The language, as the tale hath told,
Was given in the female line.
And thus we see on either hand
We name our blessings whence they've sprung;
We call our country Father Land,
We call our language Mother Tongue.

Samuel Lover [1797–1868]

THE FATHERLAND

Where is the true man's fatherland?
Is it where he by chance is born?
Doth not the yearning spirit scorn
In such scant borders to be spanned?
Oh, yes! his fatherland must be
As the blue heaven wide and free!

Is it alone where freedom is,
Where God is God and man is man?
Doth he not claim a broader span
For the soul's love of home than this?
Oh, yes! his fatherland must be
As the blue heaven wide and free!

Where'er a human heart doth wear
Joy's myrtle-wreath or sorrow's gyves,
Where'er a human spirit strives

After a life more true and fair,
There is the true man's birthplace grand,
His is a world-wide fatherland!

Where'er a single slave doth pine,
Where'er one man may help another,—
Thank God for such a birthright, brother,—
That spot of earth is thine and mine!
There is the true man's birthplace grand,
His is a world-wide fatherland!

James Russell Lowell [1819–1891]

THE CALL TO A SCOT

There came an ancient man and slow
Who piped his way along our street—
How could the neighbors' children know
That to her ears 'twas passing sweet?

With smiles they spoke the ragged kilt,
And jeered the pipes, in mirthful file;
But, strangely moved, she heard the lilt
That rallied Carrick and Argyle.

A stroller, playing in the street,
Half-hearted, weary, out of place—
But his old measure stirred her feet,
My baby with the Gaelic face:

She squared her shoulders as she stood
To watch the piper 'round the turn—
Nor dreamed what beat within her blood
Was Robert Bruce and Bannockburn!

Ruth Guthrie Harding [1882–

NARRATIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE POEMS

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

SWEET Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please:
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topped the neighboring hill,
The hawthorn-bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I blessed the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labor free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree:
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round:
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out, to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove,—

These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please;
These, round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms,—but all these charms are fled!

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green;
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert-walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the moldering wall,
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man;
For him light Labor spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more:
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered: trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land and dispossess the swain;
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
And every want to luxury allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.

Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green,—
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes, with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose;
I still had hopes—for pride attends us still—
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt and all I saw;
And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return,—and die at home at last.

O blest retirement! friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How blest is he who crowns in shades like these
A youth of labor with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate:

But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While Resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.

Sweet was the sound, when oft, at evening's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below;
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school;
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind,—
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread,
But all the bloomy flush of life is fled.
All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry fagot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden-flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place;

Unskillful he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train.
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sate by his fire, and talked the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to Virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;

E'en children followed, with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school;
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew:
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed, with counterfeited glee,
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned;
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declared how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge;
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For, e'en though vanquished, he could argue still,
While words of learnèd length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.—
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,

Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired
Where graybeard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlor splendors of that festive place,—
The whitewashed wall; the nicely sanded floor;
The varnished clock that ticked behind the door;
The chest, contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use;
The twelve good rules; the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs and flowers and fennel gay;
While broken teacups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

Vain, transitory splendors! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be pressed,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined:

But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,—
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen, who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds:
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed the neighboring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies:
While thus the land, adorned for pleasure all,
In barren splendor feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes,
But when those charms are past,—for charms are frail,—
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the gleaming impotence of dress;
Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed,
In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed,

But verging to decline, its splendors rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourged by famine from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms,—a garden and a grave.

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits strayed,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And e'en the bare-worn common is denied.
If to the city sped,—what waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury and thin mankind;
To see each joy the sons of pleasure know
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
Here while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts?—Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distressed;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
Now lost to all, her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet Auburn, thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
E'en now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!

Ah, no! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore,—
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting day
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last,
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.

His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blessed the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O Luxury! thou cursed by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigor not their own.
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank, unwieldy woe;
Till, sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

E'en now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;
And piety with wishes placed above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;

Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell; and oh, where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs, on Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervors glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigors of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him, that states of native strength possessed,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labored mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

Oliver Goldsmith [1728–1774]

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON: A FABLE

SONNET ON CHILLON

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty, thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom—
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar; for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

I

My hair is gray, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,
As men's have grown from sudden fears.
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are banned and barred—forbidden fare.
But this was for my father's faith,
I suffered chains and courted death.
That father perished at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place.
We were seven,—who now are one—
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finished as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage:
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have sealed—
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II

There are seven pillars, of Gothic mold,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old;
There are seven columns, massy and gray,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray—
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left,
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor-lamp.

And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain:
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er;
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother drooped and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III

They chained us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace;
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight;
And thus together, yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but joined in heart,
'Twas still some solace, in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon-stone,
A grating sound—not full and free,
As they of yore were wont to be;
It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do, and did, my best—
And each did well in his degree.

The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him, with eyes as blue as heaven—
For him my soul was sorely moved;
And truly might it be distressed
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free),—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone—
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for naught but others' ills;
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorred to view below.

V

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perished in the foremost rank
With joy; but not in chains to pine.
His spirit withered with their clank;
I saw it silently decline—
And so, perchance, in sooth, did mine:
But yet I forced it on, to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had followed there the deer and wolf;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

VI

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls,
A thousand feet in depth below,
Its massy waters meet and flow;

Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
  Which round about the wave enthralls;
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave,
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay;
We heard it ripple night and day;
  Sounding o'er our heads it knocked.
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high,
And wanton in the happy sky;
    And then the very rock hath rocked,
    And I have felt it shake, unshocked;
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII

I said my nearer brother pined;
I said his mighty heart declined.
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunters' fare,
And for the like had little care.
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat;
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moistened many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow-men,
Like brutes, within an iron den.
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mold
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side.
But why delay the truth?—he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,

To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died—and they unlocked his chain,
And scooped for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begged them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought;
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laughed, and laid him there,
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant—
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherished since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free—
He too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:
I've seen it rushing forth in blood;
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln, convulsive motion;
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin, delirious with its dread;
But these were horrors,—this was woe
Unmixed with such,—but sure and slow.

He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender,—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright;
And not a word of murmur, not
A groan o'er his untimely lot—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise;
For I was sunk in silence, lost
In this last loss, of all the most.
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less.
I listened, but I could not hear—
I called, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished;
I called, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rushed to him:—I found him not.
I only stirred in this black spot;
I only lived—*I* only drew
The accursèd breath of dungeon-dew;
The last, the sole, the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe.
I took that hand which lay so still—
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know

That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope,—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX

What next befell me then and there
I know not well,—I never knew.
First came the loss of light and air,
And then of darkness too.
I had no thought, no feeling—none:
Among the stones I stood a stone;
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and gray;
It was not night—it was not day;
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight;
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness,—without a place;
There were no stars, no earth, no time,
No check, no change, no good, no crime,—
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death—
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute and motionless!

X

A light broke in upon my brain—
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again—
The sweetest song ear ever heard;
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then, by dull degrees, came back

My senses to their wonted track:
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before;
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done;
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree—
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
And seemed to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before—
I ne'er shall see its likeness more.
It seemed, like me, to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate;
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And, cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine;
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in wingèd guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For—Heaven forgive that thought, the while
Which made me both to weep and smile!—
I sometimes deemed that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal—well I knew;
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone—
Lone—as the corse within its shroud,
Lone—as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI

A kind of change came in my fate—
My keepers grew compassionate.
I know not what had made them so—
They were inured to sights of woe;
But so it was—my broken chain
With links unfastened did remain;
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun—
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crushed heart fell blind and sick.

XII

I made a footing in the wall:
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me;
No child, no sire, no kin had I,
No partner in my misery.
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII

I saw them—and they were the same;
They were not changed, like me, in frame;

I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide, long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channeled rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-walled distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile—
The only one in view;
A small, green isle, it seemed no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor;
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous, each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast—
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled, and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save;
And yet my glance, too much oppressed,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV

It might be months, or years, or days—
I kept no count, I took no note—
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free,
I asked not why, and recked not where;

It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be;
I learned to love despair.
And thus, when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home.
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watched them in their sullen trade;
Had seen the mice by moonlight play—
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill; yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learned to dwell.
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regained my freedom with a sigh.

George Gordon Byron [1788–1824]

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seemed taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meager, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
The sculptured dead, on each side, seem to freeze,

Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails:
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flattered to tears this agèd man and poor;
But no—already had his death-bell rung;
The joys of all his life were said and sung;
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanced, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carvèd angels, ever eager-eyed,
Stared, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
The brain, newstuffed in youth, with triumphs gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and winged St. Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,

If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retired; not cooled by high disdain,
But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere:
She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

She danced along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
The hallowed hour was near at hand: she sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwinked with faery fancy; all amort,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She lingered still. Meantime, across the moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth such things have been.

He ventures in: let no buzzed whisper tell:
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's feverous citadel:
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,

Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage: not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

Ah, happy chance! the agèd creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond
The sound of merriment and chorus bland:
He startled her; but soon she knew his face,
And grasped his fingers in her palsied hand,
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from this place;
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race!

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand;
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursèd thee and thine, both house and land:
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit
More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me! flit!
Flit like a ghost away."—"Ah, Gossip, dear,
We're safe enough; here in this armchair sit,
And tell me how"—"Good Saints! not here, not here;
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier."

He followed through a lowly archèd way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume,
And as she muttered "Well-a-well-a-day!"
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,
"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom,
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously."

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve—
Yet men will murder upon holy days:
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,

To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro!—St. Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjurer plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile,—I've mickle time to grieve."

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an agèd crone
Who keepeth closed a wondrous riddle-book,
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his painèd heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:
"A cruel man and impious thou art:
Sweet lady! let her pray, and sleep, and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go!—I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem."

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"
Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face.
Good Angela, believe me, by these tears;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fanged than wolves and bears."

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,

Were never missed."—Thus plaining, doth she bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
While legioned fairies paced the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:
"All cates and dainties shall be storèd there
Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame
Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer
The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly passed;
The dame returned and whispered in his ear
To follow her; with agèd eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed, and chaste;
Where Porphyro took covert, pleased amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmèd maid,
Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,

She turned, and down the agèd gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove frayed and fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She closed the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

A casement high and triple-arched there was,
All garlanded with carven imageries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together pressed,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seemed a splendid angel, newly dressed,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathèd pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmèd jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:

Half-hidden, like a mermaid in seaweed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppressed
Her soothèd limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully havened both from joy and pain;
Clasped like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

Stolen to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
And listened to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless
And breathed himself: then from the closet crept
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hushed carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peeped, where, lo—how fast she slept.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguished, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet:—
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying tone:—
The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanchèd linen, smooth and lavendered,
While he forth from the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,

And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez; and spicèd dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon.

These delicates he heaped with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathèd silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retirèd quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light—
"And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache."

Thus whispering, his warm, unnervèd arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as icèd stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seemed he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mused awhile, entoiled in woofèd phantasies.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,
He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence called, "La belle dame sans merci":
Close to her ear touching the melody;—
Wherewith disturbed, she uttered a soft moan:
He ceased—she panted quick—and suddenly
Her blue affrayèd eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that nigh expelled
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep:
At which fair Madeline began to weep,

And moan forth witless words with many a sigh,
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
Who knelt, with joinèd hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she looked so dreamingly.

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear;
How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star
Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blendeth its odor with the violet,—
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows
Like Love's alarum, pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

'Tis dark, quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
'Tis dark: the icèd gusts still rave and beat:
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceivèd thing;—
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unprunèd wing."

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and vermeil-dyed?
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,

A famished pilgrim,—saved by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest
Saving of thy sweet self; if thou thinkest well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
The bloated wassailers will never heed:—
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears,—
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horsemen, hawk, and hound,
Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide;
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;—
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,

Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitched, with meager face deform;
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought-for slept amongst his ashes cold.

John Keats [1795–1821]

LOCKSLEY HALL

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn;
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland, flying over Locksley Hall:

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising through the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fireflies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wandered, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed;

When I dipped into the future far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove;
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me;
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turned,—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs;
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes,—

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong;"
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turned it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper thronged my pulses with the fulness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rushed together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me; to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is; thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy,—think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him; it is thy duty,—kiss him, take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought,—
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand,—
Better thou wert dead before me, though I slew thee with my hand.

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Rolled in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved,
Would to God—for I have loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, though my heart be at the root.

Never! though my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-wintered crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perished; sweetly did she speak and move;
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No,—she never loved me truly; love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorned of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead, unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams; and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widowed marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whispered by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry;
'Tis a purer life than thine, a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest rival brings thee rest,—
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides, the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffered"—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?
Every door is barred with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is thronged with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are rolled in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do.

For I dipped into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging through the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapped in universal law.

So I triumphed ere my passion sweeping through me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint.
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Though the deep heart of existence beat forever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers; and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark! my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,—
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn.

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moldered string?
I am shamed through all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain.

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, matched with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some
retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat!

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father, evil-starred;
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit,—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day,—

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy
skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of
Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,—
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer
from the crag,—

Droops the heavy-blossomed bower, hangs the heavy-
fruited tree,—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There, methinks, would be enjoyment more than in this
march of mind—
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake
mankind.

There the passions, cramped no longer, shall have scope and
breathing-space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinewed, they shall dive, and they shall
run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the
sun,

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the
brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know* my words are
wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian
child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage,—what to me were sun or clime?
I, the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time,—

I, that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range;
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Through the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age,—for mine I knew not,—help me as when life begun,—
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set;
Ancient founts of inspiration well through all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY

Go, for they call you, Shepherd, from the hill;
Go, Shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes:
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropped grasses shoot another head.
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanched green;
Come, Shepherd, and again begin the quest.

Here, where the reaper was at work of late,
In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruise,
And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,
Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use;
Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,
With distant cries of reapers in the corn—
All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screened is this nook o'er the high, half-reaped field,
And here till sundown, Shepherd, will I be.
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep,
And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep:
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showers
Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers:

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again:
The story of that Oxford scholar poor,
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,

Who, tired of knocking at Preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the Gipsy lore,
And roamed the world with that wild brotherhood,
And came, as most men deemed, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,
Met him, and of his way of life inquired.
Whereat he answered that the Gipsy crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains;
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will:
"And I," he said, "the secret of their art,
When fully learned, will to the world impart:
But it needs Heaven-sent moments for this skill!"

This said, he left them, and returned no more,
But rumors hung about the country-side,
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of gray,
The same the Gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-frocked boors
Had found him seated at their entering,

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would fly:
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, Wanderer, on thy trace;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks
I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;
Or in my boat I lie
Moored to the cool bank in the summer heats,
'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm green-muffled Cumnor hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retirèd ground.
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablock-hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the slow punt swings round:
And leaning backwards in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Plucked in shy fields and distant Wychwood bowers,
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream:

And then they land, and thou art seen no more.
Maidens who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers—the frail-leafed, white anemone—
Dark bluebells drenched with dews of summer eves,
And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none has words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass
Where black-winged swallows haunt the glittering
Thames,
To bathe in the abandoned lasher pass,
Have often passed thee near
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown:
Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air;
But, when they came from bathing, thou wert gone.

At some lone homestead in the Cumnor hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,

Have known thee watching, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine;
And marked thee, when the stars come out and shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,
Where most the Gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
With scarlet patches tagged and shreds of gray,
Above the forest-ground called Thessaly—
The blackbird picking food
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all;
So often has he known thee past him stray
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered spray,
And waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
Where home through flooded fields foot-travelers go,
Have I not passed thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapped in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face towards Hinksey and its wintry ridge?
And thou hast climbed the hill
And gained the white brow of the Cumnor range;
Turned once to watch, while thick the snowflakes fall,
The line of festal light in Christ Church hall—
Then sought thy straw in some sequestered grange.

But what—I dream! Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wandered from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a Gipsy tribe:
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid;
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave—
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

—No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours.
For what wears out the life of mortal men?
'Tis that from change to change their being rolls
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers.
Till having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have been.

Thou hast not lived, why shouldst thou perish, so?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire:
Else wert thou long since numbered with the dead—
Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire.
The generations of thy peers are fled,
And we ourselves shall go;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
Because thou hadst—what we, alas, have not!

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other things;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been baffled, brings
O Life unlike to ours!
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
And each half lives a hundred different lives;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from Heaven: and we,
Vague half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
Whose weak resolves never have been fulfilled;
For whom each year we see

Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day—
Ah, do not we, Wanderer, await it too?

Yes, we await it, but it still delays,
And then we suffer; and amongst us One,
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest: and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear,
With close-lipped Patience for our only friend,
Sad Patience, too near neighbor to Despair:
But none has hope like thine.
Thou through the fields and through the woods dost stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife—
Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood!
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude.

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silvered branches of the glade—
Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales,
Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales.

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!
For strong the infection of our mental strife,
Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfixed thy powers,
And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made:
And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles!
—As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,
The fringes of a southward-facing brow
Among the Ægean isles;
And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
Green bursting figs, and tunnies steeped in brine;
And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

The young light-hearted Masters of the waves;
And snatched his rudder, and shook out more sail,
And day and night held on indignantly
O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves

Outside the Western Straits, and unbent sails
There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come;
And on the beach undid his corded bales.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

JUGGLING JERRY

Pitch here the tent, while the old horse grazes:
By the old hedge-side we'll halt a stage.
It's nigh my last above the daisies:
My next leaf'll be man's blank page.
Yes, my old girl! and it's no use crying:
Juggler, constable, king, must bow.
One that outjuggles all's been spying
Long to have me, and he has me now.

We've traveled times to this old common
Often we've hung our pots in the gorse.
We've had a stirring life, old woman!
You, and I, and the old gray horse.
Races, and fairs, and royal occasions,
Found us coming to their call:
Now they'll miss us at our stations:
There's a Juggler outjuggles all!

Up goes the lark, as if all were jolly!
Over the duck-pond the willow shakes.
Easy to think that grieving's folly,
When the hand's firm as driven stakes!
Ay, when we're strong, and braced, and manful,
Life's a sweet fiddle: but we're a batch
Born to become the Great Juggler's han'ful:
Balls he shies up, and is safe to catch.

Here's where the lads of the village cricket:
I was a lad not wide from here:
Couldn't I whip off the bale from the wicket?
Like an old world those days appear!

Donkey, sheep, geese, and thatched ale-house—I know
them!
They are old friends of my halts, and seem,
Somehow, as if kind thanks I owe them:
Juggling don't hinder the heart's esteem.

Juggling's no sin, for we must have victual:
Nature allows us to bait for the fool.
Holding one's own makes us juggle no little;
But, to increase it, hard juggling's the rule.
You that are sneering at my profession,
Haven't you juggled a vast amount?
There's the Prime Minister, in one Session,
Juggles more games than my sins'll count.

I've murdered insects with mock thunder:
Conscience, for that, in men don't quail.
I've made bread from the bump of wonder:
That's my business, and there's my tale.
Fashion and rank all praised the professor:
Ay! and I've had my smile from the Queen:
Bravo, Jerry! she meant: God bless her!
Ain't this a sermon on that scene?

I've studied men from my topsy-turvy
Close, and, I reckon, rather true.
Some are fine fellows: some, right scurvy:
Most, a dash between the two.
But it's a woman, old girl, that makes me
Think more kindly of the race:
And it's a woman, old girl, that shakes me
When the Great Juggler I must face.

We two were married, due and legal:
Honest we've lived since we've been one.
Lord! I could then jump like an eagle:
You danced bright as a bit o' the sun.
Birds in a May-bush we were! right merry!
All night we kissed, we juggled all day.
Joy was the heart of Juggling Jerry!
Now from his old girl he's juggled away.

It's past parsons to console us:
No, nor no doctor fetch for me:
I can die without my bolus;
Two of a trade, lass, never agree!
Parson and Doctor!—don't they love rarely,
Fighting the devil in other men's fields!
Stand up yourself and match him fairly:
Then see how the rascal yields!

I, lass, have lived no gipsy, flaunting
Finery while his poor helpmate grubs:
Coin I've stored, and you won't be wanting:
You shan't beg from the troughs and tubs.
Nobly you've stuck to me, though in his kitchen
Many a Marquis would hail you Cook!
Palaces you could have ruled and grown rich in,
But your old Jerry you never forsook.

Hand up the chirper! ripe ale winks in it;
Let's have comfort and be at peace.
Once a stout draught made me light as a linnet.
Cheer up! the Lord must have his lease.
May be—for none see in that black hollow—
It's just a place where we're held in pawn,
And, when the Great Juggler makes as to swallow,
It's just the sword-trick—I ain't quite gone!

Yonder came smells of the gorse, so nutty,
Gold-like and warm: it's the prime of May.
Better than mortar, brick and putty,
Is God's house on a blowing day.
Lean me more up the mound; now I feel it:
All the old heath-smells! Ain't it strange?
There's the world laughing, as if to conceal it,
But He's by us, juggling the change.

I mind it well, by the sea-beach lying,
Once—it's long gone—when two gulls we beheld,
Which, as the moon got up, were flying
Down a big wave that sparked and swelled.

Crack, went a gun: one fell; the second
Wheeled round him twice, and was off for new luck:
There in the dark her white wing beckoned:—
Drop me a kiss—I'm the bird dead-struck!

George Meredith [1828–1909]

A COURT LADY

Her hair was tawny with gold, her eyes with purple were dark,
Her cheeks' pale opal burnt with a red and restless spark.

Never was lady of Milan nobler in name and in race;
Never was lady of Italy fairer to see in the face.

Never was lady on earth more true as woman and wife,
Larger in judgment and instinct, prouder in manners and life.

She stood in the early morning, and said to her maidens, "Bring
That silken robe made ready to wear at the Court of the King.

"Bring me the clasps of diamond, lucid, clear of the mote,
Clasp me the large at the waist, and clasp me the small at the throat.

"Diamonds to fasten the hair, and diamonds to fasten the sleeves,
Laces to drop from their rays, like a powder of snow from the eaves."

Gorgeous she entered the sunlight which gathered her up in a flame,
While, straight in her open carriage, she to the hospital came.

In she went at the door, and gazing from end to end,
"Many and low are the pallets, but each is the place of a friend."

Up she passed through the wards, and stood at a young man's bed:
Bloody the band on his brow, and livid the droop of his head.

"Art thou a Lombard, my brother? Happy art thou," she cried,
And smiled like Italy on him: he dreamed in her face and died.

Pale with his passing soul, she went on still to a second:
He was a grave hard man, whose years by dungeons were reckoned.

Wounds in his body were sore, wounds in his life were sorer.
"Art thou a Romagnole?" Her eyes drove lightnings before her.

"Austrian and priest had joined to double and tighten the cord
Able to bind thee, O strong one,—free by the stroke of a sword.

"Now be grave for the rest of us, using the life overcast
To ripen our wine of the present, (too new) in glooms of the past."

Down she stepped to a pallet where lay a face like a girl's,
Young, and pathetic with dying,—a deep black hole in the curls.

"Art thou from Tuscany, brother? and seest thou, dreaming in pain,
Thy mother stand in the piazza, searching the list of the slain?"

Kind as a mother herself, she touched his cheeks with her hands:
"Blessed is she who has borne thee, although she should weep as she stands."

On she passed to a Frenchman, his arm carried off by a ball:
Kneeling,—"O more than my brother! how shall I thank
thee for all?

"Each of the heroes around us has fought for his land and
line,
But *thou* hast fought for a stranger, in hate of a wrong not
thine.

"Happy are all free peoples, too strong to be dispossessed:
But blessed are those among nations, who dare to be strong
for the rest!"

Ever she passed on her way, and came to a couch where
pined
One with a face from Venetia, white with a hope out of mind.

Long she stood and gazed, and twice she tried at the name,
But two great crystal tears were all that faltered and came.

Only a tear for Venice?—she turned as in passion and loss,
And stooped to his forehead and kissed it, as if she were
kissing the cross.

Faint with that strain of heart she moved on then to an-
other,
Stern and strong in his death. "And dost thou suffer, my
brother?"

Holding his hands in hers:—"Out of the Piedmont lion
Cometh the sweetness of freedom! sweetest to live or to die
on."

Holding his cold rough hands,—"Well, oh, well have ye
done
In noble, noble Piedmont, who would not be noble alone."

Back he fell while she spoke. She rose to her feet with a
spring,—
"That was a Piedmontese! and this is the Court of the King."

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF LINCOLNSHIRE

(1571)

THE old mayor climbed the belfry tower,
The ringers ran by two, by three;
"Pull, if ye never pulled before;
Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
"Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells!
Play all your changes, all your swells,
Play uppe, 'The Brides of Enderby'."

Men say it was a stolen tyde—
The Lord that sent it, He knows all;
But in myne ears doth still abide
The message that the bells let fall:
And there was naught of strange, beside
The flight of mews and peewits pied
By millions crouched on the old sea wall.

I sat and spun within the doore,
My thread brake off, I raised myne eyes;
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
Lay sinking in the barren skies;
And dark against day's golden death
She moved where Lindis wandereth,
My sonne's faire wife, Elizabeth.

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews were falling,
Farre away I heard her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along;
Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
Floweth, floweth,
From the meads where melick groweth
Faintly came her milking song—

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
"For the dews will soone be falling;
Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow;

Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot;
Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow;
Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow,
From the clovers lift your head;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot,
Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed."

If it be long, ay, long ago,
When I beginne to think howe long,
Againe I hear the Lindis flow,
Swift as an arrowe, sharpe and strong;
And all the aire, it seemeth mee,
Bin full of floating bells (sayth shee),
That ring the tune of Enderby.

Alle fresh the level pasture lay,
And not a shadowe mote be seene,
Save where full fyve good miles away
The steeple towered from out the greene;
And lo! the great bell farre and wide
Was heard in all the country side
That Saturday at eventide.

The swanherds where their sedges are
Moved on in sunset's golden breath,
The shepherde lads I heard afarre,
And my sonne's wife, Elizabeth;
Till floating o'er the grassy sea
Came downe that kyndly message free,
The "Brides of Mavis Enderby."

Then some looked uppe into the sky,
And all along where Lindis flows
To where the goodly vessels lie,
And where the lordly steeple shows.
They sayde, "And why should this thing be?
What danger lowers by land or sea?
They ring the tune of Enderby!

"For evil news from Mablethorpe,
Of pyrate galleys warping down;
For shippes ashore beyond the scorpe,
They have not spared to wake the towne:
But while the west bin red to see,
And storms be none, and pyrates flee,
Why ring 'The Brides of Enderby'?"

I looked without, and lo! my sonne
Came riding downe with might and main:
He raised a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
"Elizabeth! Elizabeth!"
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.)

"The olde sea wall (he cried) is downe,
The rising tide comes on apace,
And boats adrift in yonder towne
Go sailing uppe the market-place."
He shook as one that looks on death:
"God save you, mother!" straight he saith;
"Where is my wife, Elizabeth?"

"Good sonne, where Lindis winds her way,
With her two bairns I marked her long;
And ere yon bells beganne to play,
Afar I heard her milking song."
He looked across the grassy lea,
To right, to left, "Ho, Enderby!"
They rang "The Brides of Enderby!"

With that he cried and beat his breast;
For, lo! along the river's bed
A mighty eygre reared his crest,
And uppe the Lindis raging sped.
It swept with thunderous noises loud;
Shaped like a curling snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.

And rearing Lindis backward pressed,
  Shook all her trembling bankes amaine;
Then madly at the eygre's breast
  Flung uppe her weltering walls again.
Then bankes came downe with ruin and rout—
Then beaten foam flew round about—
Then all the mighty floods were out.

So farre, so fast the eygre drave,
  The heart had hardly time to beat
Before a shallow seething wave
  Sobbed in the grasses at oure feet:
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea.

Upon the roofe we sate that night,
  The noise of bells went sweeping by;
I marked the lofty beacon light
  Stream from the church tower, red and high—
A lurid mark and dread to see;
And awsome bells they were to mee,
That in the dark rang "Enderby."

They rang the sailor lads to guide
  From roofe to roofe who fearless rowed;
And I—my sonne was at my side,
  And yet the ruddy beacon glowed:
And yet he moaned beneath his breath,
"O come in life, or come in death!
O lost! my love, Elizabeth!"

And didst thou visit him no more?
  Thou didst, thou didst, my daughter deare;
The waters laid thee at his doore,
  Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
Thy pretty bairns in fast embrace,
The lifted sun shone on thy face,
Downe drifted to thy dwelling-place.

That flow strewed wrecks about the grass,
  That ebbe swept out the flocks to sea;
A fatal ebbe and flow, alas!
  To manye more than myne and mee;
But each will mourn his own (she saith);
And sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.

I shall never hear her more
By the reedy Lindis shore,
"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews be falling;
I shall never hear her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
    Goeth, floweth;
From the meads where melick groweth,
  When the water winding down,
  Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver,
    Shiver, quiver;
Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling
To the sandy lonesome shore;
I shall never hear her calling,
"Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
    Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
    Hollow, hollow;
Come uppe, Lightfoot, rise and follow;
    Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
From your clovers lift the head;
Come uppe, Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed."

Jean Ingelow [1820–1897]

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR

"Speak! speak! thou fearful guest!
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armor dressed,
Comest to daunt me!
Wrapped not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
No Saga taught thee!
Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse;
For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;

Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long Winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

"While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded!
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight,
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen!
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us;

And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
'Death!' was the helmsman's hail,
'Death without quarter!'
Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water!

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden,—
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to leeward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
Stands looking seaward.

'There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother;
Death closed her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful!
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
Oh, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! *skoal!*"
Thus the tale ended.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

DANIEL GRAY

If I shall ever win the home in heaven
For whose sweet rest I humbly hope and pray,
In the great company of the forgiven
I shall be sure to find old Daniel Gray.

I knew him well; in truth, few knew him better;
For my young eyes oft read for him the Word,
And saw how meekly from the crystal letter
He drank the life of his beloved Lord.

Old Daniel Gray was not a man who lifted
On ready words his freight of gratitude,
Nor was he called upon among the gifted,
In the prayer-meetings of his neighborhood.

He had a few old-fashioned words and phrases,
Linked in with sacred texts and Sunday rhymes;
And I suppose that in his prayers and graces
I've heard them all at least a thousand times.

I see him now—his form, his face, his motions,
His homespun habit, and his silver hair,—
And hear the language of his trite devotions,
Rising behind the straight-backed kitchen chair.

I can remember how the sentence sounded—
"Help us, O Lord, to pray and not to faint!"
And how the "conquering-and-to-conquer" rounded
The loftier aspirations of the saint.

He had some notions that did not improve him,
He never kissed his children—so they say;
And finest scenes and fairest flowers would move him
Less than a horseshoe picked up in the way.

He had a hearty hatred of oppression,
And righteous words for sin of every kind;
Alas, that the transgressor and transgression
Were linked so closely in his honest mind!

He could see naught but vanity in beauty,
And naught but weakness in a fond caress,
And pitied men whose views of Christian duty
Allowed indulgence in such foolishness.

Yet there was love and tenderness within him;
And I am told that when his Charley died,
Nor nature's need nor gentle words could win him
From his fond vigils at the sleeper's side.

And when they came to bury little Charley,
They found fresh dewdrops sprinkled in his hair,
And on his breast a rose-bud gathered early,
And guessed, but did not know who placed it there.

Honest and faithful, constant in his calling,
Strictly attendant on the means of grace,
Instant in prayer, and fearful most of falling,
Old Daniel Gray was always in his place.

A practical old man, and yet a dreamer,
He thought that in some strange, unlooked-for way
His mighty Friend in Heaven, the great Redeemer,
Would honor him with wealth some golden day.

This dream he carried in a hopeful spirit
Until in death his patient eye grew dim,
And his Redeemer called him to inherit
The heaven of wealth long garnered up for him.

So, if I ever win the home in Heaven
For whose sweet rest I humbly hope and pray,
In the great company of the forgiven
I shall be sure to find old Daniel Gray.

Josiah Gilbert Holland [1819–1881]

"CURFEW MUST NOT RING TO-NIGHT"

Slowly England's sun was setting o'er the hilltops far away,
Filling all the land with beauty at the close of one sad day,
And the last rays kissed the forehead of a man and maiden fair,—
He with footsteps slow and weary, she with sunny floating hair;
He with bowed head, sad and thoughtful, she with lips all cold and white,
Struggling to keep back the murmur,—
"Curfew must not ring to-night."

"Sexton," Bessie's white lips faltered, pointing to the prison old,
With its turrets tall and gloomy, with its walls dark, damp, and cold,
"I've a lover in that prison, doomed this very night to die,
At the ringing of the Curfew, and no earthly help is nigh;
Cromwell will not come till sunset," and her lips grew strangely white
As she breathed the husky whisper:—
"Curfew must not ring to-night."

"Bessie," calmly spoke the sexton,—every word pierced her young heart
Like the piercing of an arrow, like a deadly poisoned dart,—
"Long, long years I've rung the Curfew from that gloomy, shadowed tower;
Every evening, just at sunset, it has told the twilight hour;
I have done my duty ever, tried to do it just and right,
Now I'm old I will not falter,—
Curfew, it must ring to-night."

Wild her eyes and pale her features, stern and white her thoughtful brow,
As within her secret bosom Bessie made a solemn vow.
She had listened while the judges read, without a tear or sigh:
"At the ringing of the Curfew, Basil Underwood must die."
And her breath came fast and faster, and her eyes grew large and bright;
In an undertone she murmured:—
"Curfew must not ring to-night."

With quick step she bounded forward, sprang within the old church door,
Left the old man threading slowly paths he'd trod so oft before;
Not one moment paused the maiden, but with eye and cheek aglow
Mounted up the gloomy tower, where the bell swung to and fro:
As she climbed the dusty ladder, on which fell no ray of light,
Up and up,—her white lips saying:—
"Curfew must not ring to-night!"

She has reached the topmost ladder; o'er her hangs the great, dark bell;
Awful is the gloom beneath her, like the pathway down to hell.
Lo, the ponderous tongue is swinging,—'tis the hour of Curfew now,
And the sight has chilled her bosom, stopped her breath, and paled her brow.

Shall she let it ring? No, never! flash her eyes with sudden light,
As she springs, and grasps it firmly,—
"Curfew shall not ring to-night!"

Out she swung—far out; the city seemed a speck of light below,
There 'twixt heaven and earth suspended as the bell swung to and fro,
And the half-deaf sexton ringing (years he had not heard the bell),
Sadly thought the twilight Curfew rang young Basil's funeral knell.
Still the maiden clung more firmly, and with trembling lips so white,
Said to hush her heart's wild throbbing:—
"Curfew shall not ring to-night!"

It was o'er, the bell ceased swaying, and the maiden stepped once more
Firmly on the dark old ladder where for hundred years before
Human foot had not been planted. The brave deed that she had done
Should be told long ages after: as the rays of setting sun
Crimson all the sky with beauty, aged sires, with heads of white,
Tell the eager, listening children,
"Curfew did not ring that night."

O'er the distant hills came Cromwell; Bessie sees him, and her brow,
Lately white with fear and anguish, has no anxious traces now.
At his feet she tells her story, shows her hands all bruised and torn;
And her face so sweet and pleading, yet with sorrow pale and worn,
Touched his heart with sudden pity, lit his eyes with misty light:
"Go! your lover lives," said Cromwell,
"Curfew shall not ring to-night."

Wide they flung the massive portal; led the prisoner forth to die,—
All his bright young life before him. 'Neath the darkening English sky
Bessie comes with flying footsteps, eyes aglow with love-light sweet;
Kneeling on the turf beside him, lays his pardon at his feet.
In his brave, strong arms he clasped her, kissed the face upturned and white,
Whispered, "Darling, you have saved me,—
Curfew will not ring to-night!"

Rose Hartwick Thorpe [1850–

THE OLD SERGEANT

[JANUARY 1, 1863]

The Carrier cannot sing to-day the ballads
With which he used to go,
Rhyming the glad rounds of the happy New Years
That are now beneath the snow:

For the same awful and portentous Shadow
That overcast the earth,
And smote the land last year with desolation,
Still darkens every hearth.

And the Carrier hears Beethoven's mighty death-march
Come up from every mart;
And he hears and feels it breathing in his bosom,
And beating in his heart.

And to-day, a scarred and weather-beaten veteran,
Again he comes along,
To tell the story of the Old Year's struggles
In another New Year's song.

And the song is his, but not so with the story;
For the story, you must know,
Was told in prose to Assistant-Surgeon Austin,
By a soldier of Shiloh:

By Robert Burton, who was brought up on the Adams,
With his death-wound in his side;
And who told the story to the Assistant-Surgeon,
On the same night that he died.

But the singer feels it will better suit the ballad,
If all should deem it right,
To tell the story as if what it speaks of
Had happened but last night.

"Come a little nearer, Doctor,—thank you; let me take the cup:
Draw your chair up,—draw it closer; just another little sup!
May be you think I'm better; but I'm pretty well used up,—
Doctor, you've done all you could do, but I'm just a-going up!

"Feel my pulse, sir, if you want to, but it ain't much use to try"—
"Never say that," said the Surgeon, as he smothered down a sigh;
"It will never do, old comrade, for a soldier to say die!"
"What you *say* will make no difference, Doctor, when you come to die.

"Doctor, what has been the matter?" "You were very faint, they say;
You must try to get to sleep now." "Doctor, have I been away?"
"Not that anybody knows of!" "Doctor—Doctor, please to stay!
There is something I must tell you, and you won't have long to stay!

"I have got my marching orders, and I'm ready now to go;
Doctor, did you say I fainted?—but it couldn't ha' been so,
For as sure as I'm a Sergeant, and was wounded at Shiloh,
I've this very night been back there, on the old field of Shiloh!

"This is all that I remember: the last time the Lighter came,
And the lights had all been lowered, and the noises much the same,
He had not been gone five minutes before something called my name:
'ORDERLY SERGEANT—ROBERT BURTON!'—just that way it called my name.

"And I wondered who could call me so distinctly and so slow,
Knew it couldn't be the Lighter; he could not have spoken so;
And I tried to answer, 'Here, sir!' but I couldn't make it go;
For I couldn't move a muscle, and I couldn't make it go.

"Then I thought: It's all a nightmare, all a humbug and a bore;
Just another foolish *grape-vine*—and it won't come any more;
But it came, sir, notwithstanding, just the same way as before:
'ORDERLY SERGEANT—ROBERT BURTON!'—even plainer than before.

"That is all that I remember, till a sudden burst of light,
And I stood beside the river, where we stood that Sunday night,
Waiting to be ferried over to the dark bluffs opposite,
When the river was perdition and all hell was opposite!—

"And the same old palpitation came again in all its power,
And I heard a Bugle sounding, as from some celestial Tower;
And the same mysterious voice said: 'IT IS THE ELEVENTH HOUR!
ORDERLY SERGEANT!—ROBERT BURTON—IT IS THE ELEVENTH HOUR!'

"Dr. Austin!—what *day* is this?" "It is Wednesday night, you know."
"Yes,—to-morrow will be New Year's and a right good time below!
What time is it, Dr. Austin?" "Nearly Twelve." "Then don't you go!
Can it be that all this happened—all this—not an hour ago!

"There was where the gunboats opened on the dark rebellious host;
And where Webster semicircled his last guns upon the coast;
There were still the two log-houses, just the same, or else their ghost!
And the same old transport came and took me over—or its ghost!

"And the old field lay before me, all deserted, far and wide;
There was where they fell on Prentiss—there McClernand met the tide;
There was where stern Sherman rallied, and where Hurlbut's heroes died,—
Lower down, where Wallace charged them, and kept charging till he died.

"There was where Lew Wallace showed them he was of the canny kin,
There was where old Nelson thundered, and where Rousseau waded in;
There McCook sent 'em to breakfast, and we all began to win—
There was where the grape-shot took me, just as we began to win.

"Now, a shroud of snow and silence over everything was spread;
And but for this old blue mantle and the old hat on my head,
I should not have even doubted, to this moment, I was dead,—
For my footsteps were as silent as the snow upon the dead!

"Death and silence!—Death and silence! all around me as I sped!
And behold, a mighty Tower, as if builded to the dead,
To the Heaven of the heavens lifted up its mighty head,
Till the Stars and Stripes of Heaven all seemed waving from its head!

"Round and mighty-based it towered up into the infinite—
And I knew no mortal mason could have built a shaft so bright;
For it shone like solid sunshine; and a winding stair of light
Wound around it and around it till it wound clear out of sight!

"And, behold, as I approached it—with a rapt and dazzled stare,—
Thinking that I saw old comrades just ascending the great Stair,—
Suddenly the solemn challenge broke of, 'Halt! and who goes there?'
'I'm a friend,' I said, 'if you are.' 'Then advance, sir, to the Stair!'

"I advanced! That sentry, Doctor, was Elijah Ballantyne!
First of all to fall on Monday, after we had formed the line!
'Welcome, my old Sergeant, welcome! Welcome by that countersign!'
And he pointed to the scar there, under this old cloak of mine.

"As he grasped my hand, I shuddered, thinking only of the grave;
But he smiled and pointed upward with a bright and bloodless glaive:
'That's the way, sir, to Headquarters.' 'What Headquarters?' 'Of the Brave.'
'But the great Tower?' 'That was builded of the great deeds of the Brave!'

"Then a sudden shame came o'er me at his uniform of light;
At my own so old and tattered, and at his so new and bright;
'Ah!' said he, 'you have forgotten the New Uniform to-night!
Hurry back, for you must be here at just twelve o'clock to-night!'

"And the next thing I remember, you were sitting *there*, and I . . . .
Doctor—did you hear a footstep? Hark!—God bless you all! Good-by!
Doctor, please to give my musket and my knapsack, when I die,
To my son—my son that's coming,—he won't get here till I die!

"Tell him his old father blessed him—as he never did before,—
And to carry that old musket . . . Hark! a knock is at the door! . . .
Till the Union . . . See! it opens!" . . . "Father! Father! speak once more!" . . .
"*Bless you!*"—gasped the old gray Sergeant. And he lay and said no more!

Byron Forceythe Willson [1837–1867].

JIM BLUDSO OF THE PRAIRIE BELLE

Wall, no! I can't tell whar he lives,
Because he don't live, you see;
Leastways, he's got out of the habit
Of livin' like you and me.
Whar have you been for the last three year
That you haven't heard folks tell
How Jimmy Bludso passed in his checks
The night of the Prairie Belle?

He weren't no saint,—them engineers
Is all pretty much alike,—
One wife in Natchez-under-the-Hill
And another one here, in Pike;

A keerless man in his talk, was Jim,
And an awkward hand in a row,
But he never flunked, and he never lied,—
I reckon he never knowed how.

And this was all the religion he had,—
To treat his engine well;
Never be passed on the river;
To mind the pilot's bell;
And if ever the Prairie Belle took fire,—
A thousand times he swore
He'd hold her nozzle agin the bank
Till the last soul got ashore.

All boats has their day on the Mississip,
And her day come at last,—
The Movastar was a better boat,
But the Belle she *wouldn't* be passed.
And so she come tearin' along that night—
The oldest craft on the line—
With a nigger squat on her safety-valve,
And her furnace crammed, rosin and pine.

The fire bust out as she clared the bar,
And burnt a hole in the night,
And quick as a flash she turned, and made
For that willer-bank on the right.
There was runnin' and cursin', but Jim yelled out,
Over all the infernal roar,
"I'll hold her nozzle agin the bank
Till the last galoot's ashore."

Through the hot, black breath of the burnin' boat
Jim Bludso's voice was heard,
And they all had trust in his cussedness,
And knowed he would keep his word.
And, sure's you're born, they all got off
Afore the smoke-stacks fell,—
And Bludso's ghost went up alone
In the smoke of the Prairie Belle.

He weren't no saint,—but at jedgment
I'd run my chance with Jim,

'Longside of some pious gentlemen
That wouldn't shook hands with him.
He seen his duty, a dead-sure thing,—
And went for it thar and then;
And Christ ain't a going to be too hard
On a man that died for men.

John Hay [1838–1905]

LITTLE BREECHES

I DON'T go much on religion,
I never ain't had no show;
But I've got a middlin' tight grip, sir,
On the handful o' things I know.
I don't pan out on the prophets
And free-will, and that sort of thing,—
But I b'lieve in God and the angels,
Ever sence one night last spring.

I come into town with some turnips,
And my little Gabe come along,—
No four-year-old in the county
Could beat him for pretty and strong,
Peart and chipper and sassy,
Always ready to swear and fight,—
And I'd larnt him to chaw terbacker,
Jest to keep his milk-teeth white.

The snow come down like a blanket
As I passed by Taggart's store;
I went in for a jug of molasses
And left the team at the door.
They scared at something and started,—
I heard one little squall,
And hell-to-split over the prairie
Went team, Little Breeches and all.

Hell-to-split over the prairie!
I was almost froze with skeer;
But we rousted up some torches,
And sarched for 'em far and near.

At last we struck hosses and wagon,
Snowed under a soft white mound,
Upsot, dead beat,—but of little Gabe
No hide nor hair was found.

And here all hope soured on me
Of my fellow-critter's aid,—
I jest flopped down on my marrow-bones,
Crotch-deep in the snow, and prayed.

. . . . . .

By this, the torches was played out,
And me and Isrul Parr
Went off for some wood to a sheepfold
That he said was somewhar thar.

We found it at last, and a little shed
Where they shut up the lambs at night.
We looked in, and seen them huddled thar,
So warm and sleepy and white;
And thar sot Little Breeches and chirped,
As peart as ever you see,
"I want a chaw of terbacker,
And that's what's the matter of me."

How did he get thar? Angels.
He could never have walked in that storm.
They jest scooped down and toted him
To whar it was safe and warm.
And I think that saving a little child,
And fotching him to his own,
Is a derned sight better business
Than loafing around the Throne.

John Hay [1838–1905]

THE VAGABONDS

We are two travelers, Roger and I.
Roger's my dog.—Come here, you scamp!
Jump for the gentlemen,—mind your eye!
Over the table,—look out for the lamp!—

The rogue is growing a little old;
Five years we've tramped through wind and weather,
And slept out-doors when nights were cold,
And ate and drank—and starved—together.

We've learned what comfort is, I tell you!
A bed on the floor, a bit of rosin,
A fire to thaw our thumbs (poor fellow!
The paw he holds up there's been frozen),
Plenty of catgut for my fiddle
(This out-door business is bad for strings),
Then a few nice buckwheats hot from the griddle,
And Roger and I set up for kings!

No, thank ye, Sir,—I never drink;
Roger and I are exceedingly moral,—
Aren't we, Roger?—See him wink!—
Well, something hot, then—we won't quarrel.
He's thirsty, too,—see him nod his head?
What a pity, Sir, that dogs can't talk!
He understands every word that's said,—
And he knows good milk from water-and-chalk.

The truth is, Sir, now I reflect,
I've been so sadly given to grog,
I wonder I've not lost the respect
(Here's to you, Sir!) even of my dog.
But he sticks by, through thick and thin;
And this old coat, with its empty pockets
And rags that smell of tobacco and gin,
He'll follow while he has eyes in his sockets.

There isn't another creature living
Would do it, and prove, through every disaster,
So fond, so faithful, and so forgiving,
To such a miserable, thankless master!
No, Sir!—see him wag his tail and grin!
By George! it makes my old eyes water!—
That is, there's something in this gin
That chokes a fellow. But no matter!

We'll have some music, if you're willing,
And Roger (hem! what a plague a cough is, Sir!)
Shall march a little. Start, you villain!
Paws up! Eyes front! Salute your officer!
'Bout face! Attention! Take your rifle!
(Some dogs have arms, you see!) Now hold your
Cap while the gentlemen give a trifle,
To aid a poor old patriot soldier!

March! Halt! Now show how the rebel shakes
When he stands up to hear his sentence.
Now tell us how many drams it takes
To honor a jolly new acquaintance.
Five yelps,—that's five; he's mighty knowing!
The night's before us, fill the glasses!—
Quick, Sir! I'm ill,—my brain is going!—
Some brandy,—thank you,—there!—it passes!

Why not reform? That's easily said;
But I've gone through such wretched treatment,
Sometimes forgetting the taste of bread,
And scarce remembering what meat meant,
That my poor stomach's past reform;
And there are times when, mad with thinking,
I'd sell out heaven for something warm
To prop a horrible inward sinking.

Is there a way to forget to think?
At your age, Sir, home, fortune, friends,
A dear girl's love,—but I took to drink;—
The same old story; you know how it ends.
If you could have seen these classic features,—
You needn't laugh, Sir; they were not then
Such a burning libel on God's creatures;
I was one of your handsome men!

If you had seen HER, so fair and young,
Whose head was happy on this breast!
If you could have heard the songs I sung
When the wine went round, you wouldn't have guessed

That ever I, Sir, should be straying
From door to door, with fiddle and dog,
Ragged and penniless, and playing
To you to-night for a glass of grog!

She's married since,—a parson's wife:
'Twas better for her that we should part,—
Better the soberest, prosiest life
Than a blasted home and a broken heart.
I have seen her? Once: I was weak and spent
On the dusty road: a carriage stopped:
But little she dreamed, as on she went,
Who kissed the coin that her fingers dropped!

You've set me talking, Sir; I'm sorry,
It makes me wild to think of the change!
What do you care for a beggar's story?
Is it amusing? you find it strange?
I had a mother so proud of me!
'Twas well she died before—Do you know
If the happy spirits in heaven can see
The ruin and wretchedness here below?

Another glass, and strong, to deaden
This pain; then Roger and I will start.
I wonder, has he such a lumpish, leaden,
Aching thing in place of a heart?
He is sad sometimes, and would weep, if he could,
No doubt, remembering things that were,—
A virtuous kennel, with plenty of food,
And himself, a sober, respectable cur.

I'm better now; that glass was warming.—
You rascal! limber your lazy feet!
We must be fiddling and performing
For supper and bed, or starve in the street.—
Not a very gay life to lead, you think?
But soon we shall go where lodgings are free,
And the sleepers need neither victuals nor drink;—
The sooner the better for Roger and me!

John Townsend Trowbridge [1827–1916]

HOW WE BEAT THE FAVORITE

A LAY OF THE LOAMSHIRE HUNT CUP

"Aye, squire," said Stevens, "they back him at evens;
The race is all over, bar shouting, they say;
The Clown ought to beat her; Dick Neville is sweeter
Than ever—he swears he can win all the way.

"A gentleman rider—well, I'm an outsider,
But if he's a gent, who the mischief's a jock?
You swells mostly blunder, Dick rides for the plunder,
He rides, too, like thunder—he sits like a rock.

"He calls 'hunted fairly' a horse that has barely
Been stripped for a trot within sight of the hounds,
A horse that at Warwick beat Birdlime and Yorick,
And gave Abdelkader at Aintree nine pounds.

"They say we have no test to warrant a protest;
Dick rides for a lord and stands in with a steward;
The light of their faces they show him—his case is
Prejudged and his verdict already secured.

"But none can outlast her, and few travel faster,
She strides in her work clean away from The Drag;
You hold her and sit her, she couldn't be fitter,
Whenever you hit her she'll spring like a stag.

"And p'raps the green jacket, at odds though they back it,
May fall, or there's no knowing what may turn up.
The mare is quite ready, sit still and ride steady,
Keep cool; and I think you may just win the Cup."

Dark-brown with tan muzzle, just stripped for the tussle,
Stood Iseult, arching her neck to the curb,
A lean head and fiery, strong quarters and wiry,
A loin rather light, but a shoulder superb.

Some parting injunction, bestowed with great unction,
I tried to recall, but forgot like a dunce,
When Reginald Murray, full tilt on White Surrey,
Came down in a hurry to start us at once.

"Keep back in the yellow! Come up on Othello!
Hold hard on the Chestnut! Turn round on The Drag!
Keep back there on Spartan! Back you, sir, in tartan!
So, steady there, easy," and down went the flag.

We started, and Kerr made strong running on Mermaid,
Through furrows that led to the first stake-and-bound,
The crack, half extended, looked bloodlike and splendid,
Held wide on the right where the headland was sound.

I pulled hard to baffle her rush with the snaffle,
Before her two-thirds of the field got away,
All through the wet pasture where floods of the last year
Still loitered, they clotted my crimson with clay.

The fourth fence, a wattle, floored Monk and Blue-bottle;
The Drag came to grief at the blackthorn and ditch,
The rails toppled over Redoubt and Red Rover,
The lane stopped Lycurgus and Leicestershire Witch.

She passed like an arrow Kildare and Cock Sparrow,
And Mantrap and Mermaid refused the stone wall;
And Giles on The Greyling came down at the paling,
And I was left sailing in front of them all.

I took them a burster, nor eased her nor nursed her
Until the Black Bullfinch led into the plow,
And through the strong bramble we bored with a scramble—
My cap was knocked off by the hazel-tree bough.

Where furrows looked lighter I drew the rein tighter;
Her dark chest all dappled with flakes of white foam,
Her flanks mud-bespattered, a weak rail she shattered;
We landed on turf with our heads turned for home.

Then crashed a low binder, and then close behind her
The sward to the strokes of the favorite shook;
His rush roused her mettle, yet ever so little
She shortened her stride as we raced at the brook.

She rose when I hit her. I saw the stream glitter,
A wide scarlet nostril flashed close to my knee,
Between sky and water The Clown came and caught her —
The space that he cleared was a caution to see.

And forcing the running, discarding all cunning,
A length to the front went the rider in green;
A long strip of stubble, and then the big double,
Two stiff flights of rails with a quickset between.

She raced at the rasper, I felt my knees grasp her,
I found my hands give to her strain on the bit,
She rose when The Clown did—our silks as we bounded
Brushed lightly, our stirrups clashed loud as we lit.

A rise steeply sloping, a fence with stone coping—
The last—we diverged round the base of the hill;
His path was the nearer, his leap was the clearer,
I flogged up the straight, and he led sitting still.

She came to his quarter, and on still I brought her,
And up to his girth, to his breast-plate she drew;
A short prayer from Neville just reached me,—"The devil!"
He muttered,—locked level the hurdles we flew.

A hum of hoarse cheering, a dense crowd careering,
All sights seen obscurely, all shouts vaguely heard;
"The green wins!" "The crimson!" The multitude swims on,
And figures are blended and features are blurred.

"The horse is her master!" "The green forges past her!"
"The Clown will outlast her!" "The Clown wins!"
"The Clown!"
The white railing races with all the white faces,
The chestnut outpaces, outstretches the brown.

On still past the gateway she strains in the straightway,
Still struggles, "The Clown by a short neck at most,"
He swerves, the green scourges, the stand rocks and surges,
And flashes, and verges, and flits the white post.

Ay! so ends the tussle,—I knew the tan muzzle
Was first, though the ring-men were yelling "Dead heat!"
A nose I could swear by, but Clarke said "The mare by
A short head." And that's how the favorite was beat.

Adam Lindsay Gordon [1833–1870]

PART VII

POEMS OF SORROW, DEATH AND IMMORTALITY

"DEATH, BE NOT PROUD"

From "Holy Sonnets"

DEATH, be not proud, though some have callèd thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so:
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death; nor yet canst thou kill me.
From Rest and Sleep, which but thy picture be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow;
And soonest our best men with thee do go—
Rest of their bones and souls' delivery!
Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more: Death, thou shalt die!

John Donne [1573–1631]

IN THE SHADOW

MELANCHOLY

From "The Nice Valor"

HENCE, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights,
Wherein you spend your folly:
There's naught in this life sweet
If man were wise to see't,
But only melancholy,
O sweetest Melancholy!
Welcome, folded arms, and fixèd eyes,
A sigh that piercing mortifies,
A look that's fastened to the ground,
A tongue chained up without a sound!
Fountain-heads and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves!
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are warmly housed save bats and owls!
A midnight bell, a parting groan!
These are the sounds we feed upon;
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley;
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy.

John Fletcher [1579–1625]

ON MELANCHOLY

No, no! go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,

Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globèd peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veiled Melancholy has her sovereign shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine:
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE RAINY DAY

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the moldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;

My thoughts still cling to the moldering Past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THE PRECEPT OF SILENCE

I KNOW you: solitary griefs,
Desolate passions, aching hours!
I know you: tremulous beliefs,
Agonized hopes, and ashen flowers!

The winds are sometimes sad to me;
The starry spaces full of fear:
Mine is the sorrow on the sea,
And mine the sigh of places drear.

Some players upon plaintive strings
Publish their wistfulness abroad:
I have not spoken of these things,
Save to one man, and unto God.

Lionel Johnson [1867–1902]

"MOAN, MOAN, YE DYING GALES"

MOAN, moan, ye dying gales!
The saddest of your tales
Is not so sad as life;
Nor have you e'er began
A theme so wild as man,
Or with such sorrow rife.

Fall, fall, thou withered leaf!
Autumn sears not like grief,
Nor kills such lovely flowers;
More terrible the storm,
More mournful the deform,
When dark misfortune lowers.

Hush! hush! thou trembling lyre,
Silence, ye vocal choir,
And thou, mellifluous lute,
For man soon breathes his last,
And all his hope is past,
And all his music mute.

Then, when the gale is sighing,
And when the leaves are dying,
And when the song is o'er,
O, let us think of those
Whose lives are lost in woes,
Whose cup of grief runs o'er.

Henry Neele [1798–1828]

SORROW

COUNT each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee; do thou
With courtesy receive him; rise and bow;
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first his heavenly feet to lave;
Then lay before him all thou hast; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
The soul's marmoreal calmness. Grief should be,
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end.

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814–1902]

TIME AND GRIEF

O TIME! who know'st a lenient hand to lay
Softest on Sorrow's wound, and slowly thence
(Lulling to sad repose the weary sense)
The faint pang stealest unperceived away;

On thee I rest my only hope at last,
And think, when thou hast dried the bitter tear
That flows in vain o'er all my soul held dear,
I may look back on every sorrow past,
And meet life's peaceful evening with a smile:
As some lone bird, at day's departing hour,
Sings in the sunbeam, of the transient shower
Forgetful, though its wings are wet the while:—
Yet ah! how much must that poor heart endure,
Which hopes from thee, and thee alone, a cure!

William Lisle Bowles [1762–1850]

GRIEF

I TELL you, hopeless grief is passionless;
That only men incredulous of despair,
Half-taught in anguish, through the midnight air
Beat upward to God's throne in loud access
Of shrieking and reproach. Full desertness,
In souls as countries, lieth silent-bare
Under the blanching, vertical eye-glare
Of the absolute Heavens. Deep-hearted man, express
Grief for thy Dead in silence like to death—
Most like a monumental statue set
In everlasting watch and moveless woe
Till itself crumble to the dust beneath.
Touch it; the marble eyelids are not wet:
If it could weep, it could arise and go.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

PAIN

DISMAL and purposeless and gray
The world and all its woe, we say,
Poor slaves! who in hot hours of pain
Yearn for the night to come again.

Like tortured men at length set free,
We stagger from our misery,
And watch with foolish, pain-dimmed eyes
Vague lands and unremembered skies.

When lo! what sudden splendor spreads
Its heaven of rose above our heads!
What soft winds visit our despair;
What lights, what voices everywhere!

Ere sorrow taught us, knew we these
Stupendous hills, amazing seas?
Shone there such moonlight on the lawn;
So deep a secret in the dawn?

What wandering hue from Paradise
Has found a home in children's eyes?
What women these, whose faces bless
Life with such tranquil tenderness?

When earth and sky and man seem fair,
Be this my watchword, this my prayer:
Grant me, O Gods, to prize aright
Sorrow, since sorrow gives me sight.

St. John Lucas [18 –

A FAREWELL

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet, then a river:
No where by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder-tree,
And here thine aspen shiver;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

"THE DAY IS DONE"

THE day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
That my soul cannot resist:

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THE BRIDGE

I STOOD on the bridge at midnight,
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church-tower.

I saw her bright reflection
In the waters under me,
Like a golden goblet falling
And sinking into the sea.

And far in the hazy distance
Of that lovely night in June,
The blaze of the flaming furnace
Gleamed redder than the moon.

Among the long, black rafters
The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean
Seemed to lift and bear them away,

As, sweeping and eddying through them,
Rose the belated tide,
And, streaming into the moonlight,
The seaweed floated wide.

And like those waters rushing
Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh, how often,
In the days that had gone by,
I had stood on that bridge at midnight
And gazed on that wave and sky!

How often, oh, how often,
I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
O'er the ocean wild and wide!

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear.

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me.

Yet whenever I cross the river
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odor of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then.

I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
And the old subdued and slow!

And forever and forever,
As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions,
As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection
And its shadow shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
And its wavering image here.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

"MY LIFE IS LIKE THE SUMMER ROSE"

My life is like the summer rose
That opens to the morning sky,
But, ere the shades of evening close,
Is scattered on the ground—to die!
Yet on the rose's humble bed
The sweetest dews of night are shed,
As if she wept the waste to see,—
But none shall weep a tear for me!

My life is like the autumn leaf
That trembles in the moon's pale ray;
Its hold is frail,—its date is brief,
Restless,—and soon to pass away!
Yet, ere that leaf shall fall and fade,
The parent tree will mourn its shade,
The winds bewail the leafless tree,—
But none shall breathe a sigh for me!

My life is like the prints, which feet
Have left on Tampa's desert strand;
Soon as the rising tide shall beat,
All trace will vanish from the sand;
Yet, as if grieving to efface
All vestige of the human race,
On that lone shore loud moans the sea,—
But none, alas! shall mourn for me!

Richard Henry Wilde [1789–1847]

"AS I LAYE A-THYNKYNGE"

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Merrie sang the Birde as she sat upon the spraye;
There came a noble Knyghte,
With his hauberke shynynge brighte,
And his gallant heart was lyghte,
Free and gaye;
As I laye a-thynkynge, he rode upon his waye.

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Sadly sang the Birde as she sat upon the tree!
There seemed a crimson plain,
Where a gallant Knyghte lay slayne,
And a steed with broken rein
Ran free,
As I laye a-thynkynge, most pitiful to see!

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Merrie sang the Birde as she sat upon the boughe;
A lovely maide came by,
And a gentil youthe was nyghe,
And he breathed many a syghe
And a vowe;
As I laye a-thynkynge, her hearte was gladsome now.

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Sadly sang the Birde as she sat upon the thorne;
No more a youth was there,
But a Maiden rent her haire,
And cried in sad despaire
"That I was borne!"
As I laye a-thynkynge, she perishèd forlorne.

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
Sweetly sang the Birde as she sat upon the briar;
There came a lovely Childe,
And his face was meek and mild,
Yet joyously he smiled
On his sire;
As I laye a-thynkynge, a Cherub mote admire.

But I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
And sadly sang the Birde as it perched upon a bier;
That joyous smile was gone,
And the face was white and wan,
As the downe upon the Swan
Doth appear,
As I laye a-thynkynge—oh! bitter flowed the tear!

As I laye a-thynkynge, the golden sun was sinking,
O merrie sang that Birde as it glittered on her breast
With a thousand glorious dyes,
While, soaring to the skies,
'Mid the stars she seemed to rise,
As to her nest;

As I laye a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge, a-thynkynge,
As I laye a-thynkynge, her meaning was expressed:—
"Follow, follow me away,
It boots not to delay,"—
'Twas so she seemed to saye,
"HERE IS REST!"

Richard Harris Barham [1788–1845]

THE HARP OF SORROW

SORROW has a harp of seven strings
And plays on it unceasing all the day;
The first string sings of love that is long dead,
The second sings of lost hopes burièd;
The third of happiness forgot and fled.
Of vigil kept in vain the fourth cord sings,
And the fifth string of roses dropped away.
The sixth string calls and is unanswerèd,
The seventh with your name for ever rings—
I listen for its singing all the day!

Ethel Clifford [18 –

THE JOURNEY ONWARDS

As slow our ship her foamy track
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her trembling pennant still looked back

To that dear Isle 'twas leaving.
So loth we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;
So turn our hearts, as on we rove,
To those we've left behind us!

When, round the bowl, of vanished years
We talk with joyous seeming,
With smiles, that might as well be tears,
So faint, so sad their beaming;
While memory brings us back again
Each early tie that twined us,
Oh, sweet's the cup that circles then
To those we've left behind us!

And when, in other climes, we meet
Some isle, or vale enchanting,
Where all looks flowery, wild, and sweet,
And naught but love is wanting;
We think how great had been our bliss
If Heaven had but assigned us
To live and die in scenes like this,
With some we've left behind us!

As travelers oft look back at eve
When eastward darkly going,
To gaze upon that light they leave
Still faint behind them glowing,—
So, when the close of pleasure's day
To gloom hath near consigned us,
We turn to catch one fading ray
Of joy that's left behind us.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

SONG

IN LEINSTER

I TRY to knead and spin, but my life is low the while.
Oh, I long to be alone, and walk abroad a mile;
Yet if I walk alone, and think of naught at all,
Why from me that's young should the wild tears fall?

The shower-sodden earth, the earth-colored streams,
They breathe on me awake, and moan to me in dreams,
And yonder ivy fondling the broke castle-wall,
It pulls upon my heart till the wild tears fall.

The cabin-door looks down a furze-lighted hill,
And far as Leighlin Cross the fields are green and still;
But once I hear the blackbird in Leighlin hedges call,
The foolishness is on me, and the wild tears fall!

Louise Imogen Guiney [1861–

MY SORROW

My sorrow that I am not by the little dun,
By the lake of the starlings at Rosses under the hill—
And the larks there, singing over the fields of dew,
Or evening there, and the sedges still!
For plain I see now the length of the yellow sand,
And Lissadell far off and its leafy ways,
And the holy mountain whose mighty heart
Gathers into it all the colored days.
My sorrow that I am not by the little dun,
By the lake of the starlings at evening when all is still—
And still in whispering sedges the herons stand.
'Tis there I would nestle at rest till the quivering moon
Uprose in the golden quiet over the hill.

Seumas O'Sullivan [1879–

SPIRIT OF SADNESS

She loved the Autumn, I the Spring,
Sad all the songs she loved to sing;
And in her face was strangely set
Some great inherited regret.

Some look in all things made her sigh,
Yea! sad to her the morning sky:
"So sad! so sad its beauty seems"—
I hear her say it still in dreams.

But when the day grew gray and old,
And rising stars shone strange and cold,
Then only in her face I saw
A mystic glee, a joyous awe.

Spirit of Sadness, in the spheres
Is there an end of mortal tears?
Or is there still in those great eyes
That look of lonely hills and skies?

Richard Le Gallienne [1866–

"'TIS BUT A LITTLE FADED FLOWER"

'Tis but a little faded flower,
But oh, how fondly dear!
'Twill bring me back one golden hour,
Through many a weary year.
I may not to the world impart
The secret of its power,
But treasured in my inmost heart,
I keep my faded flower.

Where is the heart that doth not keep,
Within its inmost core,
Some fond remembrance, hidden deep,
Of days that are no more?
Who hath not saved some trifling thing
More prized than jewels rare—
A faded flower, a broken ring,
A tress of golden hair?

Ellen Clementine Howarth [1827–1899]

TO EACH HIS OWN

Each hath his drug for Sorrow
(Or else the pain would slay!)
For one, it is "To-morrow";
For one, 'tis "Yesterday."

"And hast thou lost, my Brother?"
"Yea, but in dreams I find."
"And I" (so saith another)
"Leave buried dead behind!"

For each, when gyves are fretting,
A different balm must be.
Some find it in forgetting,
And some in memory.

Margaret Root Garvin [18 -

SONG

RARELY, rarely comest thou,
Spirit of Delight!
Wherefore hast thou left me now
Many a day and night?
Many a weary night and day
'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me
Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free
Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade
Of a trembling leaf,
Thou with sorrow art dismayed;
Even the sighs of grief
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty
To a merry measure:
Thou wilt never come for pity,
Thou wilt come for pleasure;
Pity then will cut away
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

I love all that thou lovest,
Spirit of Delight!
The fresh Earth in new leaves dressed,
And the starry night,
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms
Of the radiant frost;
I love waves, and winds, and storms—
Everything almost
Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude,
And such society
As is quiet, wise, and good;
Between thee and me
What difference? But thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,
And like light can flee;
But above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee!—
Thou art love and life! Oh, come,
Make once more my heart thy home!

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

THE NAMELESS ONE

Roll forth, my song, like the rushing river,
That sweeps along to the mighty sea;
God will inspire me while I deliver
My soul of thee!

Tell thou the world, when my bones lie whitening
Amid the last homes of youth and eld,
That once there was one whose veins ran lightning
No eye beheld.

Tell how his boyhood was one drear night-hour,
How shone for him, through his griefs and gloom,
No star of all heaven sends to light our
Path to the tomb.

Roll on, my song, and to after ages
Tell how, disdaining all earth can give,
He would have taught men, from wisdom's pages,
The way to live.

And tell how trampled, derided, hated,
And worn by weakness, disease, and wrong,
He fled for shelter to God, who mated
His soul with song.

—With song which alway, sublime or vapid,
Flowed like a rill in the morning beam,
Perchance not deep, but intense and rapid:
A mountain stream.

Tell how this Nameless, condemned for years long
To herd with demons from hell beneath,
Saw things that made him, with groans and tears, long
For even death.

Go on to tell how, with genius wasted,
Betrayed in friendship, befooled in love,
With spirit shipwrecked, and young hopes blasted,
He still, still strove;

Till, spent with toil, dreeing death for others
(And some whose hands should have wrought for him,
If children live not for sires and mothers),
His mind grew dim;

And he fell far through that pit abysmal,
The gulf and grave of Maginn and Burns,
And pawned his soul for the devil's dismal
Stock of returns.

But yet redeemed it in days of darkness,
And shapes and signs of the final wrath,

When death, in hideous and ghastly starkness,
Stood on his path.

And tell how now, amid wreck and sorrow,
And want, and sickness, and houseless nights,
He bides in calmness the silent morrow,
That no ray lights.

And lives he still, then? Yes! Old and hoary
At thirty-nine, from despair and woe,
He lives, enduring what future story
Will never know.

Him grant a grave to, ye pitying noble,
Deep in your bosoms: there let him dwell!
He, too, had tears for all souls in trouble,
Here and in hell.

James Clarence Mangan [1803–1849]

"DE MORTUIS NIL NISI BONUM"

(WRITTEN ON THE NIGHT OF HIS SUICIDE)

"*De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*" When
For me this end has come and I am dead,
And the little voluble, chattering daws of men
Peck at me curiously, let it then be said
By some one brave enough to speak the truth:
Here lies a great soul killed by cruel wrong.
Down all the balmy days of his fresh youth
To his bleak, desolate noon, with sword and song,
And speech that rushed up hotly from the heart,
He wrought for liberty, till his own wound
(He had been stabbed), concealed with painful art
Through wasting years, mastered him, and he swooned,
And sank there where you see him lying now
With the word "Failure" written on his brow.

But say that he succeeded. If he missed
World's honors, and world's plaudits, and the wage
Of the world's deft lacqueys, still his lips were kissed
Daily by those high angels who assuage

The thirstings of the poets—for he was
Born unto singing—and a burthen lay
Mightily on him, and he moaned because
He could not rightly utter to the day
What God taught in the night. Sometimes, nathless,
Power fell upon him, and bright tongues of flame,
And blessings reached him from poor souls in stress;
And benedictions from black pits of shame,
And little children's love, and old men's prayers,
And a Great Hand that led him unawares.

So he died rich. And if his eyes were blurred
With big films—silence! he is in his grave.
Greatly he suffered; greatly, too, he erred;
Yet broke his heart in trying to be brave.
Nor did he wait till Freedom had become
The popular shibboleth of courtier's lips;
He smote for her when God Himself seemed dumb
And all His arching skies were in eclipse.
He was a-weary, but he fought his fight,
And stood for simple manhood; and was joyed
To see the august broadening of the light
And new earths heaving heavenward from the void.
He loved his fellows, and their love was sweet—
Plant daisies at his head and at his feet.

Richard Realf [1834–1878]

HOPE AND DESPAIR

Said God, "You sisters, ere ye go
Down among men, my work to do,
I will on each a badge bestow:
Hope I love best, and gold for her,
Yet a silver glory for Despair;
For she is my angel too."

Then like a queen, Despair
Put on the stars to wear.
But Hope took ears of corn, and round
Her temples in a wreath them bound.—
Which think ye looked the more fair?

Lascelles Abercrombie [1884–

DEJECTION: AN ODE

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!
We shall have a deadly storm.
Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.

I

Well! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,
Which better far were mute.
For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!
And overspread with phantom light,
(With swimming phantom light o'erspread
But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
The coming-on of rain and squally blast.
And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,
And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!
Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst they awed,
And sent my soul abroad,
Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and live!

II

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear—
O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle wooed,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!

And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen:
Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

III

My genial spirits fail;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavor,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

IV

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live:
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the Earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

V

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.

Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower,
Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower
A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—
We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colors a suffusion from that light.

VI

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness:
For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.
But now afflictions bow me down to earth:
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth;
But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of Imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man—
This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream!
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that rav'st without,
Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree,

Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,
Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.
Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty Poet, e'en to frenzy bold!
What tell'st thou now about?
'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,
With groans, of trampled men, with smarting wounds—
At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold!
But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is over—
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud!
A tale of less affright,
And tempered with delight,
As Otway's self had framed the tender lay,—
'Tis of a little child
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

VIII

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,
And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,
Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth!
With light heart may she rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice;
To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul!
O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

WORK WITHOUT HOPE

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And Hope without an object cannot live.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772–1834]

CARE

All in the leafy darkness, when sleep had passed me by,
I knew the surging of the sea—
Though never wave were nigh.
All in the leafy darkness, unbroken by a star,
There came the clamorous call of day,
While yet the day was far.
All in the leafy darkness, woven with hushes deep,
I heard the vulture wings of Fear
Above me tireless sweep;
The sea of Doubt, the dread of day, upon me surged and swept
All in the leafy darkness,
And while the whole world slept.

Virginia Woodward Cloud [18

AT THE SALON

Brave as the firstborn flame upsprings the statue,
A worshiper of the Sun:
With arms and lips and vital hair he praises
The Dawn begun.

Buoyancy, adoration of beginnings,
He soars tiptoe,

Nor heeds he that his plinth was wreathed with cypress
An hour ago,

Memorial of the maker of the statue
Who in his ultimate pain
Set free the spirit in the block of marble,
—Child of his brain.

The men and women pacing through the Salon
By that grave challenge are stopped,
Pondering on him from whose arrested fingers
The tool has dropped.

For him black weeds are draped and just one moment
Chatter is mute,
While, like a skylark, sings his last glad sculpture
Its flame salute.

Florence Wilkinson [18

THE WIND'S WAY

A WHITE way is the wind's way,
The silver side o' the leaf:
Follow the wind, heart of mine,
Heart of grief!

Wind of the dawn, wind of the dusk,
Wingèd wind of the day,
Who would follow the wind must go
The wind's way.

Grace Hazard Conkling [1878–

TROPICAL TOWN

BLUE, pink and yellow houses, and, afar,
The cemetery, where the green trees are.

Sometimes you see a hungry dog pass by,
And there are always buzzards in the sky,
Sometimes you hear the big cathedral bell;
A blind man rings it; and sometimes you hear
A rumbling ox-cart that brings wood to sell.
Else nothing ever breaks the ancient spell

That holds the town asleep, save, once a year,
The Easter Festival. . .

I come from there,
And when I tire of hoping, and despair
Is heavy over me, my thoughts go far,
Beyond that length of lazy street, to where
The lonely green trees and the white graves are.

Salomón de la Selva [1893–

SUNSET WINGS

To-night this sunset spreads two golden wings
Cleaving the western sky;
Winged too with wind it is, and winnowings
Of birds; as if the day's last hour in rings
Of strenuous flight must die.

Sun-steeped in fire, the homeward pinions sway
Above the dovecote-tops;
And clouds of starlings, ere they rest with day,
Sink, clamorous like mill-waters, at wild play,
By turns in every copse:

Each tree heart-deep the wrangling rout receives,—
Save for the whirr within,
You could not tell the starlings from the leaves;
Then one great puff of wings, and the swarm heaves
Away with all its din.

Even thus Hope's hours, in ever-eddying flight,
To many a refuge tend;
With the first light she laughed, and the last light
Glows round her still; who natheless in the night
At length must make an end.

And now the mustering rooks innumerable
Together sail and soar,
While for the day's death, like a tolling knell,
Unto the heart they seem to cry, Farewell,
No more, farewell, no more!

Is Hope not plumed, as 'twere a fiery dart?
And oh! thou dying day,
Even as thou goest must she too depart,
And Sorrow fold such pinions on the heart
As will not fly away?

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

MORALITY

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides:
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.
Not till the hours of light return
All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
Ask, how *she* viewed thy self-control,
Thy struggling, tasked morality—
Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,
Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose answer thou dost dread
Whose eye thou wast afraid to seek,
See, on her face a glow is spread,
A strong emotion on her cheek!
"Ah, child," she cries, "that strife divine,
Whence was it, for it is not mine?

"There is no effort on *my* brow—
I do not strive, I do not weep;
I rush with the swift spheres and glow
In joy, and when I will, I sleep.
Yet that severe, that earnest air,
I saw, I felt it once—but where?

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,
Nor wore the manacles of space;
I felt it in some other clime,
I saw it in some other place.
'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,
And lay upon the breast of God.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

CUI BONO

What is Hope? A smiling rainbow
Children follow through the wet;
'Tis not here, still yonder, yonder:
Never urchin found it yet.

What is Life? A thawing iceboard
On a sea with sunny shore;
Gay we sail; it melts beneath us;
We are sunk, and seen no more.

What is Man? A foolish baby,
Vainly strives, and fights, and frets;
Demanding all, deserving nothing;
One small grave is what he gets.

Thomas Carlyle [1795–1881]

MUTABILITY

The flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow dies;
All that we wish to stay
Tempts, and then flies.
What is this world's delight?
Lightning that mocks the night,
Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is!
Friendship how rare!
Love, how it sells poor bliss
For proud despair!
But we, though soon they fall,
Survive their joy, and all
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,
Whilst flowers are gay,
Whilst eyes that change ere night
Make glad the day,
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
Dream thou—and from thy sleep
Then wake to weep.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

A FANCY FROM FONTENELLE

De mémoires de Roses on n'a point vu mourir le Jardinier

THE Rose in the garden slipped her bud,
And she laughed in the pride of her youthful blood,
As she thought of the Gardener standing by—
"He is old—so old! And he soon must die!"

The full Rose waxed in the warm June air,
And she spread and spread till her heart lay bare;
And she laughed once more as she heard his tread—
"He is older now! He will soon be dead!"

But the breeze of the morning blew, and found
That the leaves of the blown Rose strewed the ground;
And he came at noon, that Gardener old,
And he raked them gently under the mold.

And I wove the thing to a random rhyme:
For the Rose is Beauty; the Gardener, Time.

Austin Dobson [1840–

"OH, EARLIER SHALL THE ROSEBUDS BLOW"

OH, earlier shall the rosebuds blow,
In after years, those happier years,
And children weep, when we lie low,
Far fewer tears, far softer tears.

Oh, true shall boyish laughter ring,
Like tinkling chimes, in kinder times!
And merrier shall the maiden sing:
And I not there, and I not there.

Like lightning in the summer night
Their mirth shall be, so quick and free;
And oh! the flash of their delight
I shall not see, I may not see.

In deeper dream, with wider range,
Those eyes shall shine, but not on mine:
Unmoved, unblest, by worldly change,
The dead must rest, the dead shall rest.

William Johnson Cory [1823–1892]

THE DOVE

I HAD a dove, and the sweet dove died;
And I have thought it died of grieving:
O, what could it grieve for? Its feet were tied
With a silken thread of my own hand's weaving;
Sweet little red feet! why should you die—
Why would you leave me, sweet bird! why?
You lived alone in the forest tree,
Why, pretty thing! would you not live with me?
I kissed you oft and gave you white peas;
Why not live sweetly, as in the green trees?

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE WHISPERERS

As beneath the moon I walked,
Dog-at-heel my shadow stalked,
Keeping ghostly company:
And as we went gallantly
Down the fell-road, dusty-white,
Round us in the windy night
Bracken, rushes, bent and heather
Whispered ceaselessly together:
"Would he ever journey more,
Ever stride so carelessly,
If he knew what lies before,
And could see what we can see?"

As I listened, cold with dread,
Every hair upon my head

Strained to hear them talk of me,
Whispering, whispering ceaselessly:
"Folly's fool the man must be,
Surely, since, though where he goes
He knows not, his shadow knows:
And his secret shadow never
Utters warning words, or ever
Seeks to save him from his fate,
Reckless, blindfold, and unknown,
Till death tells him all, too late,
And his shadow walks alone."

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson [1878–

ON A TEAR

O THAT the chemist's magic art
Could crystallize this sacred treasure!
Long should it glitter near my heart,
A secret source of pensive pleasure.

The little brilliant, ere it fell,
Its luster caught from Chloe's eye;
Then, trembling, left its coral cell,—
The spring of Sensibility!

Sweet drop of pure and pearly light!
In thee the rays of Virtue shine,
More calmly clear, more mildly bright,
Than any gem that gilds the mine.

Benign restorer of the soul!
Who ever fliest to bring relief,
When first we feel the rude control
Of Love or Pity, Joy or Grief.

The sage's and the poet's theme,
In every clime, in every age,
Thou charm'st in Fancy's idle dream,
In Reason's philosophic page.

That very law which molds a tear,
And bids it trickle from its source,—
That law preserves the earth a sphere,
And guides the planets in their course.

Samuel Rogers [1763–1855]

THE ROSARY OF MY TEARS

Some reckon their age by years,
Some measure their life by art;
But some tell their days by the flow of their tears,
And their lives by the moans of their heart.

The dials of earth may show
The length, not the depth, of years—
Few or many they come, few or many they go,
But time is best measured by tears.

Ah! not by the silver gray
That creeps through the sunny hair,
And not by the scenes that we pass on our way,
And not by the furrows the fingers of care

On forehead and face have made,—
Not so do we count our years;
Not by the sun of the earth, but the shade
Of our souls, and the fall of our tears.

For the young are oft-times old,
Though their brows be bright and fair;
While their blood beats warm, their hearts are cold—
O'er them the spring—but winter is there;

And the old are oft-times young
When their hair is thin and white;
And they sing in age, as in youth they sung,
And they laugh, for their cross was light.

But, bead by bead, I tell
The rosary of my years;
From a cross to a cross they lead; 'tis well,
And they're blest with a blessing of tears.

Better a day of strife
Than a century of sleep;
Give me instead of a long stream of life
The tempests and tears of the deep.

A thousand joys may foam
On the billows of all the years;
But never the foam brings the lone back home,—
He reaches the haven through tears.

Abram J. Ryan [1839–1888]

ENDURANCE

How much the heart may bear, and yet not break!
How much the flesh may suffer, and not die!
I question much if any pain or ache
Of soul or body brings our end more nigh:
Death chooses his own time; till that is sworn,
All evils may be borne.

We shrink and shudder at the surgeon's knife,
Each nerve recoiling from the cruel steel
Whose edge seems searching for the quivering life;
Yet to our sense the bitter pangs reveal,
That still, although the trembling flesh be torn,
This also can be borne.

We see a sorrow rising in our way,
And try to flee from the approaching ill;
We seek some small escape: we weep and pray;
But when the blow falls, then our hearts are still;
Not that the pain is of its sharpness shorn,
But that it can be borne.

We wind our life about another life;
We hold it closer, dearer than our own:
Anon it faints and fails in deathly strife,
Leaving us stunned and stricken and alone;
But ah! we do not die with those we mourn,—
This also can be borne.

Behold, we live through all things,—famine, thirst,
Bereavement, pain; all grief and misery,
All woe and sorrow; life inflicts its worst
On soul and body,—but we can not die.
Though we be sick, and tired, and faint, and worn,—
Lo, all things can be borne!

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

LANGLEY LANE

In all the land, range up, range down,
Is there ever a place so pleasant and sweet,
As Langley Lane in London town,
Just out of the bustle of square and street?
Little white cottages all in a row,
Gardens where bachelors'-buttons grow,
Swallows' nests in roof and wall,
And up above the still blue sky,
Where the woolly white clouds go sailing by—
I seem to be able to see it all!

For now, in summer, I take my chair,
And sit outside in the sun, and hear
The distant murmur of street and square,
And the swallows and sparrows chirping near;
And Fanny, who lives just over the way,
Comes running many a time each day,
With her little hand's-touch so warm and kind,
And I smile and talk, with the sun on my cheek,
And the little live hand seems to stir and speak—
For Fanny is dumb and I am blind.

Fanny is sweet thirteen, and she
Has fine black ringlets and dark eyes clear,
And I am older by summers three,—
Why should we hold one another so dear?
Because she cannot utter a word,
Nor hear the music of bee or bird,
The water-cart's splash or the milkman's call.
Because I have never seen the sky,
Nor the little singers that hum and fly,—
Yet know she is gazing upon them all!

For the sun is shining, the swallows fly,
The bees and the blueflies murmur low,
And I hear the water-cart go by,
With its cool splash-splash down the dusty row;
And the little one, close at my side, perceives
Mine eyes upraised to the cottage eaves,

Where birds are chirping in summer shine,
And I hear, though I cannot look, and she,
Though she cannot hear, can the singers see,—
And the little soft fingers flutter in mine.

Hath not the dear little hand a tongue,
When it stirs on my palm for the love of me?
Do I not know she is pretty and young?
Hath not my soul an eye to see?
'Tis pleasure to make one's bosom stir,
To wonder how things appear to her,
That I only hear as they pass around;
And as long as we sit in the music and light,
She is happy to keep God's sight,
And I am happy to keep God's sound.

Why, I know her face, though I am blind—
I made it of music long ago:
Strange large eyes and dark hair twined
Round the pensive light of a brow of snow;
And when I sit by my little one,
And hold her hand and talk in the sun,
And hear the music that haunts the place,
I know she is raising her eyes to me,
And guessing how gentle my voice must be,
And seeing the music upon my face.

Though, if ever the Lord should grant me a prayer
(I know the fancy is only vain),
I should pray: Just once, when the weather is fair,
To see little Fanny and Langley Lane;
Though Fanny, perhaps, would pray to hear
The voice of the friend she holds so dear,
The song of the birds, the hum of the street,—
It is better to be as we have been,—
Each keeping up something, unheard, unseen,
To make God's heaven more strange and sweet!

Ah, life is pleasant in Langley Lane!
There is always something sweet to hear!
Chirping of birds or patter of rain;
And Fanny, my little one, always near;

And though I am weakly and can't live long,
And Fanny my darling is far from strong,
And though we can never married be,—
What then?—since we hold one another so dear,
For the sake of the pleasure one cannot hear,
And the pleasure that only one can see?

Robert Buchanan [1841–1901]

THE WEAKEST THING

Which is the weakest thing of all
Mine heart can ponder?
The sun, a little cloud can pall
With darkness yonder?
The cloud, a little wind can move
Where'er it listeth?
The wind, a little leaf above,
Though sere, resisteth?

What time that yellow leaf was green,
My days were gladder;
But now, whatever Spring may mean,
I must grow sadder.
Ah me! a *leaf* with sighs can wring
My lips asunder?
Then is mine heart the weakest thing
Itself can ponder.

Yet, Heart, when sun and cloud are pined
And drop together,
And at a blast which is not wind
The forests wither,
Thou, from the darkening deathly curse
To glory breakest,—
The Strongest of the universe
Guarding the weakest!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

SONG

We only ask for sunshine,
We did not want the rain;
But see the flowers that spring from showers
All up and down the plain.

We beg the gods for laughter,
We shrink, we dread the tears;
But grief's redress is happiness,
Alternate through the years.

Helen Hay Whitney [18 –

THE HOUSE OF PAIN

Unto the Prison House of Pain none willingly repair—
The bravest who an entrance gain
Reluctant linger there—
For Pleasure, passing by that door, stays not to cheer the sight,
And Sympathy but muffles sound and banishes the light.

Yet in the Prison House of Pain things full of beauty blow—
Like Christmas roses, which attain
Perfection 'mid the snow—
Love entering, in his mild warmth the darkest shadows melt,
And often, where the hush is deep, the waft of wings is felt.

Ah, me! the Prison House of Pain!—what lessons there are bought!
Lessons of a sublimer strain
Than any elsewhere taught;
Amid its loneliness and gloom, grave meanings grow more clear,
For to no earthly dwelling-place seems God so strangely near!

Florence Earle Coates [1850–

WISE

An apple orchard smells like wine;
A succory flower is blue;
Until Grief touched these eyes of mine,
Such things I never knew.

And now indeed I know so plain
Why one would like to cry
When spouts are full of April rain—
Such lonely folk go by!

So wise, so wise—that my tears fall
Each breaking of the dawn;
That I do long to tell you all—
But you are dead and gone.

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856–

"MULTUM DILEXIT"

She sat and wept beside His feet; the weight
Of sin oppressed her heart; for all the blame,
And the poor malice of the worldly shame,
To her was past, extinct, and out of date:
Only the sin remained,—the leprous state;
She would be melted by the heat of love,
By fires far fiercer than are blown to prove
And purge the silver ore adulterate.

She sat and wept, and with her untressed hair
Still wiped the feet she was so blessed to touch;
And He wiped off the soiling of despair
From her sweet soul, because she loved so much.
I am a sinner, full of doubts and fears:
Make me a humble thing of love and tears.

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1849]

PIERRETTE IN MEMORY

PIERRETTE has gone, but it was not
  Exactly that she died,
So much as vanished and forgot
  To say where she would hide.

To keep a sudden rendezvous,
  It came into her mind
That she was late. What could she do
  But leave distress behind?

Afraid of being in disgrace,
  And hurrying to dress,
She heard there was another place
  In need of loveliness.

She went so softly and so soon—
  Sh!—hardly made a stir;
But going took the stars and moon
  And sun away with her.

William Griffith [1876–

"WIND ME A SUMMER CROWN"

"WIND me a summer crown," she said,
  "And set it on my brows;
For I must go, while I am young,
  Home to my Father's house.

"And make me ready for the day,
  And let me not be stayed;
I would not linger on the way
  As if I was afraid.

"O, will the golden courts of heaven.
  When I have paced them o'er,
Be lovely as the lily walks
  Which I must see no more?

"And will the seraph hymns and harps,
When they have filled my ear,
Be tender as my mother's voice,
Which I must never hear?

"And shall I lie where sunsets drift,
Or where the stars are born,
Or where the living tints are mixed
To paint the clouds of morn?"

Your mother's tones shall reach you still,
Even sweeter than they were;
And the false love that broke your heart
Shall be forgotten there:

And not a star or flower is born
The beauty of that shore;
There is a face which you shall see
And wish for nothing more.

Menella Bute Smedley [1820–1877]

TO THE HARPIES

You who with birch or laurel
Are swift to scourge or bless—
Silence your foolish quarrel
Before her loveliness.

What though she went a-travel
Down paths you do not know?
Your words shall not unravel
Webs that allured her so.

Hush now your foolish babble
Around her golden head.
Shut out the prying rabble.
Be happy. She is dead.

Now give one final kindness
That late you dreamed not of—
Silence, to cloak your blindness—
Peace, since you know not love.

Arthur Davison Ficke [1883–

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements:
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her;
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
  Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
  Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
  Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
  Under the sun!
O, it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
  Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
  Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
  Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
  With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
  Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
  Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
  Swift to be hurled—
Anywhere, anywhere
  Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly—
No matter how coldly
  The rough river ran—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it,—think of it,
  Dissolute Man!
Lave in it,—drink of it,
  Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
  Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
  Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
  Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
  Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
  Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing,
  Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
  Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly
As if praying dumbly,
  Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
  Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
  Her sins to her Saviour!

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

THE SONG OF THE SHIRT

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread,—
Stitch—stitch—stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt;
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt!"

"Work—work—work
While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work—work—work
Till the stars shine through the roof!
It's oh! to be a slave
Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work!

"Work—work—work
Till the brain begins to swim!
Work—work—work
Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,—
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in a dream!

"O men with sisters dear!
O men with mothers and wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
But human creatures' lives!
Stitch—stitch—stitch,
In poverty, hunger and dirt,—
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A shroud as well as a shirt!

"But why do I talk of death,—
That phantom of grisly bone?
I hardly fear his terrible shape,
It seems so like my own,—

It seems so like my own
  Because of the fasts I keep;
O God! that bread should be so dear,
  And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work—work—work!
  My labor never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
  A crust of bread—and rags.
That shattered roof—and this naked floor—
  A table—a broken chair—
And a wall so blank my shadow I thank
  For sometimes falling there!

"Work—work—work
  From weary chime to chime!
Work—work—work
  As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
  Seam, and gusset, and band,—
Till the heart is sick and the brain benumbed,
  As well as the weary hand.

"Work—work—work
  In the dull December light!
And work—work—work
  When the weather is warm and bright!
While underneath the eaves
  The brooding swallows cling,
As if to show me their sunny backs,
  And twit me with the Spring.

"Oh but to breathe the breath
  Of the cowslip and primrose sweet,—
With the sky above my head,
  And the grass beneath my feet!
For only one short hour
  To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want
  And the walk that costs a meal!

"Oh but for one short hour,—
A respite, however brief!
No blessèd leisure for love or hope,
But only time for grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart;
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread,—
Stitch—stitch—stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt;
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch—
Would that its tone could reach the rich!—
She sang this "Song of the Shirt!"

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

STANZAS

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity:
The north cannot undo them,
With a sleety whistle through them;
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;
But with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passèd joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbèd sense to steal it,
Was never said in rhyme.

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE DEAD FAITH

She made a little shadow-hidden grave
The day Faith died;
Therein she laid it, heard the clod's sick fall,
And smiled aside—
"If less I ask," tear-blind, she mocked, "I may
Be less denied."

She set a rose to blossom in her hair,
The day Faith died—
"Now glad," she said, "and free at last, I go,
And life is wide."
But through long nights she stared into the dark,
And knew she lied.

Fannie Heaslip Lea [1884–

THE BALLAD OF THE BOAT

The stream was smooth as glass, we said, "Arise and let's away":
The Siren sang beside the boat that in the rushes lay;
And spread the sail, and strong the oar, we gaily took our way.
When shall the sandy bar be crossed? When shall we find the bay?

The broadening flood swells slowly out o'er cattle-dotted plains,
The stream is strong and turbulent, and dark with heavy rains;

The laborer looks up to see our shallop speed away.
When shall the sandy bar be crossed? When shall we find
the bay?

Now are the clouds like fiery shrouds; the sun, superbly
large,
Slow as an oak to woodman's stroke sinks flaming at their
marge.
The waves are bright with mirrored light as jacinths on our
way.
When shall the sandy bar be crossed? When shall we find
the bay?

The moon is high up in the sky, and now no more we see
The spreading river's either bank, and surging distantly
There booms a sullen thunder as of breakers far away.
Now shall the sandy bar be crossed, now shall we find the
bay!

The sea-gull shrieks high overhead, and dimly to our sight
The moonlit crests of foaming waves gleam towering through
the night.
We'll steal upon the mermaid soon, and start her from her
lay,
When once the sandy bar is crossed, and we are in the bay.

What rises white and awful as a shroud-enfolded ghost?
What roar of rampant tumult bursts in clangor on the coast?
Pull back! pull back! The raging flood sweeps every oar
away.
O stream, is this thy bar of sand? O boat, is this the bay?

Richard Garnett [1835–1906]

ELDORADO

Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight
In sunshine and in shadow
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell, as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow:
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the mountains
Of the moon,
Down the valley of the Shadow
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

A LOST CHORD

SEATED one day at the Organ,
I was weary and ill at ease,
And my fingers wandered idly
Over the noisy keys.

I do not know what I was playing,
Or what I was dreaming then;
But I struck one chord of music,
Like the sound of a great Amen.

It flooded the crimson twilight,
Like the close of an Angel's Psalm,
And it lay on my fevered spirit
With a touch of infinite calm.

It quieted pain and sorrow,
Like love overcoming strife;
It seemed the harmonious echo
From our discordant life.

It linked all perplexèd meanings
  Into one perfect peace,
And trembled away into silence
  As if it were loth to cease.

I have sought, but I seek it vainly,
  That one lost chord divine,
Which came from the soul of the Organ,
  And entered into mine.

It may be that Death's bright angel
  Will speak in that chord again,—
It may be that only in Heaven
  I shall hear that grand Amen.

Adelaide Anne Procter [1825–1864]

LITTLE GRAY SONGS FROM ST. JOSEPH'S

XXX

With cassock black, baret and book,
  Father Saran goes by;
I think he goes to say a prayer
  For one who has to die.

Even so, some day, Father Saran
  May say a prayer for me;
Myself meanwhile, the Sister tells,
  Should pray unceasingly.

They kneel who pray: how may I kneel
  Who face to ceiling lie,
Shut out by all that man has made
  From God who made the sky?

They lift who pray—the low earth-born—
  A humble heart to God:
But O, my heart of clay is proud—
  True sister to the sod.

I look into the face of God,
  They say bends over me;
I search the dark, dark face of God—
  O what is it I see?

I see—who lie fast bound, who may
Not kneel, who can but seek—
I see mine own face over me,
With tears upon its cheek.

XLVII

My little soul I never saw,
Nor can I count its days;
I do not know its wondrous law
And yet I know its ways.

Oh, it is young as morning-hours,
And old as is the night;
Oh, it has growth of budding flowers,
Yet tastes my body's blight.

And it is silent and apart,
And far and fair and still,
Yet ever beats within my heart,
And cries within my will.

And it is light and bright and strange,
And sees life far away,
Yet far with near can interchange
And dwell within the day.

My soul has died a thousand deaths,
And yet it does not die;
My soul has broke a thousand faiths,
And yet it cannot lie;

My soul—there's naught can make it less;
My soul—there's naught can mar;
Yet here it weeps with loneliness
Within its lonely star.

My soul—not any dark can bind,
Nor hinder any hand,
Yet here it weeps—long blind, long blind—
And cannot understand.

Grace Fallow Norton [18

BIRTHRIGHT

Lord Rameses of Egypt sighed
Because a summer evening passed;
And little Ariadne cried
That summer fancy fell at last
To dust; and young Verona died
When beauty's hour was overcast.

Theirs was the bitterness we know
Because the clouds of hawthorn keep
So short a state, and kisses go
To tombs unfathomably deep,
While Rameses and Romeo
And little Ariadne sleep.

John Drinkwater [1882–

IMMORTALIS

All loved and lovely women dear to rhyme:
Thais, Cassandra, Helen and their fames,
Burn like tall candles through forgotten time,
Lighting the Past's dim arras with their names.
Around their faces wars the eager dark
Wherein all other lights are sunken now,
Yet, casting back, the seeker still may mark
A flame of hair, a bright immortal brow.

Surely, where they have passed, one after one,
Wearing their radiance to the darkened room,
Surely, newcomers to Oblivion
May still descry in that all-quenching gloom,
Rare faces lovely, lifted and alight,
Like tapers burning through the windy night.

David Morton [18

SONNETS

Long, long ago, when all the glittering earth
Was heaven itself, when drunkards in the street
Were like mazed kings shaking at giving birth
To acts of war that sickle men like wheat,
When the white clover opened Paradise
And God lived in a cottage up the brook,
Beauty, you lifted up my sleeping eyes

And filled my heart with longing with a look;
And all the day I searched but could not find
The beautiful dark-eyed who touched me there,
Delight in her made trouble in my mind,
She was within all Nature, everywhere,
The breath I breathed, the brook, the flower, the grass,
Were her, her word, her beauty, all she was.

If I could come again to that dear place
Where once I came, where Beauty lived and moved,
Where, by the sea, I saw her face to face,
That soul alive by which the world has loved;
If, as I stood at gaze among the leaves,
She would appear again, as once before,
While the red herdsman gathered up his sheaves
And brimming waters trembled up the shore;
If, as I gazed, her Beauty that was dumb,
In that old time, before I learned to speak,
Would lean to me and revelation come,
Words to the lips and color to the cheek,
Joy with its searing-iron would burn me wise,
I should know all; all powers, all mysteries.

Roses are beauty, but I never see
Those blood drops from the burning heart of June
Glowing like thought upon the living tree,
Without a pity that they die so soon,
Die into petals, like those roses old,
Those women, who were summer in men's hearts
Before the smile upon the Sphinx was cold,
Or sand had hid the Syrian and his arts.
O myriad dust of beauty that lies thick
Under our feet that not a single grain
But stirred and moved in beauty and was quick
For one brief moon and died nor lived again;
But when the moon rose lay upon the grass
Pasture to living beauty, life that was.

O little self, within whose smallness lies
All that man was, and is, and will become,
Atom unseen that comprehends the skies
And tells the tracks by which the planets roam.

That, without moving, knows the joys of wings,
The tiger's strength, the eagle's secrecy,
And in the hovel can consort with kings,
Or clothe a god with his own mystery.
O with what darkness do we cloak thy light,
What dusty folly gather thee for food,
Thou who alone art knowledge and delight,
The heavenly bread, the beautiful, the good.
O living self, O god, O morning star,
Give us thy light, forgive us what we are.

There is no God, as I was taught in youth,
Though each, according to his stature, builds
Some covered shrine for what he thinks the truth,
Which day by day his reddest heart-blood gilds.
There is no God; but death, the clasping sea,
In which we move like fish, deep over deep
Made of men's souls that bodies have set free,
Floods to a Justice though it seems asleep.
There is no God, but still, behind the veil,
The hurt thing works, out of its agony.
Still, like a touching of a brimming Grail,
Return the pennies given to passers by.
There is no God, but we, who breathe the air,
Are God ourselves and touch God everywhere.

Let that which is to come be as it may,
Darkness, extinction, justice, life intense,
The flies are happy in the summer day,
Flies will be happy many summers hence.
Time with his antique breeds that built the Sphinx
Time with her men to come whose wings will tower,
Poured and will pour, not as the wise man thinks,
But with blind force, to each his little hour.
And when the hour has struck, comes death or change,
Which, whether good or ill, we cannot tell,
But the blind planet will wander through her range
Bearing men like us who will serve as well.
The sun will rise, the winds that ever move
Will blow our dust that once were men in love.

John Masefield [1874–

"THE DESPOT'S DESPOT"

VITÆ SUMMA BREVIS SPEM NOS VETAT INCOHARE LONGAM

THEY are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate;
I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the gate.

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:
Out of a misty dream
Our path emerges for a while, then closes
Within a dream.

Ernest Dowson [1867–1900]

DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST

From "The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses"

THE glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armor against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings:
Scepter and Crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill:
But their strong nerves at last must yield;
They tame but one another still:
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds:
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

James Shirley [1596–1666]

DEATH'S SUBTLE WAYS

From "Cupid and Death"

Victorious men of earth, no more
Proclaim how wide your empires are:
Though you bind in every shore,
And your triumphs reach as far
As night or day,
Yet you, proud monarchs, must obey,
And mingle with forgotten ashes when
Death calls ye to the crowd of common men.

Devouring famine, plague, and war,
Each able to undo mankind,
Death's servile emissaries are;
Nor to these alone confined,
He hath at will
More quaint and subtle ways to kill:
A smile or kiss, as he will use the art,
Shall have the cunning skill to break a heart.

James Shirley [1596–1666]

MAN'S MORTALITY

From "Microbiblion"

Like as the damask rose you see,
Or like the blossom on the tree,
Or like the dainty flower of May,
Or like the morning of the day,

Or like the sun, or like the shade,
Or like the gourd which Jonas had;
Even such is man, whose thread is spun,
Drawn out, and cut, and so is done.
The rose withers, the blossom blasteth,
The flower fades, the morning hasteth,
The sun sets, the shadow flies,
The gourd consumes, and man—he dies!

Like to the grass that's newly sprung,
Or like a tale that's new begun,
Or like a bird that's here to-day,
Or like the pearlèd dew of May,
Or like an hour, or like a span,
Or like the singing of a swan;
Even such is man, who lives by breath,
Is here, now there, in life and death.
The grass withers, the tale is ended,
The bird is flown, the dew's ascended,
The hour is short, the span not long,
The swan near death,—man's life is done!

Like to a bubble in the brook,
Or in a glass much like a look,
Or like a shuttle in a weaver's hand,
Or like the writing on the sand,
Or like a thought, or like a dream,
Or like the gliding of a stream;
Even such is man, who lives by breath,
Is here, now there, in life and death.
The bubble's out, the look's forgot,
The shuttle's flung, the writing's blot,
The thought is past, the dream is gone,
The water glides,—man's life is done!

Like to a blaze of fond delight,
Or like a morning clear and bright,
Or like a frost, or like a shower,
Or like the pride of Babel's tower,
Or like the hour that guides the time,
Or like to Beauty in her prime;

Even such is man, whose glory lends
That life a blaze or two, and ends.
The morn's o'ercast, joy turned to pain,
The frost is thawed, dried up the rain,
The tower falls, the hour is run,
The beauty lost,—man's life is done!

Like to an arrow from the bow,
Or like swift course of water-flow,
Or like that time 'twixt flood and ebb.
Or like the spider's tender web,
Or like a race, or like a goal,
Or like the dealing of a dole;
Even such is man, whose brittle state
Is always subject unto Fate.
The arrow's shot, the flood soon spent,
The time's no time, the web soon rent,
The race soon run, the goal soon won,
The dole soon dealt,—man's life is done!

Like to the lightning from the sky,
Or like a post that quick doth hie,
Or like a quaver in a short song,
Or like a journey three days long,
Or like the snow when summer's come,
Or like the pear, or like the plum;
Even such is man, who heaps up sorrow,
Lives but this day, and dies to-morrow.
The lightning's past, the post must go,
The song is short, the journey's so,
The pear doth rot, the plum doth fall,
The snow dissolves,—and so must all!

Simon Wastell [? –1632]

TO DEATH

O KING of Terrors! whose unbounded sway
All that have life must certainly obey;
The king, the priest, the prophet, all are thine,
Nor would even God (in flesh) thy stroke decline.

My name is on thy roll, and sure I must
Increase thy gloomy kingdom in the dust.
My soul at this no apprehension feels,
But trembles at thy swords, thy racks, thy wheels,
Thy scorching fevers, which distract the sense,
And snatch us raving, unprepared, from hence;
At thy contagious darts, that wound the heads
Of weeping friends who wait at dying beds.—
Spare these, and let thy time be when it will;
My office is to die, and thine to kill.
Gently thy fatal scepter on me lay,
And take to thy cold arms, insensibly, thy prey.

Anne Finch [? –1720]

THE GENIUS OF DEATH

What is death? 'Tis to be free,
No more to love or hope or fear,
To join the great equality;
All, all alike are humbled there.
The mighty grave
Wraps lord and slave;
Nor pride nor poverty dares come
Within that refuge-house,—the tomb.

Spirit with the drooping wing
And the ever-weeping eye,
Thou of all earth's kings art king;
Empires at thy footstool lie;
Beneath thee strewed,
Their multitude
Sink like waves upon the shore;
Storms shall never raise them more.

What's the grandeur of the earth
To the grandeur round thy throne?
Riches, glory, beauty, birth,
To thy kingdom all have gone.
Before thee stand
The wondrous band,—

Bards, heroes, sages, side by side,
Who darkened nations when they died.

Earth has hosts, but thou canst show
Many a million for her one;
Through thy gates the mortal flow
Hath for countless years rolled on.
Back from the tomb
No step has come,
There fixed till the last thunder's sound
Shall bid thy prisoners be unbound.

George Croly [1780–1860]

"OH, WHY SHOULD THE SPIRIT OF MORTAL BE PROUD?"

Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-flitting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around, and together be laid;
As the young and the old, the low and the high,
Shall crumble to dust and together shall lie.

The child that a mother attended and loved,
The mother that infant's affection who proved,
The husband that mother and infant who blessed,—
Each, all, are away to their dwellings of rest.

The maid on whose brow, on whose cheek, in whose eye,
Shone beauty and pleasure,—her triumphs are by;
And alike from the minds of the living erased
Are the memories of mortals who loved her and praised.

The hand of the king, that the scepter hath borne;
The brow of the priest, that the mitre hath worn;
The eyes of the sage, and the heart of the brave,—
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

The peasant, whose lot was to sow and to reap;
The herdsman, who climbed with his goats up the steep;
The beggar, who wandered in search of his bread,—
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

The saint who enjoyed the communion of heaven,
The sinner who dared to remain unforgiven,
The wise and the foolish, the guilty and just,
Have quietly mingled their bones in the dust.

So the multitude goes, like the flower or weed,
That withers away to let others succeed;
So the multitude comes, even those we behold,
To repeat every tale that has often been told.

For we are the same things our fathers have been;
We see the same sights our fathers have seen;
We drink the same stream, we feel the same sun,
And run the same course our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking our fathers did think;
From the death we are shrinking our fathers did shrink;
To the life we are clinging our fathers did cling,
But it speeds from us all like the bird on the wing.

They loved,—but the story we cannot unfold;
They scorned,—but the heart of the haughty is cold;
They grieved,—but no wail from their slumbers will come;
They joyed,—but the tongue of their gladness is dumb.

They died,—ah! they died;—we, things that are now,
That walk on the turf that lies over their brow,
And make in their dwellings a transient abode,
Meet the changes they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea, hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
Are mingled together in sunshine and rain:
And the smile and the tear, the song and the dirge,
Still follow each other like surge upon surge.

'Tis the wink of an eye; 'tis the draught of a breath
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud;
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

William Knox [1789–1825]

THE HOUR OF DEATH

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

Day is for mortal care:
Eve for glad meetings round the joyous hearth;
Night, for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer,
But all for thee, thou Mightiest of the earth.

The banquet hath its hour—
Its feverish hour—of mirth and song and wine;
There comes a day for grief's o'erwhelming power,
A time for softer tears,—but all are thine.

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at thee,—but thou art not of those
That wait the ripened bloom to seize their prey.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

We know when moons shall wane,
When summer birds from far shall cross the sea,
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain,—
But who shall teach us when to look for thee?

Is it when Spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie?
Is it when roses in our paths grow pale?
They have *one* season—*all* are ours to die!

Thou art where billows foam;
Thou art where music melts upon the air;
Thou art around us in our peaceful home;
And the world calls us forth—and thou art there.

Thou art where friend meets friend,
Beneath the shadow of the elm to rest;
Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend
The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death!

Felicia Dorothea Hemans [1793–1835]

THE SLEEP

"He giveth his belovèd sleep."—*Psalm* cxxvii. 2

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward into souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift or grace, surpassing this:
"He giveth his belovèd—sleep"?

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp to sweep,
The patriot's voice to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown, to light the brows?
He giveth *his* belovèd—sleep.

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith all undisproved,
A little dust to overweep,
And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake:
He giveth *his* belovèd—sleep.

"Sleep soft," beloved! we sometimes say,
Who have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber when
He giveth *his* belovèd—sleep.

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O delvèd gold, the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And giveth his belovèd—sleep.

His dews drop mutely on the hill,
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap:
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
He giveth his belovèd—sleep.

Ay, men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man
Confirmed in such a rest to keep;
But Angels say, and through the word
I think their happy smile is *heard*—
"He giveth his belovèd—sleep."

For me, my heart, that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the mummers leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on his love repose
Who giveth his belovèd—sleep.

And friends, dear friends, when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let One, most loving of you all,
Say "Not a tear must o'er her fall!
He giveth his belovèd sleep."

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

AZRAEL

THE angels in high places
Who minister to us,
Reflect God's smile,—their faces
Are luminous;
Save one, whose face is hidden,
(The Prophet saith),
The unwelcome, the unbidden,
Azrael, Angel of Death.
And yet that veilèd face, I know
Is lit with pitying eyes,
Like those faint stars, the first to glow
Through cloudy winter skies.

That they may never tire,
Angels, by God's decree,
Bear wings of snow and fire,—
Passion and purity;
Save one, all unavailing,
(The Prophet saith),
His wings are gray and trailing,
Azrael, Angel of Death.
And yet the souls that Azrael brings
Across the dark and cold,
Look up beneath those folded wings,
And find them lined with gold.

Robert Gilbert Welsh [18

"WHERE LIES THE LAND"

From "Songs in Absence"

WHERE lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,
Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace;
Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights, when wild north-westers rave,
How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!
The dripping sailor on the reeling mast
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

Arthur Hugh Clough [1819–1861]

UP-HILL

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you waiting at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labor you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yea, beds for all who come.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

THE BOURNE

Underneath the growing grass,
Underneath the living flowers,
Deeper than the sound of showers:
There we shall not count the hours
By the shadows as they pass.

Youth and health will be but vain,
Beauty reckoned of no worth:
There a very little girth
Can hold round what once the earth
Seemed too narrow to contain.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

THE CONQUEROR WORM

Lo! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years.
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theater to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly;
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their condor wings
Invisible Woe.

That motley drama—oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot;
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude:
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!

It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs!
The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

THE CITY IN THE SEA

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently,
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free:
Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls,
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,
Up shadowy, long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,
Up many and many a marvelous shrine,
Whose wreathèd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye,—
Not the gaily-jeweled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas,
Along that wilderness of glass;
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea;
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene!

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide;
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven!
The waves have now a redder glow,
The hours are breathing faint and low;
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809–1849]

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS

THERE is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have naught that is fair?" saith he;
"Have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled;
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where He was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints, upon their garments white,
These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THE CLOSING SCENE

Within his sober realm of leafless trees,
The russet year inhaled the dreamy air;
Like some tanned reaper in his hour of ease,
When all the fields are lying brown and bare.

The gray barns looking from their hazy hills
O'er the dim waters widening in the vales,
Sent down the air a greeting to the mills,
On the dull thunder of alternate flails.

All sights were mellowed and all sounds subdued,
The hills seemed farther and the streams sang low;
As in a dream the distant woodman hewed
His winter log with many a muffled blow.

The embattled forests, erewhile armed in gold,
Their banners bright with every martial hue,
Now stood, like some sad, beaten host of old,
Withdrawn afar in Time's remotest blue.

On slumbrous wings the vulture held his flight;
The dove scarce heard his sighing mate's complaint,
And like a star slow drowning in the light,
The village church-vane seemed to pale and faint.

The sentinel-cock upon the hillside crew,—
Crew thrice, and all was stiller than before,—
Silent till some replying warder blew
His alien horn, and then was heard no more.

Where erst the jay, within the elm's tall crest,
Made garrulous trouble round her unfledged young,
And where the oriole hung her swaying nest,
By every light wind like a censer swung—

Where sang the noisy masons of the eaves,
The busy swallows, circling ever near,
Foreboding, as the rustic mind believes,
An early harvest and a plenteous year;—

Where every bird which charmed the vernal feast,
Shook the sweet slumber from its wings at morn,
To warn the reaper of the rosy east,—
All now was songless, empty, and forlorn.

Alone from out the stubble piped the quail,
And croaked the crow through all the dreamy gloom;
Alone the pheasant, drumming in the vale,
Made echo to the distant cottage loom.

There was no bud, no bloom upon the bowers;
The spiders wove their thin shrouds night by night;
The thistle-down, the only ghost of flowers,
Sailed slowly by, passed noiseless out of sight.

Amid all this, in this most cheerless air,
And where the woodbine shed upon the porch
Its crimson leaves, as if the Year stood there
Firing the floor with his inverted torch;—

Amid all this, the center of the scene,
The white-haired matron, with monotonous tread,
Plied the swift wheel, and with her joyless mien,
Sat, like a Fate, and watched the flying thread.

She had known Sorrow,—he had walked with her,
Oft supped, and broke the bitter ashen crust;
And in the dead leaves still she heard the stir
Of his black mantle trailing in the dust.

While yet her cheek was bright with summer bloom,
Her country summoned and she gave her all;
And twice War bowed to her his sable plume,—
Re-gave the swords to rust upon the wall.

Re-gave the swords,—but not the hand that drew
And struck for Liberty its dying blow,
Nor him who, to his sire and country true,
Fell 'mid the ranks of the invading foe.

Long, but not loud, the droning wheel went on,
Like the low murmur of a hive at noon;
Long, but not loud, the memory of the gone
Breathed through her lips a sad and tremulous tune.

At last the thread was snapped,—her head was bowed;
Life dropped the distaff through his hands serene;—
And loving neighbors smoothed her careful shroud,
While Death and Winter closed the autumn scene.

Thomas Buchanan Read [1822–1872]

MORS ET VITA

We know not yet what life shall be,
What shore beyond earth's shore be set;
What grief awaits us, or what glee,
We know not yet.

Still, somewhere in sweet converse met,
Old friends, we say, beyond death's sea
Shall meet and greet us, nor forget

Those days of yore, those years when we
Were loved and true,—but will death let
Our eyes the longed-for vision see?
We know not yet.

Samuel Waddington [1844–

"WHAT IS TO COME"

What is to come we know not. But we know
That what has been was good—was good to show,
Better to hide, and best of all to bear.
We are the masters of the days that were:
We have lived, we have loved, we have suffered . . .
even so.

Shall we not take the ebb who had the flow?
Life was our friend. Now, if it be our foe—
Dear, though it spoil and break us!—need we care
What is to come?

Let the great winds their worst and wildest blow,
Or the gold weather round us mellow slow:
We have fulfilled ourselves, and we can dare,
And we can conquer, though we may not share
In the rich quiet of the after-glow
What is to come.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

A ROUNDEL OF REST

If rest is sweet at shut of day
For tired hands and tired feet,
How sweet at last to rest for aye,
If rest is sweet!

We work or work not through the heat:
Death bids us soon our labors lay
In lands where night and twilight meet.

When the last dawns are fallen gray
And all life's toil and ease complete,
They know who work, not they who play,
If rest is sweet.

Arthur Symons [1865–

"WHEN THE MOST IS SAID"

What's love, when the most is said? The flash of the lightning fleet,
Then, darkness that shrouds the soul,—but the earth is firm to my feet;
The rocks and the tides endure, the grasses and herbs return,
The path to my foot is sure, and the sods to my bosom yearn.

What's fame, when the truth is told? A shout to a distant hill,
The crags may echo a while, but fainter, and fainter still;
Yet forever the wind blows wide the sweetness of all the skies,
The rain cries and the snow flies, and the storm in its bosom lies.

What's life, what's life, little heart? A dream when the nights are long,
Toil in the waking days,—tears, and a kiss, a song.

What's life, what's life, little heart? To beat and be glad of breath
While death waits on either side,—before and behind us, Death!

Mary Ainge De Vere [1844–

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Here, where the world is quiet,
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams,
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers,
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labor,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,

Pale beds of blowing rushes,
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than Love's, who fears to greet her,
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure;
And Love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be,
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

THE CHANGING ROAD

Beneath the softly falling snow,
The wood whose shy anemones
We plucked such little while ago
Becomes a wood of Christmas trees.

Our paths of rustling silken grass
Will soon be ermine bands of white
Spotted with tiny steps that pass
On silent errands in the night.

The river will be locked in hush,
But frosted like a fairy lawn
With knots of crystal flowers that flush
By moonlight, blanching in the dawn.

Flown are our minstrels, golden-wing
And rosy-breast and ruby-throat,
But all the pines are murmuring
A sweet, orchestral under-note.

So trustfully our hands we lay
Within the old, kind hands of Time,
Who holds on his mysterious way
From rime to bloom, from bloom to rime,

And lets us run beside his knee
O'er rough and smooth, and touch his load,
And play we bear the burden, we,
And revel in the changing road,

Till ivory dawn and purple noon
And dove-gray eve have one by one
Traced on the skies their ancient rune,
And all our little strength is done.

Then Time shall lift a starry torch
In signal to his gentle Twin,
Who, stooping from a shining porch,
Gathers the drowsy children in.

I wonder if, through that strange sleep,
Unstirred by clock or silver chime,
Our dreams will not the cadence keep
Of those unresting feet of Time,

And follow on his beauteous path
From snow to flowers, from flowers to snow,
And marvel what high charge he hath,
Whither the fearless footsteps go.

Katharine Lee Bates [1859–

THE GREAT MISGIVING

"Not ours," say some, "the thought of death to dread;
Asking no heaven, we fear no fabled hell:
Life is a feast, and we have banqueted—
Shall not the worms as well?

"The after-silence, when the feast is o'er,
And void the places where the minstrels stood,
Differs in naught from what hath been before,
And is nor ill nor good."

Ah, but the Apparition—the dumb sign—
The beckoning finger bidding me forgo
The fellowship, the converse, and the wine,
The songs, the festal glow!

And ah, to know not, while with friends I sit,
And while the purple joy is passed about,
Whether 'tis ampler day divinelier lit
Or homeless night without;

And whether, stepping forth, my soul shall see
New prospects, or fall sheer—a blinded thing!
There is, O grave, thy hourly victory,
And there, O death, thy sting.

William Watson [1858–

THE DEAD COACH

At night when sick folk wakeful lie,
I heard the dead coach passing by,
And heard it passing wild and fleet,
And knew my time was come not yet.

Click-clack, click-clack, the hoofs went past,
Who takes the dead coach travels fast,
On and away through the wild night,
The dead must rest ere morning light.

If one might follow on its track
The coach and horses, midnight black,
Within should sit a shape of doom
That beckons one and all to come.

God pity them to-night who wait
To hear the dead coach at their gate,
And him who hears, though sense be dim,
The mournful dead coach stop for him.

He shall go down with a still face,
And mount the steps and take his place,
The door be shut, the order said!
How fast the pace is with the dead!

Click-clack, click-clack, the hour is chill,
The dead coach climbs the distant hill.
Now, God, the Father of all us,
Wipe Thou the widow's tears that fall!

Katharine Tynan [1861–

L'ENVOI

Where are the loves that we loved before,
When once we are alone, and shut the door?
No matter whose the arms that held me fast,
The arms of Darkness hold me at the last.

No matter down what primrose path I tend,
I kiss the lips of Silence in the end.
No matter on what heart I found delight,
I come again unto the breast of Night.
No matter when or how Love did befall,
'Tis loneliness that loves me best of all.
And in the end she claims me, and I know
That she will stay, though all the rest may go.
No matter whose the eyes that I would keep
Near in the dark, 'tis in the eyes of Sleep
That I must look and look forevermore,
When once I am alone and shut the door.

Willa Sibert Cather [1875–

DEATH

I AM the key that parts the gates of Fame;
I am the cloak that covers cowering Shame;
I am the final goal of every race;
I am the storm-tossed spirit's resting-place:

The messenger of sure and swift relief,
Welcomed with wailings and reproachful grief;
The friend of those that have no friend but me,
I break all chains, and set all captives free.

I am the cloud that, when Earth's day is done,
An instant veils an unextinguished sun;
I am the brooding hush that follows strife,
The waking from a dream that Man calls—Life!

Florence Earle Coates [1850–

A DIRGE

From "The White Devil"

CALL for the robin-redbreast and the wren,
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.

Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And (when gay tombs are robbed) sustain no harm;
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.

John Webster [1580?–1625?]

DIRGE

From "Cymbeline"

Fear no more the heat o' the sun
  Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
  Home art gone and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
  Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat;
  To thee the reed is as the oak:
The scepter, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash
  Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
  Thou hast finished joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

William Shakespeare [1564–1616]

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE

Sung by Guiderus and Arviragus over Fidele, supposed to be dead

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
  Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet, of earliest bloom,
  And rifle all the breathing spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear,
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No withered witch shall here be seen,
No goblins lead their nightly crew;
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew.

The redbreast oft at evening hours
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gathered flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
In tempests shake the sylvan cell,
Or midst the chase on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell,

Each lonely scene shall thee restore,
For thee the tear be duly shed:
Beloved, till life could charm no more;
And mourned, till Pity's self be dead.

William Collins [1721–1759]

HALLOWED GROUND

What's hallowed ground? Has earth a clod
Its Maker meant not should be trod
By man, the image of his God,
Erect and free,
Unscourged by Superstition's rod
To bow the knee?

That's hallowed ground where, mourned and missed,
The lips repose our love has kissed;
But where's their memory's mansion? Is't
Yon churchyard's bowers?
No! in ourselves their souls exist,
A part of ours.

A kiss can consecrate the ground
Where mated hearts are mutual bound:
The spot where love's first links were wound,
That ne'er are riven,
Is hallowed down to earth's profound,
And up to Heaven!

For time makes all but true love old;
The burning thoughts that then were told
Run molten still in memory's mold;
And will not cool
Until the heart itself be cold
In Lethe's pool.

What hallows ground where heroes sleep?
'Tis not the sculptured piles you heap!
In dews that heavens far distant weep
Their turf may bloom;
Or Genii twine beneath the deep
Their coral tomb.

But strew his ashes to the wind
Whose sword or voice has served mankind,—
And is he dead, whose glorious mind
Lifts thine on high?—
To live in hearts we leave behind
Is not to die.

Is't death to fall for Freedom's right?
He's dead alone that lacks her light!
And murder sullies in Heaven's sight
The sword he draws:—
What can alone ennoble fight?
A noble cause!

Give that!—and welcome War to brace
Her drums! and rend Heaven's reeking space!
The colors planted face to face,
The charging cheer,
Though Death's pale horse lead on the chase
Shall still be dear.

And place our trophies where men kneel
To Heaven!—but Heaven rebukes my zeal
The cause of Truth and human weal,
O God above!
Transfer it from the sword's appeal
To Peace and Love.

Peace, Love! the cherubim, that join
Their spread wings o'er Devotion's shrine,
Prayers sound in vain, and temples shine,
Where they are not,—
The heart alone can make divine
Religion's spot.

To incantations dost thou trust,
And pompous rites in domes august?
See moldering stones and metal's rust
Belie the vaunt,
That man can bless one pile of dust
With chime or chaunt.

The ticking wood-worm mocks thee, man!
Thy temples,—creeds themselves grow wan!
But there's a dome of nobler span,
A temple given
Thy faith, that bigots dare not ban,—
Its space is Heaven!

Its roof, star-pictured Nature's ceiling,
Where, trancing the rapt spirit's feeling,
And God himself to man revealing,
The harmonious spheres
Make music, though unheard their pealing
By mortal ears.

Fair stars! are not your beings pure?
Can sin, can death, your worlds obscure?
Else why so swell the thoughts at your
Aspect above?
Ye must be Heavens that make us sure
Of heavenly love!

And in your harmony sublime
I read the doom of distant time:
That man's regenerate soul from crime
  Shall yet be drawn,
And reason on his mortal clime
  Immortal dawn.

What's hallowed ground? 'Tis what gives birth
To sacred thoughts in souls of worth!—
Peace! Independence! Truth! go forth
  Earth's compass round;
And your high-priesthood shall make earth
  All hallowed ground.

Thomas Campbell [1777–1844]

THE CHURCHYARD

How slowly creeps the hand of Time
  On the old clock's green-mantled face!
Yea, slowly as those ivies climb,
  The hours roll round with patient pace;
The drowsy rooks caw on the tower,
  The tame doves hover round and round;
Below, the slow grass hour by hour
  Makes green God's sleeping-ground.

All moves, but nothing here is swift;
  The grass grows deep, the green boughs shoot;
From east to west the shadows drift;
  The earth feels heavenward underfoot;
The slow stream through the bridge doth stray
  With water-lilies on its marge,
And slowly, piled with scented hay,
  Creeps by the silent barge.

All stirs, but nothing here is loud:
  The cushat broods, the cuckoo cries;
Faint, far up, under a white cloud,
  The lark trills soft to earth and skies;

And underneath the green graves rest;
And through the place, with slow footfalls,
With snowy cambric on his breast,
The old gray Vicar crawls.

And close at hand, to see him come,
Clustering at the playground gate,
The urchins of the school-house, dumb
And bashful, hang the head and wait;
The little maidens curtsey deep,
The boys their forelocks touch meanwhile,
The Vicar sees them, half asleep,
And smiles a sleepy smile.

Slow as the hand on the clock's face,
Slow as the white cloud in the sky,
He cometh now with tottering pace
To the old vicarage hard by;
Smothered it stands in ivy leaves,
Laurels and yews make dark the ground;
The swifts that build beneath the eaves
Wheel in still circles round.

And from the portal, green and dark,
He glances at the church-clock old—
Gray soul! why seek his eyes to mark
The creeping of that finger cold?
He cannot see, but still as stone
He pauses, listening for the chime,
And hears from that green tower intone
The eternal voice of Time.

Robert Buchanan [1841–1901]

THE OLD CHURCHYARD OF BONCHURCH

The churchyard leans to the sea with its dead,—
It leans to the sea with its dead so long.
Do they hear, I wonder, the first bird's song,
When the winter's anger is all but fled;

The high, sweet voice of the west wind,
The fall of the warm, soft rain,
When the second month of the year
Puts heart in the earth again?

Do they hear, through the glad April weather,
The green grasses waving above them?
Do they think there are none left to love them,
They have lain for so long there together?
Do they hear the note of the cuckoo,
The cry of gulls on the wing,
The laughter of winds and waters,
The feet of the dancing Spring?

Do they feel the old land slipping seaward,—
The old land, with its hills and its graves,—
As they gradually slide to the waves,
With the wind blowing on them from leaward?
Do they know of the change that awaits them,—
The sepulcher vast and strange?
Do they long for the days to go over,
And bring that miraculous change?

Or love they their night with no moonlight,
With no starlight, no dawn to its gloom?
Do they sigh: "'Neath the snow, or the bloom
Of the wild things that wave from our night,
We are warm, through winter and summer;
We hear the winds rave, and we say:
'The storm-wind blows over our heads,
But we, here, are out of its way'"?

Do they mumble low, one to another
With a sense that the waters that thunder
Shall ingather them all, draw them under:
"Ah, how long to our moving, my brother?
How long shall we quietly rest here,
In graves of darkness and ease?
The waves even now, may be on us
To draw us down under the seas!"

Do they think 'twill be cold when the waters
That they love not, that neither can love them,
Shall eternally thunder above them?
Have they dread of the sea's shining daughters,
That people the bright sea-regions
And play with the young sea-kings?
Have they dread of their cold embraces,
And dread of all strange sea-things?

But their dread or their joy,—it is bootless:
They shall pass from the breast of their mother;
They shall lie low, dead brother by brother,
In a place that is radiant and fruitless;
And the folk that sail over their heads
In violent weather
Shall come down to them, haply, and all
They shall lie there, together.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850–1887]

THE INDIAN BURYING-GROUND

In spite of all the learned have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The posture that we give the dead
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands;—
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imaged birds, and painted bowl,
And venison, for a journey dressed,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
Activity, that wants no rest.

His bow for action ready bent,
And arrows with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit,—
Observe the swelling turf, and say,
They do not lie, but here they sit.

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted half by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far projecting shade
(And which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest played.

There oft a restless Indian queen
(Pale Shebah with her braided hair),
And many a barbarous form is seen
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chase arrayed,
The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer—a shade!

And long shall timorous Fancy see
The painted chief, and pointed spear,
And Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.

Philip Freneau [1752–1832]

GOD'S-ACRE

I LIKE that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
The burial-ground God's-Acre! It is just;
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

God's-Acre! Yes, that blessed name imparts
Comfort to those who in the grave have sown
The seed that they had garnered in their hearts,
Their bread of life, alas! no more their own.

Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
In the sure faith, that we shall rise again
At the great harvest, when the archangel's blast
Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain.

Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom,
In the fair garden of that second birth;
And each bright blossom mingle its perfume
With that of flowers, which never bloomed on earth.

With thy rude plowshare, Death, turn up the sod,
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow;
This is the field and Acre of our God,
This is the place where human harvests grow.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THE CITY OF THE DEAD

They do neither plight nor wed
In the city of the dead,
In the city where they sleep away the hours;
But they lie, while o'er them range
Winter blight and Summer change,
And a hundred happy whisperings of flowers.
No, they neither wed nor plight,
And the day is like the night,
For their vision is of other kind than ours.

They do neither sing nor sigh
In that burg of by and by,
Where the streets have grasses growing cool and long;
But they rest within their bed,
Leaving all their thoughts unsaid,
Deeming silence better far than sob or song.
No, they neither sigh nor sing,
Though the robin be a-wing,
Though the leaves of Autumn march a million strong.

There is only rest and peace
In the City of Surcease
From the failings and the wailings 'neath the sun,
And the wings of the swift years
Beat but gently o'er the biers,

Making music to the sleepers every one.
There is only peace and rest;
But to them it seemeth best,
For they lie at ease and know that life is done.

Richard Burton [1859–

THE GARDEN THAT I LOVE

The Garden that I love is full of Light;
It lies upon the sloping of a hill,
Where Dawn first stirs the curtains of the Night,
And the breeze whispers when the Noon is still.

The garden that I love is full of Peace;
The voices of the vale are faint and far,
The busy murmurs of the highway cease,
And silently, at evening, comes the Star.

The garden that I love is full of Dreams;
Visions of joy gone by, and bliss that waits,
Beyond the furthest verge of sunset gleams,
With the wide opening of the Golden Gates.

The garden that I love is full of Rest;
God's own fair Acre, where His dear ones lie,
In the safe shelter of the kind earth's breast,
Waiting His Easter dawning up the sky.

There may I rest, asleep with them awhile,
There may I wake, with them, that glorious Day,
When, in the sunshine of the Master's smile,
Sorrow and sighing shall be swept away!

Florence L. Henderson [18 –

THE OLD SEXTON

Nigh to a grave that was newly made,
Leaned a sexton old on his earth-worn spade;
His work was done, and he paused to wait
The funeral-train at the open gate.

A relic of by-gone days was he,
And his locks were gray as the foamy sea;
And these words came from his lips so thin:
"I gather them in—I gather them in—
Gather—gather—gather them in.

"I gather them in; for man and boy,
Year after year of grief and joy,
I've builded the houses that lie around
In every nook of this burial-ground,
Mother and daughter, father and son,
Come to my solitude, one by one;
But come they stranger, or come they kin,
I gather them in—I gather them in.

"Many are with me, yet I'm alone;
I'm King of the Dead, and I make my throne
On a monument slab of marble cold—
My scepter of rule is the spade I hold.
Come they from cottage, or come they from hall,
Mankind are my subjects, all, all, all!
May they loiter in pleasure, or toilfully spin,
I gather them in—I gather them in.

"I gather them in, and their final rest
Is here, down here, in the earth's dark breast!"
And the sexton ceased as the funeral-train
Wound mutely over that solemn plain;
And I said to myself: When time is told,
A mightier voice than that sexton's old,
Will sound o'er the last trump's dreadful din:
"I gather them in—I gather them in—
Gather—gather—gather them in."

Park Benjamin [1809–1864]

THE TWO VILLAGES

Over the river, on the hill,
Lieth a village white and still;
All around it the forest-trees
Shiver and whisper in the breeze;
Over it sailing shadows go
Of soaring hawk and screaming crow,

And mountain grasses, low and sweet,
Grow in the middle of every street.

Over the river, under the hill,
Another village lieth still;
There I see in the cloudy night
Twinkling stars of household light,
Fires that gleam from the smithy's door,
Mists that curl on the river-shore;
And in the roads no grasses grow,
For the wheels that hasten to and fro.

In that village on the hill
Never is sound of smithy or mill;
The houses are thatched with grass and flowers;
Never a clock to toll the hours;
The marble doors are always shut,
You cannot enter in hall or hut;
All the villagers lie asleep;
Never a grain to sow or reap;
Never in dreams to moan or sigh;
Silent and idle and low they lie.

In that village under the hill,
When the night is starry and still,
Many a weary soul in prayer
Looks to the other village there,
And weeping and sighing, longs to go
Up to that home from this below;
Longs to sleep in the forest wild,
Whither have vanished wife and child,
And heareth, praying, this answer fall:
"Patience! that village shall hold ye all!"

Rose Terry Cooke [1827–1892]

DAYBREAK

A WIND came up out of the sea,
And said, "O mists, make room for me!"

It hailed the ships, and cried, "Sail on,
Ye mariners, the night is gone!"

And hurried landward far away,
Crying, "Awake! it is the day!"

It said unto the forest, "Shout!
Hang all your leafy banners out!"

It touched the wood-bird's folded wing,
And said, "O bird, awake and sing!"

And o'er the farms, "O chanticleer,
Your clarion blow, the day is near!"

It whispered to the fields of corn,
"Bow down, and hail the coming morn!"

It shouted through the belfry-tower,
"Awake, O bell! proclaim the hour."

It crossed the churchyard with a sigh,
And said, "Not yet! in quiet lie."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

THANATOPSIS

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice:—

Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mold.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulcher. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first

The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glides away, the sons of men—
The youth in life's fresh spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

THE DANCE OF DEATH

(AFTER HOLBEIN)

"Contra vim Mortis
Non est medicamen in hortis."

He is the despots' Despot. All must bide,
Later or soon, the message of his might;
Princes and potentates their heads must hide,
Touched by the awful sigil of his right;
Beside the Kaiser he at eve doth wait

And pours a potion in his cup of state;
The stately Queen his bidding must obey;
No keen-eyed Cardinal shall him affray;
And to the Dame that wantoneth he saith—
"Let be, Sweet-heart, to junket and to play."
There is no King more terrible than Death.

The lusty Lord, rejoicing in his pride,
He draweth down; before the armèd Knight
With jingling bridle-rein he still doth ride;
He crosseth the strong Captain in the fight;
The Burgher grave he beckons from debate;
He hales the Abbot by his shaven pate,
Nor for the Abbess' wailing will delay;
No bawling Mendicant shall say him nay;
E'en to the pyx the Priest he followeth,
Nor can the Leech his chilling finger stay . . .
There is no King more terrible than Death.

All things must bow to him. And woe betide
The Wine-bibber,—the Roisterer by night;
Him the feast-master, many bouts defied,
Him 'twixt the pledging and the cup shall smite;
Woe to the Lender at usurious rate,
The hard Rich Man, the hireling Advocate;
Woe to the Judge that selleth Law for pay;
Woe to the Thief that like a beast of prey
With creeping tread the traveller harryeth:—
These, in their sin, the sudden sword shall slay . . .
There is no King more terrible than Death.

He hath no pity,—nor will be denied.
When the low hearth is garnishèd and bright,
Grimly he flingeth the dim portal wide,
And steals the Infant in the Mother's sight;
He hath no pity for the scorned of fate:—
He spares not Lazarus lying at the gate,
Nay, nor the Blind that stumbleth as he may;
Nay, the tired Ploughman,—at the sinking ray,—
In the last furrow,—feels an icy breath,
And knows a hand hath turned the team astray . . .
There is no King more terrible than Death.

He hath no pity. For the new-made Bride,
Blithe with the promise of her life's delight,
That wanders gladly by her Husband's side,
He with the clatter of his drum doth fright;
He scares the Virgin at the convent grate;
The Maid half-won, the Lover passionate;
He hath no grace for weakness and decay:
The tender Wife, the Widow bent and gray,
The feeble Sire whose footstep faltereth,—
All these he leadeth by the lonely way . . .
There is no King more terrible than Death.

ENVOY

YOUTH, for whose ear and monishing of late,
I sang of Prodigals and lost estate,
Have thou thy joy of living and be gay;
But know not less that there must come a day,—
Aye, and perchance e'en now it hasteneth,—
When thine own heart shall speak to thee and say,—
There is no King more terrible than Death.

Austin Dobson [1840–

FACING THE SUNSET

THE LIE

Go, Soul, the Body's guest,
  Upon a thankless arrant;
Fear not to touch the best;
  The truth shall be thy warrant:
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the World the lie.

Say to the Court, it glows
  And shines like rotten wood:
Say to the Church, it shows
  What's good, and doth no good:
If Court and Church reply
Then give them both the lie.

Tell Potentates, they live
  Acting by others' action,
Not loved unless they give,
  Not strong but by a faction:
If Potentates reply,
Give Potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition
  That manage the Estate,
Their purpose is ambition,
  Their practice, only hate:
And if they once reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most,
  They beg for more by spending,
Who, in their greatest cost,
  Seek nothing but commending:
And if they make reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell Zeal it wants devotion;
  Tell Love it is but lust;
Tell Time it is but motion;
  Tell Flesh it is but dust:
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell Age it daily wasteth;
  Tell Honor how it alters;
Tell Beauty how she blasteth;
  Tell Favor how it falters:
And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell Wit how much it wrangles
  In tickle points of niceness;
Tell Wisdom she entangles
  Herself in over-wiseness:
And when they do reply,
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell Physic of her boldness;
  Tell Skill it is pretension;
Tell Charity of coldness;
  Tell Law it is contention:
And as they do reply,
So give them still the lie.

Tell Fortune of her blindness;
  Tell Nature of decay;
Tell Friendship of unkindness;
  Tell Justice of delay:
And if they will reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell Arts they have no soundness,
  But vary by esteeming;
Tell Schools they want profoundness,
  And stand too much on seeming:
If Arts and Schools reply,
Give Arts and Schools the lie.

Tell Faith it's fled the City;
  Tell how the Country erreth,
Tell Manhood shakes off pity;
  Tell Virtue least preferreth:
And if they do reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast, as I
  Commanded thee, done blabbing,—
Although to give the lie
  Deserves no less than stabbing,—
Yet, stab at thee that will,
No stab the soul can kill!

Walter Raleigh [1552?–1618]

HIS PILGRIMAGE

Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
  My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
  My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer,
No other balm will there be given;
Whilst my soul, like quiet palmer,
Traveleth towards the land of Heaven;
Over the silver mountains
Where spring the nectar fountains:
    There will I kiss
    The bowl of bliss,
And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken hill.
My soul will be a-dry before;
But after, it will thirst no more.

Then by that happy, blissful day,
More peaceful pilgrims I shall see,
That have cast off their rags of clay,
And walk appareled fresh like me.
    I'll take them first
    To quench their thirst,

And taste of nectar's suckets
At those clear wells
Where sweetness dwells
Drawn up by saints in crystal buckets.

And when our bottles and all we
Are filled with immortality,
Then the blessèd paths we'll travel,
Strowed with rubies thick as gravel;—
Ceilings of diamonds, sapphire floors,
High walls of coral, and pearly bowers.
From thence to Heaven's bribeless hall,
Where no corrupted voices brawl;
No conscience molten into gold,
No forged accuser bought or sold,
No cause deferred, no vain-spent journey,
For there Christ is the King's Attorney,
Who pleads for all without degrees,
And He hath angels, but no fees.
And when the grand twelve-million jury
Of our sins, with direful fury,
Against our souls black verdicts give,
Christ pleads His death, and then we live.

Be Thou my speaker, taintless pleader,
Unblotted lawyer, true proceeder!
Thou giv'st salvation even for alms;
Not with a bribèd lawyer's palms.
And this is mine eternal plea
To Him that made heaven, earth, and sea,
That, since my flesh must die so soon,
And want a head to dine next noon,
Just at the stroke, when my veins start and spread,
Set on my soul an everlasting head!
Then am I ready, like a palmer, fit
To tread those blest paths which before I writ.

O death and judgment, heaven and hell,
Who oft doth think, must needs die well.

Walter Raleigh [1552?–1618]

THE CONCLUSION

Even such is Time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days;
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God will raise me up, I trust.

Walter Raleigh [1552?–1618]

DEATH'S SUMMONS

Adieu, farewell, earth's bliss!
This world uncertain is:
Fond are life's lustful joys,
Death proves them all but toys.
None from his darts can fly:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Rich men, trust not in wealth,
Gold cannot buy you health;
Physic himself must fade;
All things to end are made;
The plague full swift goes by:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Beauty is but a flower,
Which wrinkles will devour:
Brightness falls from the air;
Queens have died young and fair;
Dust hath closed Helen's eye:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Strength stoops unto the grave;
Worms feed on Hector brave;

Swords may not fight with fate;
Earth still holds ope her gate;
Come, come, the bells do cry.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Wit with his wantonness,
Tasteth death's bitterness;
Hell's executioner
Hath no ears for to hear
What vain art can reply;
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Haste therefore each degree
To welcome destiny!
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage;
Mount we unto the sky:
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Thomas Nashe [1567–1601]

HIS WINDING-SHEET

Come thou, who art the wine and wit
Of all I've writ:
The grace, the glory, and the best
Piece of the rest.
Thou art of what I did intend
The all and end;
And what was made, was made to meet
Thee, thee, my sheet.
Come then, and be to my chaste side
Both bed and bride:
We two, as reliques left, will have
One rest, one grave:
And, hugging close, we will not fear
Lust entering here:
Where all desires are dead and cold
As is the mold;

And all affections are forgot,
  Or trouble not.
Here, here, the slaves and prisoners be
  From shackles free:
And weeping widows, long oppressed,
  Do here find rest.
The wrongèd client ends his laws
  Here, and his cause.
Here those long suits of Chancery lie
  Quiet, or die:
And all Star-Chamber bills do cease
  Or hold their peace.
Here needs no Court for our Request
  Where all are best,
All wise, all equal, and all just
  Alike i' th' dust.
Nor need we here to fear the frown
  Of court or crown:
Where Fortune bears no sway o'er things,
  There all are kings.
In this securer place we'll keep
  As lulled asleep;
Or for a little time we'll lie
  As robes laid by;
To be another day re-worn,
  Turned, but not torn:
Or like old testaments engrossed,
  Locked up, not lost.
And for a while lie here concealed,
  To be revealed
Next at that great Platonic Year,
  And then meet here.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

A PRAYER IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH

O Thou unknown, Almighty Cause
  Of all my hope and fear!
In whose dread presence, ere an hour,
  Perhaps I must appear!

If I have wandered in those paths
Of life I ought to shun,
As something, loudly, in my breast,
Remonstrates I have done;

Thou know'st that Thou hast formèd me
With passions wild and strong;
And listening to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stepped aside,
Do Thou, All-Good!—for such Thou art,—
In shades of darkness hide.

Where with intention I have erred,
No other plea I have,
But, Thou art good; and Goodness still
Delighteth to forgive.

Robert Burns [1759–1796]

SONG OF THE SILENT LAND *

Into the Silent Land!
Ah! who shall lead us thither?
Clouds in the evening sky more darkly gather,
And shattered wrecks lie thicker on the strand.
Who leads us with a gentle hand
Thither, oh, thither,
Into the Silent Land?

Into the Silent Land!
To you, ye boundless regions
Of all perfection! Tender morning-visions
Of beauteous souls! The Future's pledge and band!
Who in Life's battle firm doth stand,
Shall bear Hope's tender blossoms
Into the Silent Land!

* For the original of this poem see page 3832.

O Land! O Land!
For all the broken-hearted
The mildest herald by our fate allotted,
Beckons, and with inverted torch doth stand
To lead us with a gentle hand
To the land of the great Departed,
Into the Silent Land!

After von Salis-Seewis, by
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

JUNE

I GAZED upon the glorious sky
And the green mountains round,
And thought that when I came to lie
At rest within the ground,
'Twere pleasant that, in flowery June,
When brooks send up a cheerful tune,
And groves a joyous sound,
The sexton's hand, my grave to make,
The rich, green mountain-turf should break.

A cell within the frozen mould,
A coffin borne through sleet,
And icy clods above it rolled,
While fierce the tempests beat—
Away!—I will not think of these—
Blue be the sky and soft the breeze,
Earth green beneath the feet,
And be the damp mould gently pressed
Into my narrow place of rest.

There through the long, long summer hours,
The golden light should lie,
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
Stand in their beauty by.
The oriole should build and tell
His love-tale close beside my cell;
The idle butterfly
Should rest him there, and there be heard
The housewife bee and humming-bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon
Come, from the village sent,
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon
With fairy laughter blent?
And what if, in the evening light,
Betrothèd lovers walk in sight
Of my low monument?
I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know that I no more should see
The season's glorious show,
Nor would its brightness shine for me,
Nor its wild music flow;
But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom
Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their softened hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene;
Whose part, in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is that his grave is green;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice.

William Cullen Bryant [1794–1878]

LOVE, TIME AND DEATH

Ah me, dread friends of mine,—Love, Time, and Death:
Sweet Love, who came to me on shining wing,
And gave her to my arms,—her lips, her breath,
And all her golden ringlets clustering:
And Time, who gathers in the flying years,
He gave me all, but where is all he gave?
He took my love and left me barren tears;
Weary and lone I follow to the grave.

There Death will end this vision half-divine.
Wan Death, who waits in shadow evermore,
And silent, ere he give the sudden sign;
Oh, gently lead me through thy narrow door,
Thou gentle Death, thou trustieth friend of mine—
Ah me, for Love—will Death my Love restore?

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

A WISH

I ASK not that my bed of death
From bands of greedy heirs be free;
For these besiege the latest breath
Of fortune's favored sons, not me.

I ask not each kind soul to keep
Tearless, when of my death he hears.
Let those who will, if any, weep!
There are worse plagues on earth than tears.

I ask but that my death may find
The freedom to my life denied;
Ask but the folly of mankind
Then, then at last, to quit my side.

Spare me the whispering, crowded room,
The friends who come, and gape, and go;
The ceremonious air of gloom—
All, which makes death a hideous show!

Nor bring, to see me cease to live,
Some doctor full of phrase and fame,
To shake his sapient head, and give
The ill he cannot cure a name.

Nor fetch, to take the accustomed toll,
Of the poor sinner bound for death,
His brother-doctor of the soul,
To canvass with official breath

The future and its viewless things—
That undiscovered mystery
Which one who feels death's winnowing wings
Must needs read clearer, sure, than he!

Bring none of these; but let me be,
While all around in silence lies,
Moved to the window near, and see
Once more, before my dying eyes,

Bathed in the sacred dews of morn
The wide aërial landscape spread—
The world which was ere I was born,
The world which lasts when I am dead;

Which never was the friend of *one*,
Nor promised love it could not give,
But lit for all its generous sun,
And lived itself, and made us live.

There let me gaze, till I become
In soul, with what I gaze on, wed!
To feel the universe my home;
To have before my mind—instead

Of the sick room, the mortal strife,
The turmoil for a little breath—
The pure eternal course of life,
Not human combatings with death!

Thus feeling, gazing, might I grow
Composed, refreshed, ennobled, clear;
Then willing let my spirit go
To work or wait elsewhere or here!

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

NEXT OF KIN

The shadows gather round me, while you are in the sun:
My day is almost ended, but yours is just begun:
The winds are singing to us both and the streams are singing still,
And they fill your heart with music, but mine they cannot fill.

Your home is built in sunlight, mine in another day:
Your home is close at hand, sweet friend, but mine is far away:
Your bark is in the haven where you fain would be:
I must launch out into the deep, across the unknown sea.

You, white as dove or lily or spirit of the light:
I, stained and cold and glad to hide in the cold dark night:
You, joy to many a loving heart and light to many eyes:
I, lonely in the knowledge earth is full of vanities.

Yet when your day is over, as mine is nearly done,
And when your race is finished, as mine is almost run,
You, like me, shall cross your hands and bow your graceful head:
Yea, we twain shall sleep together in an equal bed.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

A BETTER RESURRECTION

I HAVE no wit, no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or fears.
Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is in the falling leaf:
O Jesu, quicken me!

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk;
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see:
Yet rise it shall,—the sap of Spring;
O Jesu, rise in me!

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold;

Cast in the fire the perished thing,
Melt and remold it, till it be
A royal cup for Him my King:
O Jesu, drink of me!

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

THE SUMMER IS ENDED

WREATHE no more lilies in my hair,
For I am dying, Sister sweet:
Or, if you will for the last time
Indeed, why make me fair
Once for my winding-sheet.

Pluck no more roses for my breast,
For I like them fade in my prime:
Or, if you will, why pluck them still,
That they may share my rest
Once more for the last time.

Weep not for me when I am gone,
Dear tender one, but hope and smile:
Or, if you cannot choose but weep,
A little while weep on,
Only a little while.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

A LITTLE PARABLE

I MADE the cross myself whose weight
Was later laid on me.
This thought is torture as I toil
Up life's steep Calvary.

To think mine own hands drove the nails!
I sang a merry song,
And chose the heaviest wood I had
To build it firm and strong.

If I had guessed—if I had dreamed
Its weight was meant for me,
I should have made a lighter cross
To bear up Calvary!

Anne Reeve Aldrich [1866–1892]

MY CROSS

My Lord would make a cross for me
But I would none of His,—
I thought I better knew than He
To bear my pain or bliss.

My Lord would make a cross for me
But I would make my own,—
In fashion light as cross could be
But now it weighs like stone.

If I had only bowed me low
To take the cross He laid,
It never would have galled me so
As this, the one I made.

For aye, His cross is true and sure
In all its breadth and length,
Just what His children can endure
And measured to their strength.

But I had fainted 'neath the load
I on myself did lay,
Had He not met me on the road
And helped me on the way!

Zitella Cocke [1847–

IN THE HOSPITAL

I LAY me down to sleep,
With little thought or care
Whether my waking find
Me here, or there.

A bowing, burdened head,
That only asks to rest,
Unquestioning, upon
A loving breast.

My good right hand forgets
Its cunning now;
To march the weary march
I know not how.

I am not eager, bold,
Nor strong—all that is past;
I am ready not to do
At last, at last.

My half day's work is done,
And this is all my part—
I give a patient God
My patient heart,

And grasp His banner still,
Though all the blue be dim;
These stripes as well as stars
Lead after Him.

Mary Woolsey Howland [1832–1864]

WHEN

If I were told that I must die to-morrow,
That the next sun
Which sinks would bear me past all fear and sorrow
For any one,
All the fight fought, all the short journey through,
What should I do?

I do not think that I should shrink or falter,
But just go on,
Doing my work, nor change nor seek to alter
Aught that is gone;
But rise and move and love and smile and pray
For one more day.

And, lying down at night for a last sleeping,
Say in that ear
Which hearkens ever: "Lord, within Thy keeping
How should I fear?
And when to-morrow brings Thee nearer still,
Do thou Thy will."

I might not sleep for awe; but peaceful, tender,
My soul would lie
All the night long; and when the morning splendor
Flushed o'er the sky,
I think that I could smile—could calmly say,
"It is His day."

But if a wondrous hand from the blue yonder
Held out a scroll
On which my life was writ, and I with wonder
Beheld unroll
To a long century's end its mystic clue,
What should I do?

What *could* I do, O blessed Guide and Master,
Other than this:
Still to go on as now, not slower, faster,
Nor fear to miss
The road, although so very long it be,
While led by Thee?

Step after step, feeling Thee close beside me,
Although unseen,
Through thorns, through flowers, whether the tempest hide
Thee,
Or heavens serene,
Assured Thy faithfulness cannot betray,
Thy love decay.

I may not know; my God, no hand revealeth
Thy counsels wise;
Along the path a deepening shadow stealeth,
No voice replies
To all my questioning thought, the time to tell;
And it is well.

Let me keep on, abiding and unfearing
Thy will always,
Through a long century's ripening fruition
Or a short day's;
Thou canst not come too soon; and I can wait
If Thou come late.

Sarah Chauncey Woolsey [1845–1905]

"EX LIBRIS"

In an old book at even as I read
Fast fading words adown my shadowy page,
I crossed a tale of how, in other age,
At Arqua, with his books around him, sped
The word to Petrarch; and with noble head
Bowed gently o'er his volume that sweet sage
To Silence paid his willing seigniorage.
And they who found him whispered, "He is dead!"
Thus timely from old comradeships would I
To Silence also rise. Let there be night,
Stillness, and only these staid watchers by,
And no light shine save my low study light—
Lest of his kind intent some human cry
Interpret not the Messenger aright.

Arthur Upson [1877–1908]

IN EXTREMIS

Till dawn the Winds' insuperable throng
Passed over like archangels in their might,
With roar of chariots from their stormy height,
And broken thunder of mysterious song—
By mariner or sentry heard along
The star-usurping battlements of night—
And wafture of immeasurable flight,
And high-blown trumpets mutinous and strong.
Till louder on the dreadful dark I heard
The shrieking of the tempest-tortured tree,
And deeper on immensity the call
And tumult of the empire-forging sea;

But near the eternal Peace I lay, nor stirred,
Knowing the happy dead hear not at all.

George Sterling [1869–

SPINNING

Like a blind spinner in the sun,
I tread my days;
I know that all the threads will run
Appointed ways;
I know each day will bring its task,
And, being blind, no more I ask.

I do not know the use or name
Of that I spin:
I only know that some one came,
And laid within
My hand the thread, and said, "Since you
Are blind, but one thing you can do."

Sometimes the threads so rough and fast
And tangled fly,
I know wild storms are sweeping past,
And fear that I
Shall fall; but dare not try to find
A safer place, since I am blind.

I know not why, but I am sure
That tint and place,
In some great fabric to endure
Past time and race,
My threads will have; so from the first,
Though blind, I never felt accurst.

I think, perhaps, this trust has sprung
From one short word
Said over me when I was young,—
So young, I heard
It, knowing not that God's name signed
My brow, and sealed me His, though blind.

But whether this be seal or sign
Within, without,
It matters not. The bond divine
I never doubt.
I know He set me here, and still,
And glad, and blind, I wait His will;

But listen, listen, day by day,
To hear their tread
Who bear the finished web away,
And cut the thread,
And bring God's message in the sun,
"Thou poor blind spinner, work is done."

Helen Huni Jackson [1831–1885]

"SOME TIME AT EVE"

Some time at eve when the tide is low,
I shall slip my mooring and sail away,
With no response to the friendly hail
Of kindred craft in the busy bay.
In the silent hush of the twilight pale,
When the night stoops down to embrace the day,
And the voices call in the waters' flow—
Some time at eve when the tide is low,
I shall slip my mooring and sail away.

Through the purpling shadows that darkly trail
O'er the ebbing tide of the Unknown Sea,
I shall fare me away, with a dip of sail
And a ripple of waters to tell the tale
Of a lonely voyager, sailing away
To the Mystic Isles where at anchor lay
The crafts of those who have sailed before
O'er the Unknown Sea to the Unseen Shore.

A few who have watched me sail away
Will miss my craft from the busy bay;
Some friendly barks that were anchored near,
Some loving souls that my heart held dear,
In silent sorrow will drop a tear—

But I shall have peacefully furled my sail
In moorings sheltered from storm or gale,
And greeted the friends who have sailed before
O'er the Unknown Sea to the Unseen Shore.

Lizzie Clark Hardy [18—]

NIGHT

When the time comes for me to die,
To-morrow, or some other day,
If God should bid me make reply,
"What would'st thou?" I shall say,

O God, Thy world was great and fair;
Yet give me to forget it clean!
Vex me no more with things that were,
And things that might have been.

I loved, I toiled, throve ill or well,
—Lived certain years and murmured not.
Now grant me in that land to dwell
Where all things are forgot.

For others, Lord, Thy purging fires,
The loves reknit, the crown, the palm.
For me, the death of all desires
In deep, eternal calm.

Thomas William Rolleston [1857–

AFTERWARDS

I know that these poor rags of womanhood,—
This oaten pipe, whereon the wild winds played
Making sad music,—tattered and outfrayed,
Cast off, played out,—can hold no more of good,
Of love, or song, or sense of sun and shade.

What homely neighbors elbow me (hard by
'Neath the black yews) I know I shall not know,
Nor take account of changing winds that blow,
Shifting the golden arrow, set on high
On the gray spire, nor mark who come and go.

Yet would I lie in some familiar place,
Nor share my rest with uncongenial dead,—
Somewhere, may be, where friendly feet will tread,—
As if from out some little chink of space
Mine eyes might see them tripping overhead.

And though too sweet to deck a sepulcher
Seem twinkling daisy-buds and meadow-grass;
And so would more than serve me, lest they pass
Who fain would know what woman rested there,
What her demeanor, or her story was,—

For these I would that on a sculptured stone
(Fenced round with ironwork to keep secure)
Should sleep a form with folded palms demure,
In aspect like the dreamer that was gone,
With these words carved, "*I hoped, but was not sure.*"

Violet Fane [18] –

A HUNDRED YEARS TO COME

Oh, where will be the birds that sing,
A hundred years to come?
The flowers that now in beauty spring,
A hundred years to come?
The rosy lip, the lofty brow,
The heart that beats so gaily now,—
Oh, where will be love's beaming eye,
Joy's pleasant smile, and sorrow's sigh,
A hundred years to come?

Who'll press for gold this crowded street,
A hundred years to come?
Who'll tread yon church with willing feet,
A hundred years to come?
Pale, trembling age, and fiery youth,
And childhood with its brow of truth,
The rich and poor, on land and sea,—
Where will the mighty millions be,
A hundred years to come?

We all within our graves shall sleep,
A hundred years to come;
No living soul for us will weep
A hundred years to come;
But other men our lands shall till,
And others then our streets shall fill,
While other birds shall sing as gay,
As bright the sunshine as to-day,
A hundred years to come!

William Goldsmith Brown [1812–1906]

THE LAST CAMP-FIRE

Scar not earth's breast that I may have
Somewhere above her heart a grave;
Mine was a life whose swift desire
Bent ever less to dust than fire;
Then through the swift white path of flame
Send back my soul to whence it came;
From some great peak, storm challenging,
My death-fire to the heavens fling;
The rocks my altar, and above
The still eyes of the stars I love;
No hymn, save as the midnight wind
Comes whispering to seek his kind.

Heap high the logs of spruce and pine,
Balsam for spices and for wine;
Brown cones, and knots a golden blur
Of hoarded pitch, more sweet than myrrh;
Cedar, to stream across the dark
Its scented embers spark on spark;
Long, shaggy boughs of juniper,
And silvery, odorous sheaves of fir;
Spice-wood, to die in incense smoke
Against the stubborn roots of oak,
Red to the last for hate or love
As that red stubborn heart above.

Watch till the last pale ember dies,
Till wan and low the dead pyre lies,
Then let the thin white ashes blow
To all earth's winds a finer snow;
There is no wind of hers but I
Have loved it as it whistled by;
No leaf whose life I would not share,
No weed that is not some way fair;
Hedge not my dust in one close urn,
It is to these I would return,—
The wild, free winds, the things that know
No master's rule, no ordered row,—

To be, if Nature will, at length
Part of some great tree's noble strength;
Growth of the grass; to live anew
In many a wild-flower's richer hue;
Find immortality, indeed,
In ripened heart of fruit and seed.
Time grants not any man redress
Of his broad law, forgetfulness;
I parley not with shaft and stone,
Content that in the perfume blown
From next year's hillsides something sweet
And mine, shall make earth more complete.

Sharlot M. Hall [1870–

INTERLUDE

The days grow shorter, the nights grow longer,
The headstones thicken along the way;
And life grows sadder, but love grows stronger
For those who walk with us, day by day.

The tear comes quicker, the laugh comes slower,
The courage is lesser to do and dare;
And the tide of joy in the heart runs lower
And seldom covers the reefs of care.

But all true things in the world seem truer,
And the better things of the earth seem best;

And friends are dearer as friends are fewer,
And love is all as our sun dips west.

Then let us clasp hands as we walk together,
And let us speak softly, in love's sweet tone,
For no man knows, on the morrow, whether
We two pass by, or but one alone.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox [1855–

THE ONE HOPE

When vain desire at last and vain regret
Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,
What shall assuage the unforgotten pain
And teach the unforgetful to forget?
Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long unmet,—
Or may the soul at once in a green plain
Stoop through the spray of some sweet life-fountain
And cull the dew-drenched flowering amulet?
Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air
Between the scriptured petals softly blown
Peers breathless for the gift of grace unknown,—
Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er
But only the one Hope's one name be there,—
Not less nor more, but even that word alone.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882[

THE LAMP IN THE WEST

Venus has lit her silver lamp
Low in the purple West,
Casting a soft and mellow light
Upon the sea's full breast;
In one clear path—as if to guide
Some pale, wayfaring guest.

Far out, far out the restless bar
Starts from a troubled sleep,
Where, roaring through the narrow straits,
The meeting waters leap;
But still that shining pathway leads
Across the lonely deep.

When I sail out the narrow straits
Where unknown dangers be,
And cross the troubled, moaning bar
To the mysterious sea,
Dear God, wilt thou not set a lamp
Low in the West for me?

Ella Higginson [1862–

THE DYING RESERVIST

I SHALL not see the faces of my friends,
Nor hear the songs the rested reapers sing
After the labors of the harvesting,
In those dark nights before the summer ends;
Nor see the floods of spring, the melting snow,
Nor in the autumn twilight hear the stir
Of reedy marshes, when the wild ducks whir
And circle black against the afterglow.
My mother died; she shall not have to weep;
My wife will find another home; my child,
Too young, will never grieve or know; but I
Have found my brother, and contentedly
I'll lay my head upon his knees and sleep.
O brother Death,—I knew you when you smiled.

Maurice Baring [1874–1916]

"IF LOVE WERE JESTER AT THE COURT OF DEATH"

IF Love were jester at the court of Death,
And Death the king of all, still would I pray,
"For me the motley and the bauble, yea,
Though all be vanity, as the Preacher saith,
The mirth of love be mine for one brief breath!"
Then would I kneel the monarch to obey,
And kiss that pale hand, should it spare or slay;
Since I have tasted love, what mattereth!
But if, dear God, this heart be dry as sand,
And cold as Charon's palm holding Hell's toll,

How worse! how worse! Scorch it with sorrow's brand!
Haply, though dead to joy, 'twould feel *that* coal;
Better a cross, and nails through either hand,
Than Pilate's palace and a frozen soul!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869–1905]

CONSTANCY

"Dear as remembered kisses after death"—
We read and pause, toying the pliant page
With absent fingers while we question slow,
By whom remembered? Not by those that live,
And love again, and wed, and know fresh joys,
Forgetting the pale past. Ah, no! for them,
The sudden stirring of such long-whelmed thought
Means shock and pain, and swift reburial.
But it may be, that with the dreaming dead,
Who sank away quick piercèd by despair,
It may be that their stillness is aglow
Through soft recalling of each loved caress;
Perchance it is of them the poet saith
"Dear as remembered kisses after death."

Minor Watson [18 –

THE WILD RIDE

I hear in my heart, I hear in its ominous pulses
All day, on the road, the hoofs of invisible horses,
All night, from their stalls, the importunate pawing and neighing.

Let cowards and laggards fall back! but alert to the saddle
Weatherworn and abreast, go men of our galloping legion,
With a stirrup-cup each to the lily of women that loves him.

The trail is through dolor and dread, over crags and morasses;
There are shapes by the way, there are things that appal or entice us:
What odds? We are Knights of the Grail, we are vowed to the riding.

Thought's self is a vanishing wing, and joy is a cobweb,
And friendship a flower in the dust, and glory a sunbeam:
Not here is our prize, nor, alas! after these our pursuing.

A dipping of plumes, a tear, a shake of the bridle,
A passing salute to this world and her pitiful beauty:
We hurry with never a word in the track of our fathers.

I hear in my heart, I hear in its ominous pulses
All day, on the road, the hoofs of invisible horses,
All night, from their stalls, the importunate pawing and neighing.

We spur to a land of no name, outracing the storm-wind;
We leap to the infinite dark like sparks from the anvil.
Thou leadest, O God! All's well with Thy troopers that follow.

Louise Imogen Guiney [1861–

"I WOULD NOT LIVE ALWAY"

I WOULD not live alway—live alway below!
Oh no, I'll not linger when bidden to go:
The days of our pilgrimage granted us here
Are enough for life's woes, full enough for its cheer:
Would I shrink from the path which the prophets of God,
Apostles, and martyrs, so joyfully trod?
Like a spirit unblest, o'er the earth would I roam,
While brethren and friends are all hastening home?

I would not live alway: I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way;
Where seeking for rest we but hover around,
Like the patriarch's bird, and no resting is found;
Where Hope, when she paints her gay bow in the air,
Leaves its brilliance to fade in the night of despair,
And joy's fleeting angel ne'er sheds a glad ray,
Save the gleam of the plumage that bears him away.

I would not live alway—thus fettered by sin,
Temptation without and corruption within;
In a moment of strength if I sever the chain,
Scarce the victory's mine, ere I'm captive again;
E'en the rapture of pardon is mingled with fears,
And the cup of thanksgiving with penitent tears:
The festival trump calls for jubilant songs,
But my spirit her own *miserere* prolongs.

I would not live alway—no, welcome the tomb,
Since Jesus hath lain there I dread not its gloom;
Where He deigned to sleep, I'll too bow my head,
All peaceful to slumber on that hallowed bed.
Then the glorious daybreak, to follow that night,
The orient gleam of the angels of light,
With their clarion call for the sleepers to rise
And chant forth their matins, away to the skies.

Who, who would live alway? away from his God,
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns;
Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Saviour and brethren transported to greet,
While the songs of salvation exultingly roll
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.

That heavenly music! what is it I hear?
The notes of the harpers ring sweet in mine ear!
And see, soft unfolding those portals of gold,
The King all arrayed in His beauty behold!
Oh give me, oh give me, the wings of a dove,
To adore Him—be near Him—enwrapped with his love;
I but wait for the summons, I list for the word—
Alleluia—Amen—evermore with the Lord!

William Augustus Muhlenberg [1796–1877]

TRAVELLER'S HOPE

Lay me to rest in some fair spot
  Where sound of waters near,
And songs of sailors in their ships
  Shall reach my waiting ear:

Where I shall catch the Captain's call:
  "All hands again to sea!"
When swift embarking, I may fare
  To founts of life to be;

Fare to the dreamed-of lands that lie
  Beyond the Port of Death;
Fare to the Dawn of whose glad realms
  God sometimes whispereth;

With hope of flowers that lift their heads
  After the night is past,
And joy of sailors in their ships
  When home's in sight at last.

Charles Granville [18

SEALED ORDERS

We bear sealed orders o'er Life's weltered sea,
  Our haven dim and far;
We can but man the helm right cheerily,
  Steer by the brightest star,

And hope that when at last the Great Command
  Is read, we then may hear
Our anchor song, and see the longed-for land
  Lie, known and very near.

Richard Burton [1859–

SONG

I make my shroud but no one knows,
So shimmering fine it is and fair,
With stitches set in even rows.
I make my shroud but no one knows.

In door-way where the lilac blows,
Humming a little wandering air,
I make my shroud and no one knows,
So shimmering fine it is and fair.

Adelaide Crapsey [1878–1914]

A SONG OF LIVING

Because I have loved life, I shall have no sorrow to die.
I have sent up my gladness on wings, to be lost in the blue of the sky.
I have run and leaped with the rain, I have taken the wind to my breast.
My cheek like a drowsy child to the face of the earth I have pressed.
Because I have loved life, I shall have no sorrow to die.
I have kissed young Love on the lips, I have heard his song to the end.
I have struck my hand like a seal in the loyal hand of a friend.
I have known the peace of heaven, the comfort of work done well.
I have longed for death in the darkness and risen alive out of hell.
Because I have loved life, I shall have no sorrow to die.
I give a share of my soul to the world where my course is run.
I know that another shall finish the task I must leave undone.
I know that no flower, no flint was in vain on the path I trod.
As one looks on a face through a window, through life I have looked on God.
Because I have loved life, I shall have no sorrow to die.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878–

COMPENSATION

Because I had loved so deeply,
Because I had loved so long,
God in His great compassion
Gave me the gift of song.

Because I have loved so vainly,
And sung with such faltering breath,
The Master, in infinite mercy,
Offers the boon of Death.

Paul Laurence Dunbar [1872–1906]

THE RECESSIONAL

Now along the solemn heights
Fade the Autumn's altar-lights;
Down the great earth's glimmering chancel
Glide the days and nights.

Little kindred of the grass,
Like a shadow in a glass
Falls the dark and falls the stillness;
We must rise and pass.

We must rise and follow, wending
Where the nights and days have ending,—
Pass in order pale and slow
Unto sleep extending.

Little brothers of the clod,
Soul of fire and seed of sod,
We must fare into the silence
At the knees of God.

Little comrades of the sky,
Wing to wing we wander by,
Going, going, going, going,
Softly as a sigh.

Hark, the moving shapes confer,
Globe of dew and gossamer,
Fading and ephemeral spirits
In the dusk astir.

Moth and blossom, blade and bee,
Worlds must go as well as we,
In the long procession joining
Mount and star and sea.

Toward the shadowy brink we climb
Where the round year rolls sublime,
  Rolls, and drops, and falls forever
In the vast of time.

Like a plummet plunging deep
Past the utmost reach of sleep,
  Till remembrance has no longer
Care to laugh or weep.

Charles G. D. Roberts [1860–

MOUNTAIN SONG

I HAVE not where to lay my head:
  Upon my breast no child shall lie;
For me no marriage feast is spread:
  I walk alone under the sky.

My staff and scrip I cast away—
  Light-burdened to the mountain height!
Climbing the rocky steep by day,
  Kindling my fire against the night.

The bitter hail shall flower the peak,
  The icy wind shall dry my tears.
Strong shall I be, who am but weak,
  When bright Orion spears my fears.

Under the horned moon I shall rise
  Up-swinging on the scarf of dawn.
The sun, searching with level eyes,
  Shall take my hand and lead me on.

Wide flaming pinions veil the West—
  Ah, shall I find? and shall I know?
My feet are bound upon the Quest—
  Over the Great Divide I go.

Harriet Monroe [1860–

TO M. E. W.

WORDS, for alas my trade is words, a barren burst of rhyme,
Rubbed by a hundred rhymesters, battered a thousand times,
Take them, you, that smile on strings, those nobler sounds than mine,
The words that never lie, or brag, or flatter, or malign.

I give a hand to my lady, another to my friend,
To whom you too have given a hand; and so before the end
We four may pray, for all the years, whatever suns be set,
The sole two prayers worth praying—to live and not forget.

The pale leaf falls in pallor, but the green leaf turns to gold;
We that have found it good to be young shall find it good to be old;
Life that bringeth the marriage bell, the cradle and the grave,
Life that is mean to the mean of heart, and only brave to the brave.

In the calm of the last white winter, when all the past is ours,
Old tears are frozen as jewels, old storms frosted as flowers,
Dear Lady, may we meet again, stand up again, we four,
Beneath the burden of the years, and praise the earth once more.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton [1874–

RETURNING

NEVER sings a city-robin on the gray-stone window-ledges
But I dream the long, cool meadows where the yellow cowslips be;
To his call I guess an answer from the grass and tangled hedges—
There's a thrill of other springtimes in the country soul of me!

Never falls light rain above me but I hear its gentle patter
On a lonely roof at even, as I heard it years ago;
Through the music, warmth, and fragrance, past the sound of careless chatter,
Throbs the silence of far places where the pines and birches grow.

I shall see a few more springtimes, then shall heed no answer lilted
To that first full-throated robin, hear no rain above my head . . .
Give me, God, the meadow-blossoms when my formal wreaths have wilted—
Let me lie till Thine Own Springtime with the pines beside my bed!

Ruth Guthrie Harding [1882–

"O WORLD, BE NOT SO FAIR"

O MOON, O hide thy golden light,
O night, be not so fair;
O ye dear stars, shine not so bright:
I would for sleep prepare.
Mine eyes are closing wearily
That watched the slow day's flight,
And yet there is no rest for me
In this enchanted night.

O fellow-men, be not too good!
O world, be not too fair!
Wake no new life-glow in my blood—
I would for sleep prepare.
My day is dim; there beckons clear
A star of other air;
And yet, and yet, my heart is here!
O world, be not so fair.

From the German of Maria Jäger by Grace Fallow Norton [18 –

"ONE FIGHT MORE"

PROSPICE

FEAR death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

"OH MAY I JOIN THE CHOIR INVISIBLE"

Longum illud tempus, quum non ero, magis me movet, quam hoc exiguum.—*Cicero, ad Att.*, xii. 18.

Oh may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.
So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, failed, and agonized,
With widening retrospect that bred despair.
Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child,
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolved;
Its discords, quenched by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,

That sobbed religiously in yearning song,
That watched to ease the burden of the world,
Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better,—saw within
A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shaped it forth before the multitude,
Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mixed with love,—
That better self shall live till human Time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gathered like a scroll within the tomb
Unread forever.

This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

George Eliot [1819–1880]

LAST LINES

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in Thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity;
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy Spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes cease to be,
And Thou were left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

Emily Brontë [1818–1848]

LAUS MORTIS

Nay, why should I fear Death,
Who gives us life, and in exchange takes breath?

He is like cordial Spring
That lifts above the soil each buried thing;—

Like Autumn, kind and brief—
The frost that chills the branches frees the leaf;—

Like Winter's stormy hours
That spread their fleece of snow to save the flowers.

The lordliest of all things,—
Life lends us only feet, Death gives us wings!

Fearing no covert thrust,
Let me walk onward, armed with valiant trust,

Dreading no unseen knife,
Across Death's threshold step from life to life!

O all ye frightened folk,
Whether ye wear a crown or bear a yoke,

Laid in one equal bed,
When once your coverlet of grass is spread,

What daybreak need you fear?
The Love will rule you there which guides you here!

Where Life, the Sower, stands,
Scattering the ages from his swinging hand

Thou waitest, Reaper lone,
Until the multitudinous grain hath grown

Scythe-bearer, when thy blade
Harvests my flesh, let me be unafraid!

God's husbandman thou art!—
In His unwithering sheaves, O bind my heart!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869–1905]

"WHEN I HAVE FEARS"

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,
Before high-pilèd books, in charact'ry
Hold like rich garners the full-ripened grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour!
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the fairy power
Of unreflecting love!—then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do sink.

John Keats [1795–1821]

LAST SONNET

Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priest-like task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

John Keats [1795–1821]

THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL

Animula, vagula, blandula,
Hospes Comesque Corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca,
Pallidula, rigida, nudula?
Nec, ut soles, dabis joca.

ADRIANI MORIENTIS, AD ANIMAM SUAM

Vital spark of heavenly flame,
Quit, O quit this mortal frame!
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite,
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes; my ears

With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?

Alexander Pope [1688–1744]

"BEYOND THE SMILING AND THE WEEPING"

Beyond the smiling and the weeping
I shall be soon;
Beyond the waking and the sleeping,
Beyond the sowing and the reaping,
I shall be soon.
Love, rest, and home!
Sweet hope!
Lord, tarry not, but come.

Beyond the blooming and the fading
I shall be soon;
Beyond the shining and the shading,
Beyond the hoping and the dreading,
I shall be soon.

Beyond the rising and the setting
I shall be soon;
Beyond the calming and the fretting,
Beyond remembering and forgetting,
I shall be soon.

Beyond the gathering and the strowing
I shall be soon;
Beyond the ebbing and the flowing,
Beyond the coming and the going,
I shall be soon.

Beyond the parting and the meeting
I shall be soon;
Beyond the farewell and the greeting,
Beyond this pulse's fever beating,
I shall be soon.

Beyond the frost chain and the fever
I shall be soon;
Beyond the rock waste and the river,
Beyond the ever and the never,
I shall be soon.
Love, rest, and home!
Sweet hope!
Lord, tarry not, but come.

Horatius Bonar [1808–1889]

"I STROVE WITH NONE"

I STROVE with none; for none was worth my strife.
Nature I loved and, next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

DEATH

DEATH stands above me, whispering low
I know not what into my ear;
Of his strange language all I know
Is, there is not a word of fear.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

LIFE

LIFE! I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we met,
I own to me's a secret yet.
But this I know, when thou art fled,
Where'er they lay these limbs, this head,
No clod so valueless shall be
As all that then remains of me.

O whither, whither dost thou fly?
Where bend unseen thy trackless course?
And in this strange divorce,
Ah, tell where I must seek this compound I?
To the vast ocean of empyreal flame
From whence thy essence came
Dost thou thy flight pursue, when freed
From matter's base encumbering weed?
Or dost thou, hid from sight,
Wait, like some spell-bound knight,
Through blank oblivious years the appointed hour
To break thy trance and reassume thy power?
Yet canst thou without thought or feeling be?
O say, what art thou, when no more thou'rt thee?

Life! we have been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear;
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;—
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not Good-night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good-morning!

Anna Letitia Barbauld [1743–1825]

DYING HYMN

Earth, with its dark and dreadful ills,
Recedes, and fades away;
Lift up your heads, ye heavenly hills;
Ye gates of death, give way!

My soul is full of whispered song,
My blindness is my sight;
The shadows that I feared so long
Are all alive with light.

The while my pulses faintly beat,
My faith doth so abound,
I feel grow firm beneath my feet
The green immortal ground.

That faith to me a courage gives
  Low as the grave, to go:
I know that my Redeemer lives:
  That I shall live, I know.

The palace walls I almost see,
  Where dwells my Lord and King;
O grave, where is thy victory!
  O death, where is thy sting!

Alice Cary [1820–1871]

IN HARBOR

I THINK it is over, over,
  I think it is over at last;
Voices of foeman and lover,
  The sweet and the bitter, have passed:
Life, like a tempest of ocean,
Hath outblown its ultimate blast:
There's but a faint sobbing seaward
While the calm of the tide deepens leeward,
And behold! like the welcoming quiver
Of heart-pulses throbbed through the river,
  Those lights in the harbor at last,
  The heavenly harbor at last!

I feel it is over! over!
  For the winds and the waters surcease;
Ah, few were the days of the rover
  That smiled in the beauty of peace!
And distant and dim was the omen
That hinted redress or release:—
From the ravage of life, and its riot,
What marvel I yearn for the quiet
  Which bides in the harbor at last,—
For the lights, with their welcoming quiver,
That throb through the sanctified river,
  Which girdle the harbor at last,
  This heavenly harbor at last?

I know it is over, over,
I know it is over at last!
Down sail! the sheathed anchor uncover,
For the stress of the voyage has passed:
Life, like a tempest of ocean,
Hath outbreathed its ultimate blast:
There's but a faint sobbing to seaward,
While the calm of the tide deepens leeward;
And behold! like the welcoming quiver
Of heart-pulses throbbed through the river,
Those lights in the harbor at last,
The heavenly harbor at last!

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830–1886]

THE LAST INVOCATION

At the last, tenderly,
From the walls of the powerful, fortressed house,
From the clasp of the knitted locks, from the keep of the well-closed doors,
Let me be wafted.

Let me glide noiselessly forth;
With the key of softness unlock the locks—with a whisper
Set ope the doors, O soul!

Tenderly—be not impatient!
(Strong is your hold, O mortal flesh!
Strong is your hold, O love!)

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

"DAREST THOU NOW, O SOUL"

Darest thou now, O soul,
Walk out with me toward the unknown region,
Where neither ground is for the feet nor any path to follow?

No map there, nor guide,
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,
Nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in that land.

I know it not, O soul,
Nor dost thou, all is a blank before us,—
All waits undreamed of in that region, that inaccessible land.

Till when the ties loosen,
All but the ties eternal, Time and Space,
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds bounding us.

Then we burst forth, we float,
In Time and Space, O soul! prepared for them,
Equal, equipped at last (O joy! O fruit of all!), them to fulfill, O soul!

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

WAITING

SERENE, I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind, nor tide, nor sea;
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,
For, lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me;
No wind can drive my bark astray,
Nor change the tide of destiny.

What matter if I stand alone?
I wait with joy the coming years;
My heart shall reap where it hath sown,
And garner up its fruit of tears.

The waters know their own and draw
The brook that springs in yonder heights;
So flows the good with equal law
Unto the soul of pure delights.

The stars come nightly to the sky;
The tidal wave comes to the sea;
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,
Can keep my own away from me.

John Burroughs [1837–

IN THE DARK

All moveless stand the ancient cedar-trees
Along the drifted sand-hills where they grow;
And from the dark west comes a wandering breeze,
And waves them to and fro.

A murky darkness lies along the sand,
Where bright the sunbeams of the morning shone,
And the eye vainly seeks, by sea and land,
Some light to rest upon.

No large, pale star its glimmering vigil keeps;
An inky sea reflects an inky sky;
And the dark river, like a serpent, creeps
To where its black piers lie.

Strange salty odors through the darkness steal,
And through the dark, the ocean-thunders roll;
Thick darkness gathers, stifling, till I feel
Its weight upon my soul.

I stretch my hands out in the empty air;
I strain my eyes into the heavy night;
Blackness of darkness!—Father, hear my prayer!
Grant me to see the light!

George Arnold [1834–1865]

LAST VERSES

When I beneath the cold red earth am sleeping,
Life's fever o'er,
Will there for me be any bright eye weeping
That I'm no more?
Will there be any heart still memory keeping
Of heretofore?

When the great winds through leafless forests rushing
Sad music make;
When the swollen streams, o'er crag and gully gushing,
Like full hearts break,—
Will there then one, whose heart despair is crushing,
Mourn for my sake?

When the bright sun upon that spot is shining,
With purest ray,
And the small flowers, their buds and blossoms twining,
Burst through that clay,—
Will there be one still on that spot repining
Lost hopes all day?

When no star twinkles with its eye of glory
On that low mound,
And wintry storms have, with their ruins hoary,
Its loneness crowned,—
Will there be then one, versed in misery's story,
Pacing it round?

It may be so,—but this is selfish sorrow
To ask such meed,—
A weakness and a wickedness to borrow,
From hearts that bleed,
The wailings of to-day for what to-morrow
Shall never need.

Lay me then gently in my narrow dwelling,
Thou gentle heart;
And though thy bosom should with grief be swelling,
Let no tear start:
It were in vain,—for Time hath long been knelling,—
"Sad one, depart!"

William Motherwell [1797–1835]

THE RUBICON

One other bitter drop to drink,
And then—no more!
One little pause upon the brink,
And then—go o'er!

One sigh—and then the lib'rant morn
Of perfect day,
When my free spirit, newly born,
Will soar away!

One pang—and I shall rend the thrall
Where grief abides,
And generous Death will show me all
That now he hides;
And, lucid in that second birth,
I shall discern
What all the sages of the earth
Have died to learn.

One motion—and the stream is crossed,
So dark, so deep!
And I shall triumph, or be lost
In endless sleep.
Then, onward! Whatsoe'er my fate,
I shall not care!
Nor Sin nor Sorrow, Love nor Hate
Can touch me there.

William Winter [1836-

WHEN I HAVE GONE WEIRD WAYS

When I have finished with this episode,
Left the hard, uphill road,
And gone weird ways to seek another load,
O Friend, regret me not, nor weep for me—
Child of Infinity!

Nor dig a grave, nor rear for me a tomb
To say with lying writ: "Here in the gloom
He who loved bigness takes a narrow room,
Content to pillow here his weary head—
For he is dead."

But give my body to the funeral pyre,
And bid the laughing fire,
Eager and strong and swift as my desire,
Scatter my subtle essence into Space—
Free me of Time and Place.

Sweep up the bitter ashes from the hearth!
Fling back the dust I borrowed from the Earth
Unto the chemic broil of Death and Birth—
  The vast Alembic of the cryptic Scheme,
  Warm with the Master-Dream.

And thus, O little House that sheltered me,
Dissolve again in wind and rain, to be
Part of the cosmic weird Economy:
  And Oh, how oft with new life shalt thou lift
  Out of the atom-drift!

John G. Neihardt [1881–

A RHYME OF LIFE

If life be as a flame that death doth kill,
  Burn, little candle, lit for me,
  With a pure flame, that I may rightly see
  To word my song, and utterly
    God's plan fulfil.

If life be as a flower that blooms and dies,
  Forbid the cunning frost that slays
  With Judas kiss, and trusting love betrays;
  Forever may my song of praise
    Untainted rise.

If life be as a voyage, foul or fair,
  Oh, bid me not my banners furl
  For adverse gale, or wave in angry whirl,
  Till I have found the gates of pearl,
    And anchored there.

Charles Warren Stoddard [1843–1909]

"THALATTA! THALATTA!"

CRY OF THE TEN THOUSAND

I STAND upon the summit of my years;
Behind, the toil, the camp, the march, the strife,
The wandering and the desert; vast, afar,
Beyond this weary way, behold! the Sea!

The sea o'erswept by clouds and winds and wings,
By thoughts and wishes manifold, whose breath
Is freshness and whose mighty pulse is peace.
Palter no question of the dim Beyond;
Cut loose the bark; such voyage itself is rest,
Majestic motion, unimpeded scope,
A widening heaven, a current without care.
Eternity!—Deliverance, Promise, Course!
Time-tired souls salute thee from the shore.

Joseph Brownlee Brown [1824–1888]

REQUIEM

Hush your prayers, 'tis no saintly soul
Comes fainting back from the foughten field;
Carry me forth on my broken shield;
Trumpet and drum shall my requiem yield—
Silence the bells that toll.

Dig no hole in the ground for me:
Though my body be made of mold and must,
Ne'er in the earth shall my dead bones rust;
Give my corse to the flame's white lust,
And sink my ashes at sea.

Reeking still with the sweat of the strife,
Never a prayer have I to say
(My lips long since have forgotten the way)
Save this: "I have sorrowed sore in my day—
But I thank Thee, God, for my life!"

F. Norreys Connell [18

INVICTUS

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

"A LATE LARK TWITTERS FROM THE QUIET SKIES"

A LATE lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, gray city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,

My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

William Ernest Henley [1849–1903]

"IN AFTER DAYS"

In after days when grasses high
O'er-top the stone where I shall lie,
Though ill or well the world adjust
My slender claim to honored dust,
I shall not question or reply.

I shall not see the morning sky;
I shall not hear the night-wind sigh;
I shall be mute, as all men must
In after days!

But yet, now living, fain were I
That some one then should testify,
Saying—"He held his pen in trust
To Art, not serving shame or lust."
Will none?—Then let my memory die
In after days!

Austin Dobson [1840–

"CALL ME NOT DEAD"

Call me not dead when I, indeed, have gone
Into the company of the everliving
High and most glorious poets! Let thanksgiving
Rather be made. Say: "He at last hath won
Rest and release, converse supreme and wise,
Music and song and light of immortal faces;
To-day, perhaps, wandering in starry places,
He hath met Keats, and known him by his eyes.

To-morrow (who can say?) Shakespeare may pass,
And our lost friend just catch one syllable
Of that three-centuried wit that kept so well;
Or Milton; or Dante, looking on the grass
Thinking of Beatrice, and listening still
To chanted hymns that sound from the heavenly hill."

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

EPILOGUE

From "Asolando"

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools think, imprisoned—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
—Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel
—Being—who?

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed,—fight on, fare ever
There as here!"

Robert Browning [1812–1889]

CROSSING THE BAR

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

L'ENVOI

WHEN Earth's last picture is painted, and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colors have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie down for an eon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall set us to work anew!

And those that were good shall be happy: they shall sit in a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comets' hair;

They shall find real saints to draw from—Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame;
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They Are!

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

ENVOI

Oh seek me not within a tomb;
Thou shalt not find me in the clay!
I pierce a little wall of gloom
To mingle with the Day!

I brothered with the things that pass,
Poor giddy Joy and puckered Grief;
I go to brother with the Grass
And with the sunning Leaf.

Not Death can sheathe me in a shroud;
A joy-sword whetted keen with pain,
I join the armies of the Cloud,
The Lightning and the Rain.

Oh subtle in the sap athrill,
Athletic in the glad uplift,
A portion of the Cosmic Will,
I pierce the planet-drift.

My God and I shall interknit
As rain and Ocean, breath and Air;
And Oh, the luring thought of it
Is prayer!

John G. Neihardt [1881–

GREEK FOLK SONG

Under dusky laurel leaf,
Scarlet leaf of rose,
I lie prone, who have known
All a woman knows.

Love and grief and motherhood,
Fame and mirth and scorn—
These are all shall befall
Any woman born.

Jewel-laden are my hands,
Tall my stone above—
Do not weep that I sleep,
Who was wise in love.

Where I walk, a shadow gray
Through gray asphodel,
I am glad, who have had
All that life can tell.

Margaret Widdemer [18

"WHEN I AM DEAD AND SISTER TO THE DUST"

When I am dead and sister to the dust;
When no more avidly I drink the wine
Of human love; when the pale Proserpine
Has covered me with poppies, and cold rust
Has cut my lyre-strings, and the sun has thrust
Me underground to nourish the world-vine,
Men shall discover these old songs of mine,
And say: This woman lived—as poets must!
This woman lived and wore life as a sword
To conquer wisdom; this dead woman read
In the sealed Book of Love and underscored
The meanings. Then the sails of faith she spread,
And faring out for regions unexplored,
Went singing down the River of the Dead.

Elsa Barker [18

A PARTING GUEST

WHAT delightful hosts are they—
Life and Love!
Lingeringly I turn away,
This late hour, yet glad enough
They have not withheld from me
Their high hospitality.
So, with face lit with delight
And all gratitude, I stay
Yet to press their hands and say,
"Thanks.—So fine a time! Good night."

James Whitcomb Riley [1857–1916]

THE STIRRUP CUP

MY short and happy day is done,
The long and dreary night comes on;
And at my door the Pale Horse stands,
To carry me to unknown lands.

His whinny shrill, his pawing hoof,
Sound dreadful as a gathering storm;
And I must leave this sheltering roof,
And joys of life so soft and warm.

Tender and warm the joys of life,—
Good friends, the faithful and the true;
My rosy children and my wife,
So sweet to kiss, so fair to view.

So sweet to kiss, so fair to view,—
The night comes down, the lights burn blue;
And at my door the Pale Horse stands,
To bear me forth to unknown lands.

John Hay [1838–1905]

"THEY ARE ALL GONE"

FRIENDS DEPARTED

THEY are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit lingering here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is dressed
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days:
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope! and high Humility,
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have showed them me,
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death! the jewel of the Just!
Shining nowhere, but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know,
At first sight, if the bird be flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as Angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul, when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there;
But when the hand that locked her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee!
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass:
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,
Where I shall need no glass.

Henry Vaughan [1622–1695]

"OVER THE RIVER"

Over the river they beckon to me,—
Loved ones who've crossed to the farther side;
The gleam of their snowy robes I see,
But their voices are drowned in the rushing tide.
There's one with ringlets of sunny gold,
And eyes the reflection of heaven's own blue;
He crossed in the twilight gray and cold,
And the pale mist hid him from mortal view.
We saw not the angels who met him there,
The gates of the city we could not see:
Over the river, over the river,
My brother stands waiting to welcome me.

Over the river the boatman pale
Carried another, the household pet;
Her brown curls waved in the gentle gale,—
Darling Minnie! I see her yet.
She crossed on her bosom her dimpled hands,
And fearlessly entered the phantom bark;
We watched it glide from the silver sands,
And all our sunshine grew strangely dark.

We know she is safe on the farther side,
Where all the ransomed and angels be;
Over the river, the mystic river,
My childhood's idol is waiting for me.

For none return from those quiet shores,
Who cross with the boatman cold and pale;
We hear the dip of the golden oars,
And catch a gleam of the snowy sail;
And lo! they have passed from our yearning hearts,
They cross the stream and are gone for aye.
We may not sunder the veil apart
That hides from our vision the gates of day;
We only know that their barks no more
May sail with us o'er life's stormy sea;
Yet somewhere, I know, on the unseen shore,
They watch, and beckon, and wait for me.

And I sit and think, when the sunset's gold
Is flushing river and hill and shore,
I shall one day stand by the water cold,
And list for the sound of the boatman's oar;
I shall watch for a gleam of the flapping sail,
I shall hear the boat as it gains the strand,
I shall pass from sight with the boatman pale,
To the better shore of the spirit land.
I shall know the loved who have gone before,
And joyfully sweet will the meeting be,
When over the river, the peaceful river,
The angel of death shall carry me.

Nancy Woodbury Priest [1836–1870]

RESIGNATION

THERE is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors;
Amid these earthly damps
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

AFTERWARD

THERE *is* no vacant chair. The loving meet,
A group unbroken—smitten, who knows how?
One sitteth silent only, in his usual seat;
We gave him once that freedom. Why not now?

Perhaps he is too weary, and needs rest;
He needed it so often, nor could we
Bestow. God gave it, knowing how to do so best.
Which of us would disturb him? Let him be.

There is no vacant chair. If he will take
The mood to listen mutely, be it done.
By his least mood we crossed, for which the heart must ache,
Plead not nor question! Let him have this one.

Death is a mood of life. It is no whim
By which life's Giver mocks a broken heart.
Death is life's reticence. Still audible to Him,
The hushed voice, happy, speaketh on, apart.

There is no vacant chair. To love is still
To have. Nearer to memory than to eye.
And dearer yet to anguish than to comfort, will
We hold by our love, that shall not die.

For while it doth not, thus he cannot. Try!
Who can put out the motion or the smile?
The old ways of being noble all with him laid by?
Because we love, he is. Then trust awhile.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward [1844–1911]

SOMETIME

SOMETIME, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans are right,
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me;
How, when we called, He heeded not our cry,
Because His wisdom to the end could see.
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if, sometimes, commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out the potion for our lips to drink;

And if some friend you love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh, do not blame the loving Father so,
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace!

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends His friend,
And that, sometimes, the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon His love can send.
If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart;
God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,—
Time will reveal the chalices of gold.
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
When we shall clearly see and understand,
I think that we will say, "God knew the best!"

May Riley Smith [1842–

"THE MOURNERS CAME AT BREAK OF DAY"

The mourners came at break of day
Unto the garden-sepulcher;
With darkened hearts to weep and pray,
For Him, the loved one buried there.
What radiant light dispels the gloom?
An angel sits beside the tomb.

The earth doth mourn her treasures lost,
All sepulchered beneath the snow;
When wintry winds, and chilling frost
Have laid her summer glories low;
The spring returns, the flowerets bloom—
An angel sits beside the tomb.

Then mourn we not belovèd dead,
E'en while we come to weep and pray;
The happy spirit far hath fled
To brighter realms of endless day:
Immortal Hope dispels the gloom!
An angel sits beside the tomb.

Sarah Flower Adams [1805–1848]

WHAT OF THE DARKNESS?

TO THE HAPPY DEAD PEOPLE

WHAT of the darkness? Is it very fair?
Are there great calms? and find we silence there?
Like soft-shut lilies, all your faces glow
With some strange peace our faces never know,
With some strange faith our faces never dare,—
Dwells it in Darkness? Do you find it there?

Is it a Bosom where tired heads may lie?
Is it a Mouth to kiss our weeping dry?
Is it a Hand to still the pulse's leap?
Is it a Voice that holds the runes of sleep?
Day shows us not such comfort anywhere—
Dwells it in Darkness? Do you find it there?

Out of the Day's deceiving light we call—
Day that shows man so great, and God so small,
That hides the stars, and magnifies the grass—
O is the Darkness too a lying glass!
Or undistracted, do you find truth there?
What of the Darkness? Is it very fair?

Richard Le Gallienne [1866–

A SEA DIRGE

From "The Tempest"

FULL fathom five thy father lies:
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade,

Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royal'st seed
That the earth did e'er suck in,
Since the first man died for sin;
Here the bones of birth have cried,
"Though gods they were, as men they died."
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropped from the ruined sides of kings.
Here's a world of pomp and state,
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

Francis Beaumont [1584–1616]

EPITAPH ON THE COUNTESS DOWAGER OF PEMBROKE

UNDERNEATH this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse:
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother:
Death, ere thou hast slain another,
Fair, and learned, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

Marble piles let no man raise
To her name: in after days,
Some kind woman born as she,
Reading this, like Niobe
Shall turn marble, and become
Both her mourner and her tomb.

William Browne [1591–1643?]

AN EPITAPH INTENDED FOR HIMSELF

LIKE thee I once have stemmed the sea of life,
Like thee have languished after empty joys,
Like thee have labored in the stormy strife,
Been grieved for trifles, and amused with toys.

Forget my frailties; thou art also frail:
Forgive my lapses; for thyself may'st fall:
Nor read unmoved my artless tender tale—
I was a friend, O man, to thee, to all.

James Beattie [1735–1803]

LYCIDAS

A LAMENT FOR A FRIEND DROWNED IN HIS PASSAGE FROM CHESTER ON THE IRISH SEAS, 1637

YET once more, O ye Laurels, and once more
Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your Berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin, then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favor *my* destined Urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high Lawns appeared
Under the opening eye-lids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the Gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the Star that rose, at Evening, bright
Toward Heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the Rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the Oaten Flute;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel,

Here's an acre sown indeed
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Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the Star that rose, at Evening, bright
Toward Heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the Rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the Oaten Flute;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel,

From the glad sound would not be absent long,
And old Damætas loved to hear our song.
But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the Woods, and desert Caves,
With wild Thyme and the gadding Vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.
The Willows, and the Hazel Copses green,
Shall now no more be seen,
Fanning their joyous Leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the Canker to the Rose,
Or Taint-worm to the weanling Herds that graze,
Or Frost to Flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the White-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to Shepherd's ear.
Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:
Aye me, I fondly dream!
Had ye been there—for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son
Whom Universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! What boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely slighted Shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse,
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of Noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair Guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,

Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumor lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heaven expect thy meed."
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honored flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my Oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the Waves, and asked the Felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd Promontory.
They knew not of his story,
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed,
The Air was calm, and on the level brine,
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious Bark
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next Camus, reverend Sire, went footing slow,
His Mantle hairy, and his Bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
"Ah, who hath reft," (quoth he) "my dearest pledge?"
Last come, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake.
Two massy Keys he bore of metals twain,
(The Golden opes, the Iron shuts amain).
He shook his Mitered locks, and stern bespake,
"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,

Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A Sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful Herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel Pipes of wretched straw,
The hungry Sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim Wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door,
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return Sicilian Muse,
And call the Vales, and bid them hither cast
Their Bells, and Flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use,
Of shades and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart Star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enameled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe Primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted Crow-toe, and pale Jessamine,
The white Pink, and the Pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing Violet,
The Musk-rose, and the well-attired Woodbine,
With Cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And Daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the Laureate Hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! Whilst thee the shores, and sounding Seas

Wash far away, where e'er thy bones are hurled,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded Mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye Dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the Ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled Ore,
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With Nectar pure his oozy Locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial Song,
In the blest Kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet Societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the Shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth Swain to the Oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with Sandals gray,
He touched the tender stops of various Quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the Sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the Western bay;
At last he rose, and twitched his Mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh Woods, and Pastures new.

John Milton [1608–1674]

TO THE PIOUS MEMORY OF THE ACCOMPLISHED YOUNG LADY, MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW, EXCELLENT IN THE TWO SISTER-ARTS OF POESIE AND PAINTING

I

Thou youngest Virgin-Daughter of the skies,
Made in the last promotion of the blest;
Whose palms, new plucked from Paradise,
In spreading branches more sublimely rise,
Rich with immortal green above the rest:
Whether, adopted to some neighboring star,
Thou roll'st above us in thy wandering race,
Or, in procession fixed and regular,
Moved with the heavens' majestic pace;
Or, called to more superior bliss,
Thou tread'st, with seraphims, the vast abyss:
Whatever happy region is thy place,
Cease thy celestial song a little space;
(Thou wilt have time enough for hymns divine,
Since Heaven's eternal year is thine.)
Hear then a mortal muse thy praise rehearse,
In no ignoble verse;
But such as thy own voice did practice here,
When thy first fruits of poesie were given,
To make thyself a welcome inmate there;
While yet a young probationer,
And candidate of Heaven.

II

If by traduction came thy mind,
Our wonder is the less to find
A soul so charming from a stock so good;
Thy father was transfused into thy blood:
So wert thou born into the tuneful strain,
(An early, rich, and inexhausted vein.)
But if thy pre-existing soul
Was formed, at first, with myriads more,
It did through all the mighty poets roll

Who Greek or Latin laurels wore,
And was that Sappho last, which once it was before.
If so, then cease thy flight, O Heaven-born mind!
Thou hast no dross to purge from thy rich ore:
Nor can thy soul a fairer mansion find
Than was the beauteous frame she left behind:
Return, to fill or mend the choir of thy celestial kind.

May we presume to say, that at thy birth
New joy was sprung in Heaven as well as here on earth?
For sure the milder planets did combine
On thy auspicious horoscope to shine,
And even the most malicious were in trine.
Thy brother-angels at thy birth
Strung each his lyre, and tuned it high,
That all the people of the sky
Might know a poetess was born on earth.
And then if ever, mortal ears
Had heard the music of the spheres!
And if no clustering swarm of bees
On thy sweet mouth distilled their golden dew,
'Twas that, such vulgar miracles
Heaven had not leisure to renew:
For all the blest fraternity of love
Solemnized there thy birth, and kept thy holyday above.

IV

O gracious God! How far have we
Profaned thy Heavenly gift of poesy!
Made prostitute and profligate the muse,
Debased to each obscene and impious use,
Whose harmony was first ordained above,
For tongues of angels and for hymns of love!
Oh wretched we! why were we hurried down
This lubrique and adulterate age,
(Nay, added fat pollutions of our own)
To increase the steaming ordures of the stage?
What can we say to excuse our second fall?
Let this thy vestal, Heaven, atone for all:

Her Arethusian stream remains unsoiled,
Unmixed with foreign filth and undefiled,
Her wit was more than man, her innocence a child.

V

Art she had none, yet wanted none,
For nature did that want supply:
So rich in treasures of her own,
She might our boasted stores defy:
Such noble vigor did her verse adorn,
That it seemed borrowed, where 'twas only born.
Her morals too were in her bosom bred
By great examples daily fed,
What in the best of books, her father's life, she read.
And to be read her self she need not fear;
Each test, and every light, her muse will bear,
Though Epictetus with his lamp were there.
Even love (for love sometimes her muse expressed),
Was but a lambent-flame which played about her breast:
Light as the vapors of a morning dream,
So cold herself, whilst she such warmth expressed,
'Twas Cupid bathing in Diana's stream.

VI

Born to the spacious empire of the Nine,
One would have thought, she should have been content
To manage well that mighty government;
But what can young ambitious souls confine?
To the next realm she stretched her sway,
For painting near adjoining lay,
A plenteous province, and alluring prey.
A chamber of dependences was framed,
(As conquerors will never want pretence,
When armed, to justify the offence),
And the whole fief, in right of poetry she claimed.
The country open lay without defence;
For poets frequent inroads there had made,
And perfectly could represent
The shape, the face, with every lineament;

And all the large domains which the dumb-sister swayed;
All bowed beneath her government,
Received in triumph wheresoe'er she went.
Her pencil drew whate'er her soul designed
And oft the happy draught surpassed the image in her mind.
The sylvan scenes of herds and flocks
And fruitful plains and barren rocks,
Of shallow brooks that flowed so clear,
The bottom did the top appear;
Of deeper too and ampler floods
Which as in mirrors, showed the woods;
Of lofty trees, with sacred shades
And perspectives of pleasant glades,
Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
And shaggy satyrs standing near,
Which them at once admire and fear.
The ruins too of some majestic piece,
Boasting the power of ancient Rome or Greece,
Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
And, though defaced, the wonder of the eye;
What nature, art, bold fiction, e'er durst frame,
Her forming hand gave feature to the name.
So strange a concourse ne'er was seen before,
But when the peopled ark the whole creation bore.

VII

The scene then changed; with bold erected look
Our martial King the sight with reverence strook:
For, not content to express his outward part,
Her hand called out the image of his heart,
His warlike mind, his soul devoid of fear,
His high-designing thoughts were figured there,
As when, by magic, ghosts are made appear.
Our phœnix Queen was portrayed too so bright,
Beauty alone could beauty take so right:
Her dress, her shape, her matchless grace,
Were all observed, as well as heavenly face.
With such a peerless majesty she stands,
As in that day she took the crown from sacred hands:

Before a train of heroines was seen,
In beauty foremost, as in rank, the Queen!
Thus nothing to her genius was denied,
But like a ball of fire, the farther thrown,
Still with a greater blaze she shone,
And her bright soul broke out on every side.
What next she had designed, Heaven only knows:
To such immoderate growth her conquest rose
That Fate alone its progress could oppose.

VIII

Now all those charms, that blooming grace,
The well-proportioned shape and beauteous face,
Shall never more be seen by mortal eyes;
In earth the much-lamented virgin lies!
Not wit nor piety could Fate prevent;
Nor was the cruel destiny content
To finish all the murder at a blow,
To sweep at once her life and beauty too;
But, like a hardened felon, took a pride
To work more mischievously slow,
And plundered first, and then destroyed.
O double sacrilege on things divine,
To rob the relique, and deface the shrine!
But thus Orinda died:
Heaven, by the same disease, did both translate,
As equal were their souls, so equal was their fate.

IX

Mean time, her warlike brother on the seas
His waving streamers to the winds displays,
And vows for his return, with vain devotion, pays.
Ah, generous youth! that wish forbear,
The winds too soon will waft thee here!
Slack all thy sails, and fear to come,
Alas, thou know'st not, thou art wrecked at home!
No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face,
Thou hast already had her last embrace.
But look aloft, and if thou ken'st from far,

Among the Pleiades, a new-kindled star,
If any sparkles, than the rest, more bright,
'Tis she that shines in that propitious light.

X

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
To raise the nations under ground;
When in the valley of Jehosaphat
The judging God shall close the book of Fate;
And there the last assizes keep
For those who wake and those who sleep;
When rattling bones together fly
From the four corners of the sky,
When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
Those clothed with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,
And foremost from the tomb shall bound:
For they are covered with the lightest ground;
And straight, with in-born vigor, on the wing,
Like mounting larks to the New Morning sing.
There thou, sweet Saint, before the choir shalt go,
As harbinger of Heaven, the way to show,
The way which thou so well hast learned below.

John Dryden [1631–1700]

HERACLITUS

They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.
I wept as I remembered how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of gray ashes, long, long ago at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake;
For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

William Johnson-Cory [1823–1892]

ELEGY

TO THE MEMORY OF AN UNFORTUNATE LADY

WHAT beckoning ghost along the moonlight shade
Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?
'Tis she!—but why that bleeding bosom gored?
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?
O ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,
Is it in heaven a crime to love too well,
To bear too tender or too firm a heart,
To act a lover's or a Roman's part?
Is there no bright reversion in the sky,
For those who greatly think or bravely die?
Why bade ye else, ye Powers! her soul aspire
Above the vulgar flight of low desire?
Ambition first sprung from your blest abodes,
The glorious fault of angels and of gods;
Thence to their images on earth it flows,
And in the breasts of kings and heroes glows.
Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age,
Dull sullen prisoners in the body's cage:
Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years,
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres;
Like Eastern kings a lazy state they keep,
And, close confined to their own palace, sleep.
From these perhaps (ere Nature bade her die),
Fate snatched her early to the pitying sky.
As into air the purer spirits flow,
And separate from their kindred dregs below,
So flew the soul to its congenial place,
Nor left one virtue to redeem her race.
But thou, false guardian of a charge too good!
Thou, mean deserter of thy brother's blood!
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,
These cheeks now fading at the blast of Death.
Cold is that breast which warmed the world before,
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.
Thus, if eternal Justice rules the ball,
Thus shall your wives, and thus your children fall;

On all the line a sudden vengeance waits,
And frequent hearses shall besiege your gates.
There passengers shall stand, and pointing say
(While the long funerals blacken all the way),
"Lo! these were they whose souls the Furies steeled,
And cursed with hearts unknowing how to yield."
Thus unlamented pass the proud away,
The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day!
So perish all whose breast ne'er learned to glow
For others' good, or melt at others' woe!

What can atone (O ever-injured shade!)
Thy fate unpitied, and thy rites unpaid?
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear
Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mournful bier.
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were closed,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs composed,
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorned,
By strangers honored, and by strangers mourned!
What though no friends in sable weeds appear,
Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a year,
And bear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances, and the public show?
What though no weeping Loves thy ashes grace,
Nor polished marble emulate thy face?
What though no sacred earth allow thee room,
Nor hallowed dirge be muttered o'er thy tomb?
Yet shall thy grave with rising flowers be dressed,
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:
There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,
There the first roses of the year shall blow;
While angels with their silver wings o'ershade
The ground now sacred by thy reliques made.

So peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,
What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.
How loved, how honored once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee,
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!

Poets themselves must fall, like those they sung,
Deaf the praised ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.

Even he whose soul now melts in mournful lays
Shall shortly want the generous tear he pays;
Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart:
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The Muse forgot, and thou beloved no more!

Alexander Pope [1688–1744]

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a moldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden that, with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool, sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonored dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the 'customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he:

"The next, with dirges due in sad array,
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn:"

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery (all he had) a tear,
He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

Thomas Gray [1716–1771]

THE SETTLERS

How green the earth, how blue the sky,
How pleasant all the days that pass,
Here where the British settlers lie
Beneath their cloaks of grass!

Here ancient peace resumes her round,
And rich from toil stand hill and plain;
Men reap and store; but they sleep sound,
The men who sowed the grain.

Hard to the plough their hands they put,
And wheresoe'er the soil had need
The furrow drave, and underfoot
They sowed themselves for seed.

Ah! not like him whose hand made yield
The brazen kine with fiery breath,
And over all the Colchian field
Strewed far the seeds of death;

Till, as day sank, awoke to war
The seedlings of the dragon's teeth,
And death ran multiplied once more
Across the hideous heath.

But rich in flocks be all these farms,
And fruitful be the fields which hide
Brave eyes that loved the light, and arms
That never clasped a bride!

O willing hearts turned quick to clay,
Glad lovers holding death in scorn,
Out of the lives ye cast away
The coming race is born.

Laurence Housman [1867–

"HE BRINGETH THEM UNTO THEIR DESIRED HAVEN"

I KNEW a much-loved mariner,
Who lies a fathom underground;
Above him now the grasses stir,
Two rose-trees set a bound.

From a high hill his grave looks out
Through sighing larches to the sea;
Now for the ocean's raucous rout
All June the humblebee

Drones round him on the lonely steeps,
And shy wood-creatures come and go
Above the green mound where he keeps
His silent watch below.

An elemental man was he—
Loved God, his wife, his children dear,
And fared through dangers of the sea
Without a sense of fear.

And, loving nature, he was wise
In all the moods of wave and cloud;
Before the pageant of the skies
Nightly his spirit bowed;

Yet reckoned shrewdly with the gale,
And felt the viking's fierce delight
To face the north wind's icy hail,
Unmoved to thought of flight.

But wheresoe'er his prow was turned,
His thoughts, like homing pigeons, came
Back where his casement candle burned
Through many a league its flame.

Exiled from all he loved, at last
The summer gale has brought him home,
Where on the hillsides thickly massed
The elders break in foam.

The lonely highways that he knew
No longer hold him, nor the gale,
Sweeping the desolated blue,
Roars in his slanting sail.

For he has grown a part of all
The winter silence of the hills;
For him the stately twilights fall,
The hemlock softly shrills

In mimicry of gales that woke
His vigilance off many a shore
Whereon the vibrant billows broke.
Now he awakes no more.

He wakes no more! Ah, me! his grief
Was ever that the sea had power
To hold from him the budding leaf,
The opening of the flower.

And so he hungered for the spring—
The hissing, furrow-turning plow,
The first thin notes the bluebirds sing,
The reddening of the bough.

Wave-deafened, many a night he stood
Upon his watery deck, and dreamed
Of thrushes singing in the wood,
And murmurous brooks that streamed

Through silver shallows, and of bees
Lulling the summer afternoon
With mellow trumpetings of ease,
Of drowsiness the boon.

And dreamed of growing old at home,
The wise Ulysses of his crew

Of children's children, who would roam
With him the lands he knew;

And, wide-eyed, face with him the gale,
And hear the slanting billows roar
Their diapason round his rail—
All safe beside his door.

Now he has come into his own,—
Sunshine and bird-song round the spot,
And scents from spicy woodlands blown,—
Yet haply knows it not.

But round the grave where he doth keep,
Unsolaced by regret or woe,
His narrowed heritage in sleep,
The little children go.

They shyly go without a sound,
And read in reverent awe his name,
Until for them the very ground
Doth blossom with his fame.

L. Frank Tooker [1855–

IN THE LILAC-RAIN

All in the lilac-rain,
Tender and sweet,
Brushing the window-pane
Sudden—and fleet!
Came the dear wraith of her
Out of lost Mays—
(Ah, but the faith of her,
True to old ways!)

Scarcely her face I knew
Dim in the wet;
Only her eyes of blue
Who could forget!
Hands full of lilacs too—
Lilac crowned, yet!

These were the flowers she loved
In the far years;
These were the showers she loved—
Light as her tears!
These were the hours she loved—
Hope chasing fears!

Veiled in the lilac-rain
Comes she—and goes. . . .
Sun through the clouds again,
Fresh the wind blows.
Mine, a swift pleasure-pain
None other knows.

Edith M. Thomas [1854–

A DEAD MARCH

Play me a march, low-toned and slow—a march for a silent tread,
Fit for the wandering feet of one who dreams of the silent dead,
Lonely, between the bones below and the souls that are overhead.

Here for a while they smiled and sang, alive in the interspace,
Here with the grass beneath the foot, and the stars above the face,
Now are their feet beneath the grass, and whither has flown their grace?

Who shall assure us whence they come, or tell us the way they go?
Verily, life with them was joy, and, now they have left us, woe.
Once they were not, and now they are not, and this is the sum we know.

Orderly range the seasons due, and orderly roll the stars.
How shall we deem the soldier brave who frets of his wounds and scars?
Are we as senseless brutes that we should dash at the well-seen bars?

No, we are here, with feet unfixed, but ever as if with lead,
Drawn from the orbs which shine above to the orb on which we tread,
Down to the dust from which we came and with which we shall mingle dead.

No, we are here to wait, and work, and strain our banished eyes,
Weary and sick of soil and toil, and hungry and fain for skies,
Far from the reach of wingless men, and not to be scaled with cries.

No, we are here to bend our necks to the yoke of tyrant Time,
Welcoming all the gifts he gives us—glories of youth and prime,
Patiently watching them all depart as our heads grow white as rime.

Why do we mourn the days that go—for the same sun shines each day,
Ever a spring her primrose hath, and ever a May her may;
Sweet as the rose that died last year is the rose that is born to-day.

Do we not too return, we men, as ever the round earth whirls?
Never a head is dimmed with gray but another is sunned with curls;
She was a girl and he was a boy, but yet there are boys and girls.

Ah, but alas for the smile of smiles that never but one face wore;
Ah, for the voice that has flown away like a bird to an unseen shore;
Ah, for the face—the flower of flowers—that blossoms on earth no more.

Cosmo Monkhouse [1840–1901]

TOMMY'S DEAD

You may give over plow, boys,
You may take the gear to the stead,
All the sweat o' your brow, boys,
Will never get beer and bread.
The seed's waste, I know, boys,
There's not a blade will grow, boys,
'Tis cropped out, I trow, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

Send the colt to fair, boys,
He's going blind, as I said,
My old eyes can't bear, boys,
To see him in the shed;
The cow's dry and spare, boys,
She's neither here nor there, boys,
I doubt she's badly bred;
Stop the mill to-morn, boys,
There'll be no more corn, boys,
Neither white nor red;
There's no sign of grass, boys,
You may sell the goat and the ass, boys,
The land's not what it was, boys,
And the beasts must be fed:
You may turn Peg away, boys,
You may pay off old Ned,
We've had a dull day, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

Move my chair on the floor, boys,
Let me turn my head:
She's standing there in the door, boys,
Your sister Winifred!
Take her away from me, boys,
Your sister Winifred!
Move me round in my place, boys,
Let me turn my head,

Take her away from me, boys,
As she lay on her death-bed,
The bones of her thin face, boys,
As she lay on her death-bed!
I don't know how it be, boys,
When all's done and said,
But I see her looking at me, boys,
Wherever I turn my head;
Out of the big oak-tree, boys,
Out of the garden-bed,
And the lily as pale as she, boys,
And the rose that used to be red.

There's something not right, boys,
But I think it's not in my head,
I've kept my precious sight, boys—
The Lord be hallowèd!
Outside and in
The ground is cold to my tread,
The hills are wizen and thin,
The sky is shriveled and shred,
The hedges down by the loan
I can count them bone by bone,
The leaves are open and spread,
But I see the teeth of the land,
And hands like a dead man's hand,
And the eyes of a dead man's head.
There's nothing but cinders and sand,
The rat and the mouse have fed,
And the summer's empty and cold;
Over valley and wold
Wherever I turn my head
There's a mildew and a mold,
The sun's going out overhead,
And I'm very old,
And Tommy's dead.

What am I staying for, boys?
You're all born and bred,
'Tis fifty years and more, boys,
Since wife and I were wed,

And she's gone before, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

She was always sweet, boys,
Upon his curly head,
She knew she'd never see't, boys,
And she stole off to bed;
I've been sitting up alone, boys,
For he'd come home, he said,
But it's time I was gone, boys,
For Tommy's dead.

Put the shutters up, boys,
Bring out the beer and bread,
Make haste and sup, boys,
For my eyes are heavy as lead;
There's something wrong i' the cup, boys,
There's something ill wi' the bread,
I don't care to sup, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

I'm not right, I doubt, boys,
I've such a sleepy head,
I shall never more be stout, boys,
You may carry me to bed.
What are you about, boys?
The prayers are all said,
The fire's raked out, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

The stairs are too steep, boys,
You may carry me to the head,
The night's dark and deep, boys,
Your mother's long in bed,
'Tis time to go to sleep, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

I'm not used to kiss, boys,
You may shake my hand instead.
All things go amiss, boys,
You may lay me where she is, boys,

And I'll rest my old head:
'Tis a poor world, this, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

Sydney Dobell [1824–1874]

IN MEMORIAM

'Tis right for her to sleep between
Some of those old Cathedral walls,
And right too that her grave is green
With all the dew and rain that falls.

'Tis well the organ's solemn sighs
Should soar and sink around her rest,
And almost in her ear should rise
The prayers of those she loved the best.

'Tis also well this air is stirred
By Nature's voices loud and low,
By thunder and the chirping bird,
And grasses whispering as they grow.

For all her spirit's earthly course
Was as a lesson and a sign
How to o'errule the hard divorce
That parts things natural and divine.

Undaunted by the clouds of fear,
Undazzled by a happy day,
She made a Heaven about her here,
And took how much! with her away.

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809–1885]

HER EPITAPH

The handful here, that once was Mary's earth,
Held, while it breathed, so beautiful a soul,
That, when she died, all recognized her birth,
And had their sorrow in serene control.

"Not here! not here!" to every mourner's heart
The wintry wind seemed whispering round her bier;
And when the tomb-door opened, with a start
We heard it echoed from within,—"Not here!"

Shouldst thou, sad pilgrim, who mayst hither pass,
Note in these flowers a delicater hue,
Should spring come earlier to this hallowed grass,
Or the bee later linger on the dew,—

Know that her spirit to her body lent
Such sweetness, grace, as only goodness can;
That even her dust, and this her monument,
Have yet a spell to stay one lonely man,—

Lonely through life, but looking for the day
When what is mortal of himself shall sleep,
When human passion shall have passed away,
And Love no longer be a thing to weep.

Thomas William Parsons [1819–1892]

THE DEATH-BED

We watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

Thomas Hood [1799–1845]

HESTER

When maidens such as Hester die,
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try,
With vain endeavor.
A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed,
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flushed her spirit:
I know not by what name beside
I shall it call;—if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool;
But she was trained in Nature's school,
Nature had blessed her.
A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind;
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,—
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbor, gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
Some summer morning,
When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,—
A bliss that would not go away,—
A sweet forewarning?

Charles Lamb [1775–1834]

"SOFTLY WOO AWAY HER BREATH"

Softly woo away her breath,
Gentle Death!
Let her leave thee with no strife,
Tender, mournful, murmuring Life!
She hath seen her happy day:—
She hath had her bud and blossom:
Now she pales and shrinks away,
Earth, into thy gentle bosom!

She hath done her bidding here,
Angels dear!
Bear her perfect soul above,
Seraph of the skies,—sweet Love!
Good she was, and fair in youth,
And her mind was seen to soar,
And her heart was wed to truth:
Take her, then, for evermore,—
For ever—evermore.

Bryan Waller Procter [1787–1874]

A DEATH-BED

Her suffering ended with the day,
Yet lived she at its close,
And breathed the long, long night away
In statue-like repose.

But when the sun in all his state
Illumed the eastern skies,
She passed through Glory's morning gate
And walked in Paradise.

James Aldrich [1810–1856]

"SHE DIED IN BEAUTY"

She died in beauty,—like a rose
Blown from its parent stem;
She died in beauty,—like a pearl
Dropped from some diadem.

She died in beauty,—like a lay
  Along a moonlit lake;
She died in beauty,—like the song
  Of birds amid the brake.

She died in beauty,—like the snow
  On flowers dissolved away;
She died in beauty,—like a star
  Lost on the brow of day.

She lives in glory,—like night's gems
  Set round the silver moon;
She lives in glory,—like the sun
  Amid the blue of June.

Charles Doyne Sillery [1807–1837]

THE WHITE JESSAMINE

I KNEW she lay above me,
  Where the casement all the night
Shone, softened with a phosphor glow
  Of sympathetic light,
And that her fledgling spirit pure
  Was pluming fast for flight.

Each tendril throbbed and quickened
  As I nightly climbed apace,
And could scarce restrain the blossoms
  When, anear the destined place,
Her gentle whisper thrilled me
  Ere I gazed upon her face.

I waited, darkling, till the dawn
  Should touch me into bloom,
While all my being panted
  To outpour its first perfume,
When, lo! a paler flower than mine
  Had blossomed in the gloom!

John Banister Tabb [1845–1909]

EARLY DEATH

SHE passed away like morning dew
Before the sun was high;
So brief her time, she scarcely knew
The meaning of a sigh.

As round the rose its soft perfume,
Sweet love around her floated;
Admired she grew—while mortal doom
Crept on, unfeared, unnoted.

Love was her guardian Angel here,
But Love to Death resigned her;
Though Love was kind, why should we fear
But holy Death is kinder?

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1849]

THE MOSS-ROSE

WALKING to-day in your garden, O gracious lady,
Little you thought, as you turned in that alley remote and shady
And gave me a rose, and asked if I knew its savor—
The old-world scent of the moss-rose, flower of a bygone favor—

Little you thought, as you waited the word of appraisement,
Laughing at first, and then amazed at my amazement,
That the rose you gave was a gift already cherished,
And the garden whence you plucked it a garden long perished.

But I—I saw that garden, with its one treasure
The tiny moss-rose, tiny even by childhood's measure.
And the long morning shadow of the rusty laurel,
And a boy and a girl beneath it, flushed with a childish quarrel.

She wept for her one little bud; but he, outreaching
The hand of brotherly right, would take it for all her beseeching;

And she flung her arms about him, and gave like a sister,
And laughed at her own tears, and wept again when he kissed her.

So the rose is mine since, and whenever I find it
And drink again the sharp sweet scent of the moss behind it,
I remember the tears of a child, and her love and her laughter,
And the morning shadows of youth, and the night that fell thereafter.

Henry Newbolt [1862–

A REQUIEM

Thou hast lived in pain and woe,
Thou hast lived in grief and fear;
Now thine heart can dread no blow,
Now thine eyes can shed no tear:
Storms round us shall beat and rave;
Thou art sheltered in the grave.

Thou for long, long years hast borne,
Bleeding through Life's wilderness,
Heavy loss and wounding scorn;
Now thine heart is burdenless:
Vainly rest for ours we crave;
Thine is quiet in the grave.

We must toil with pain and care,
We must front tremendous Fate,
We must fight with dark Despair:
Thou dost dwell in solemn state,
Couched triumphant, calm and brave,
In the ever-holy grave.

James Thomson [1834–1882]

DIRGE

Calm on the bosom of thy God,
Fair spirit, rest thee now!
E'en while with ours thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath!
Soul, to its place on high!
They that have seen thy look in death
No more may fear to die.

Lone are the paths, and sad the bowers,
Whence thy meek smile is gone;
But oh! a brighter home than ours
In heaven, is now thine own.

Felicia Dorothea Hemans [1793–1835]

THE LAMP OF POOR SOULS

Above my head the shields are stained with rust,
The wind has taken his spoil, the moth his part;
Dust of dead men beneath my knees, and dust,
Lord, in my heart.

Lay Thou the hand of faith upon my fears;
The priest has prayed, the silver bell has rung,
But not for him. O unforgotten tears,
He was so young!

Shine, little lamp, nor let thy light grow dim.
Into what vast, dread dreams, what lonely lands,
Into what griefs hath death delivered him,
Far from my hands?

Cradled is he, with half his prayers forgot.
I cannot learn the level way he goes.
He whom the harvest hath remembered not
Sleeps with the rose.

Shine, little lamp, fed with sweet oil of prayers.
Shine, little lamp, as God's own eyes may shine,
When He treads softly down His starry stairs
And whispers, "Thou art Mine."

Shine, little lamp, for love hath fed thy gleam.
Sleep, little soul, by God's own hands set free.
Cling to His arms and sleep, and sleeping, dream,
And dreaming, look for me.

Marjorie L. C. Pickthall [1883–

SENTENCE

Shall I say that what heaven gave
  Earth has taken?—
Or that sleepers in the grave
  Reawaken?

One sole sentence can I know,
  Can I say:
You, my comrade, had to go,
  I to stay.

Witter Bynner [1881–

RESURRECTION

I hope there is a resurrection day
For bodies, as the ancient prophets say,
When Helen's naked limbs again will gleam
Regathered from the dust of death's long dream,—
When those who thrilled the ages, being fair,
Will take the singing angels unaware
And make God's perfect meadows doubly sweet
With rosy vagrancy of little feet.

Harry Kemp [1883–

THE SLEEPER

Above the cloistral valley,
  Above the druid rill,
There lies a quiet sleeper
  Upon a lonely hill.

All the long days of summer
  The low winds whisper by,
And the soft voices of the leaves
  Make murmurous reply.

All the long eves of autumn
  The loving shadows mass
Round this sequestered slumbering-place
  Beneath the cool hill grass.

All the long nights of winter
  The white drifts heap and heap
To form a fleecy coverlet
  Above the dreamer's sleep.

All the long morns of springtime
  The tear-drops of the dew
Gleam in the violets' tender eyes
  As if the blossoms knew.

Ah, who would break the rapture
  Brooding and sweet and still,
The great peace of the sleeper
  Upon the lonely hill!

Clinton Scollard [1860–

THE WIDOW'S MITE

A WIDOW—she had only one!
A puny and decrepit son;
  But, day and night,
Though fretful oft, and weak and small,
A loving child, he was her all—
  The Widow's Mite.

The Widow's Mite! ay, so sustained,
She battled onward, nor complained,
  Though friends were fewer:
And while she toiled for daily fare,
A little crutch upon the stair
  Was music to her.

I saw her then,—and now I see
That, though resigned and cheerful, she
  Has sorrowed much:
She has, He gave it tenderly,
Much faith; and, carefully laid by,
  A little crutch.

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821–1895]

MOTHER AND POET

TURIN, AFTER NEWS FROM GAETA, 1861

Dead! One of them shot by the sea in the east,
And one of them shot in the west by the sea.
Dead! both my boys! When you sit at the feast
And are wanting a great song for Italy free,
Let none look at *me!*

Yet I was a poetess only last year,
And good at my art, for a woman, men said;
But *this* woman, *this*, who is agonized here,
—The east sea and west sea rhyme on in her head
For ever instead.

What art can a woman be good at? Oh, vain!
What art *is* she good at, but hurting her breast
With the milk-teeth of babes, and a smile at the pain?
Ah boys, how you hurt! you were strong as you pressed,
And I proud, by that test.

What art's for a woman! To hold on her knees
Both darlings! to feel all their arms round her throat
Cling, strangle a little! to sew by degrees
And 'broider the long-clothes and neat little coat;
To dream and to dote.

To teach them. . . It stings there! *I* made them indeed
Speak plain the word "country." *I* taught them, no doubt,
That a country's a thing men should die for at need.
I prated of liberty, rights, and about
The tyrant cast out.

And when their eyes flashed . . . O my beautiful eyes! . . .
I exulted; nay, let them go forth at the wheels
Of the guns, and denied not. But then the surprise
When one sits quite alone! Then one weeps, then one kneels!
God! how the house feels!

At first, happy news came, in gay letters moiled
With my kisses,—of camp-life and glory, and how
They both loved me; and, soon coming home to be spoiled,
In return would fan off every fly from my brow
With their green laurel-bough.

Then was triumph at Turin: "Ancona was free!"
And some one came out of the cheers in the street,
With a face pale as stone, to say something to me.
My Guido was dead! I fell down at his feet,
While they cheered in the street.

I bore it; friends soothed me; my grief looked sublime
As the ransom of Italy. One boy remained
To be leant on and walked with, recalling the time
When the first grew immortal, while both of us strained
To the height he had gained.

And letters still came, shorter, sadder, more strong,
Writ now but in one hand, "I was not to faint,—
One loved me for two . . . would be with me erelong:
And *Viva l'Italia!—he* died for, our saint,
Who forbids our complaint."

My Nanni would add, "he was safe, and aware
Of a presence that turned off the balls . . . was impressed
It was Guido himself, who knew what I could bear,
And how 'twas impossible, quite dispossessed,
To live on for the rest."

On which, without pause, up the telegraph-line
Swept smoothly the next news from Gaeta:—*Shot.*
Tell his mother. Ah, ah, "his," "their" mother;—not
"mine,"
No voice says "*My* mother" again to me. What!
You think Guido forgot?

Are souls straight so happy that, dizzy with Heaven,
They drop earth's affections, conceive not of woe?
I think not. Themselves were too lately forgiven
Through THAT Love and Sorrow which reconciled so
The Above and Below.

O Christ of the five wounds, who look'dst through the dark
  To the face of thy mother! consider, I pray,
How we common mothers stand desolate, mark,
  Whose sons, not being Christs, die with eyes turned away,
    And no last word to say!

Both boys dead? but that's out of nature. We all
  Have been patriots, yet each house must always keep one.
'Twere imbecile, hewing out roads to a wall;
  And when Italy's made, for what end is it done
    If we have not a son?

Ah, ah, ah! when Gaeta's taken, what then?
  When the fair wicked queen sits no more at her sport
Of the fire-balls of death crashing souls out of men?
  When the guns of Cavalli with final retort
    Have cut the game short?

When Venice and Rome keep their new jubilee,
  When your flag takes all heaven for its white, green and
      red,
When *you* have your country from mountain to sea,
  When King Victor has Italy's crown on his head,
    (And *I* have my Dead)—

What then? Do not mock me. Ah, ring your bells low,
  And burn your lights faintly! *My* country is *there*,
Above the star pricked by the last peak of snow:
  My Italy's THERE, with my brave civic Pair,
    To disfranchise despair!

Forgive me. Some women bear children in strength,
  And bite back the cry of their pain in self-scorn;
But the birth-pangs of nations will wring us at length
  Into wail such as this—and we sit on forlorn
    When the man-child is born.

Dead! One of them shot by the sea in the east,
  And one of them shot in the west by the sea.
Both! both my boys! If in keeping the feast
  You want a great song for your Italy free,
    Let none look at *me!*

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

A MOTHER IN EGYPT

"About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill."

Is the noise of grief in the palace over the river
For this silent one at my side?
There came a hush in the night, and he rose with his hands a-quiver
Like lotus petals adrift on the swing of the tide.
O small cold hands, the day groweth old for sleeping!
O small still feet, rise up, for the hour is late!
Rise up, my son, for I hear them mourning and weeping
In the temple down by the gate!

Hushed is the face that was wont to brighten with laughter
When I sang at the mill;
And silence unbroken shall greet the sorrowful dawns hereafter,—
The house shall be still.
Voice after voice takes up the burden of wailing—
Do you heed, do you hear?—in the high priest's house by the wall.
But mine is the grief, and their sorrow is all unavailing.
Will he wake at their call?

Something I saw of the broad dim wings half folding
The passionless brow.
Something I saw of the sword that the shadowy hands were holding,—
What matters it now?
I held you close, dear face, as I knelt and harkened
To the wind that cried last night like a soul in sin,
When the broad bright stars dropped down and the soft sky darkened
And the Presence moved therein.

I have heard men speak in the market-place of the city,
Low-voiced, in a breath,
Of a God who is stronger than ours, and who knows not changing nor pity,
Whose anger is death.

Nothing I know of the lords of the outland races,
But Amun is gentle and Hathor the mother is mild,
And who would descend from the light of the Peaceful Places
To war on a child?

Yet here he lies, with a scarlet pomegranate petal
Blown down on his cheek.
The slow sun sinks to the sand like a shield of some burnished metal,
But he does not speak.
I have called, I have sung, but he neither will hear nor waken;
So lightly, so whitely, he lies in the curve of my arm,
Like a feather let fall from the bird that the arrow hath taken,—
Who could see him, and harm?

"The swallow flies home to her sleep in the eaves of the altar,
And the crane to her nest."—
So do we sing o'er the mill, and why, ah, why should I falter,
Since he goes to his rest?
Does he play in their flowers as he played among these with his mother?
Do the gods smile downward and love him and give him their care?
Guard him well, O ye gods, till I come; lest the wrath of that Other
Should reach to him there.

Marjorie L. C. Pickthall [1883–

THE DARK ROAD

THERE is no light in any path of Heaven,
Every star is folded in dark sleep;
The clouds hang heavily, the moon is hidden,
How will she know the road her soul must keep?

She did not ask for heavenly palaces,
A little human home was her desire;
The intimate, close touch of human hands—
To love and watch beside a human fire.

As tears will be remembrance in her heart
If she recall her lamp's familiar light,
And as a sword vain pity in her heart
If she should hear her children's cry to-night.

Ah Mary, Mother, stand by Heaven's gate
And watch the road for one who comes to find
In loneliness and fear what Heaven holds
To comfort her who leaves the earth behind.

Ethel Clifford [18 –

OUT OF HEARING

No need to hush the children for her sake,
Or fear their play:
She will not wake, mavrone, she will not wake.
'Tis the long sleep, the deep long sleep she'll take,
Betide what may.
No need to hush the children for her sake;
Even if their glee could yet again outbreak
So loud and gay,
She will not wake, mavrone, she will not wake.
But sorrow a thought have they of merry-make
This many a day:
No need to hush the children. For her sake
So still they bide and sad, her heart would ache
At their dismay.
She will not wake, mavrone, she will not wake
To bid them laugh, and if some angel spake
Small heed they'd pay.
No need to hush the children for her sake:
She will not wake, mavrone, she will not wake.

Jane Barlow [18 –1917]

"JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO"

"John Anderson, my jo, John,"
How cold you are, and still;
You hear me not, nor see me,
Ah, no, and never will

Your hands are resting now, John;
The heart that loved me so
Against my breast shall beat no more,
"John Anderson, my jo."

"John Anderson, my jo, John,"
I'll tarry but a while;
I've still some work to do, John,
To go a weary mile;
And then I'll take your path, John,
And win you soon, I know,
For you will wait for your old wife,
"John Anderson, my jo."

Charles G. Blanden [1857–

THE SPRING OF THE YEAR

Gone were but the winter cold,
And gone were but the snow,
I could sleep in the wild woods
Where primroses blow.

Cold's the snow at my head,
And cold at my feet;
And the finger of death's at my e'en,
Closing them to sleep.

Let none tell my father
Or my mother so dear,—
I'll meet them both in heaven
At the spring of the year.

Allan Cunningham [1784–1842]

THE GRAVES OF A HOUSEHOLD

They grew in beauty, side by side,
They filled one home with glee;
Their graves are severed far and wide
By mount, and stream, and sea.

The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow;
She had each folded flower in sight—
Where are those dreamers now?

One 'mid the forests of the West,
By a dark stream is laid;
The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar shade.
The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one—
He lies where pearls lie deep;
He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

One sleeps where southern vines are dressed
Above the noble slain;
He wrapped his colors round his breast
On a blood-red field of Spain.
And one—o'er her the myrtle showers
Its leaves, by soft winds fanned;
She faded 'mid Italian flowers,
The last of that bright band.

And, parted thus, they rest who played
Beneath the same green tree,
Whose voices mingled as they prayed
Around one parent-knee!
They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheered with song the hearth;
Alas for love, if thou wert all,
And naught beyond, O Earth!

Felicia Dorothea Hemans [1793–1835]

THE FAMILY MEETING

We are all here,
Father, mother,
Sister, brother,
All who hold each other dear.
Each chair is filled, we are all at home!
To-night let no cold stranger come;

It is not often thus around
Our old familiar hearth we're found.
Bless, then, the meeting and the spot,
For once be every care forgot;
Let gentle peace assert her power,
And kind affection rule the hour.
We're all—all here.

We're not all here!
Some are away,—the dead ones dear,
Who thronged with us this ancient hearth,
And gave the hour to guileless mirth.
Fate, with a stern, relentless hand,
Looked in and thinned our little band;
Some like a night-flash passed away,
And some sank lingering day by day;
The quiet grave-yard—some lie there,—
And cruel ocean has his share.
We're not all here!

We are all here.
Even they—the dead—though dead, so dear,
Fond memory, to her duty true,
Brings back their faded forms to view.
How life-like, through the mist of years,
Each well-remembered face appears!
We see them, as in times long past;
From each to each kind looks are cast;
We hear their words, their smiles behold,
They're 'round us as they were of old.
We are all here!

We are all here:
Father, mother,
Sister, brother,
You that I love with love so dear.
This may not long of us be said;
Soon must we join the gathered dead,
And by the hearth we now sit 'round
Some other circle will be found.

Oh, then, that wisdom may we know
Which yields a life of peace below;
So, in the world to follow this,
May each repeat, in words of bliss,
We're all—all here.

Charles Sprague [1791–1875]

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
"The will of God be done!"

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We traveled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun;
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply:

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn
Such colors, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopped short
Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale;
And then she sang;—she would have been
A very nightingale.

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

"And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the church-yard yew,
A blooming girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

"A basket on her head she bare;
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a child so very fair
It was a pure delight!

"No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

"There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine;
I looked at her, and looked again,
And did not wish her mine!"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

"SURPRISED BY JOY"

Surprised by joy—impatient as the Wind—
I turned to share the transport—O! with whom
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find?
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—
But how could I forget thee? Through what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss?—That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

THE REVEL

EAST INDIA

We meet 'neath the sounding rafter,
And the walls around are bare;
As they shout back our peals of laughter
It seems that the dead are there.
Then stand to your glasses, steady!
We drink in our comrades' eyes:
One cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

Not here are the goblets glowing,
Not here is the vintage sweet;
'Tis cold, as our hearts are growing,
And dark as the doom we meet.

But stand to your glasses, steady!
And soon shall our pulses rise:
A cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

There's many a hand that's shaking,
And many a cheek that's sunk;
But soon, though our hearts are breaking,
They'll burn with the wine we've drunk.
Then stand to your glasses, steady!
'Tis here the revival lies:
Quaff a cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

Time was when we laughed at others;
We thought we were wiser then;
Ha! ha! let them think of their mothers,
Who hope to see them again.
No! stand to your glasses, steady!
The thoughtless is here the wise:
One cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

Not a sigh for the lot that darkles,
Not a tear for the friends that sink;
We'll fall, 'midst the wine-cup's sparkles,
As mute as the wine we drink.
Come, stand to your glasses, steady!
'Tis this that the respite buys:
A cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

There's a mist on the glass congealing,
'Tis the hurricane's sultry breath;
And thus does the warmth of feeling
Turn ice in the grasp of Death.
But stand to your glasses, steady!
For a moment the vapor flies:
Quaff a cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

Who dreads to the dust returning?
Who shrinks from the sable shore,
Where the high and haughty yearning
Of the soul can sting no more?
No, stand to your glasses, steady!
The world is a world of lies:
A cup to the dead already—
And hurrah for the next that dies!

Cut off from the land that bore us,
Betrayed by the land we find,
When the brightest have gone before us,
And the dullest are most behind—
Stand, stand to your glasses, steady!
'Tis all we have left to prize:
One cup to the dead already—
Hurrah for the next that dies!

Bartholomew Dowling [1823–1863]

THE CHOICE

From "The House of Life"

I

Eat thou and drink; to-morrow thou shalt die.
Surely the earth, that's wise being very old,
Needs not our help. Then loose me, love, and hold
Thy sultry hair up from my face; that I
May pour for thee this golden wine, brim-high,
Till round the glass thy fingers glow like gold.
We'll drown all hours: thy song, while hours are tolled,
Shall leap, as fountains veil the changing sky.
Now kiss, and think that there are really those,
My own high-bosomed beauty, who increase
Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might choose our way!
Through many years they toil; then on a day
They die not,—for their life was death,—but cease;
And round their narrow lips the mold falls close.

II

Watch thou and fear; to-morrow thou shalt die.
Or art thou sure thou shalt have time for death?
Is not the day which God's word promiseth
To come man knows not when? In yonder sky,
Now while we speak, the sun speeds forth: can I
Or thou assure him of his goal? God's breath
Even at this moment haply quickeneth
The air to a flame; till spirits, always nigh
Though screened and hid, shall walk the daylight here.
And dost thou prate of all that man shall do?
Canst thou, who hast but plagues, presume to be
Glad in his gladness that comes after thee?
Will *his* strength slay *thy* worm in Hell? Go to:
Cover thy countenance, and watch, and fear.

III

Think thou and act; to-morrow thou shalt die.
Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon the shore,
Thou say'st: "Man's measured path is all gone o'er;
Up all his years, steeply, with strain and sigh,
Man clomb until he touched the truth; and I,
Even I, am he whom it was destined for."
How should this be? Art thou then so much more
Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst reap thereby?
Nay, come up hither. From this wave-washed mound
Unto the furthest flood-brim look with me;
Then reach on with thy thought till it be drowned.
Miles and miles distant though the last line be,
And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond,—
Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is more sea.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828–1882]

READÈN OV A HEAD-STWONE

As I wer readèn ov a stwonè
In Grenley church-yard all alwone,
A little maïd ran up, wi' pride
To zee me there, an' pushed a-zide

A bunch o' bennets that did hide
A verse her father, as she zaïd,
Put up above her mother's head,
To tell how much he loved her.

The verse wer short, but very good,
I stood an' larned en where I stood:—
"Mid God, dear Meäry, gi'e me greäce,
To vind, lik' thee, a better pleäce,
Where I woonce mwore mid zee thy feäce;
An' bring thy children up to know
His word, that they mid come an' show
Thy soul how much I loved thee."

"Where's father, then," I zaid, "my chile?"
"Dead too," she answered wi' a smile;
"An' I an' brother Jim do bide
At Betty White's, o' t'other side
O' road." "Mid He, my chile," I cried,
"That's father to the fatherless,
Become thy father now, an' bless,
An' keep, an' leäd, an' love thee."

Though she've a-lost, I thought, so much,
Still He don't let the thoughts o't touch
Her litsome heart by day or night;
An' zoo, if we could teäke it right,
Do show He'll meäke His burdens light
To weaker souls, an' that His smile
Is sweet upon a harmless chile,
When they be dead that loved it.

William Barnes [1801–1886]

THE TWO MYSTERIES

We know not what it is, dear, this sleep so deep and still;
The folded hands, the awful calm, the cheek so pale and chill;
The lids that will not lift again, though we may call and call;
The strange, white solitude of peace that settles over all.

We know not what it means, dear, this desolate heart-pain;
This dread to take our daily way, and walk in it again;
We know not to what other sphere the loved who leave us go,
Nor why we're left to wonder still, nor why we do not know.

But this we know: Our loved and dead, if they should come this day—
Should come and ask us, "What is life?" not one of us could say.
Life is a mystery as deep as ever death can be;
Yet, oh, how dear it is to us, this life we live and see!

Then might they say—these vanished ones—and blessed is the thought,
"So death is sweet to us, beloved! though we may show you naught;
We may not to the quick reveal the mystery of death—
Ye cannot tell us, if ye would, the mystery of breath."

The child who enters life comes not with knowledge or intent,
So those who enter death must go as little children sent.
Nothing is known. But I believe that God is overhead;
And as life is to the living, so death is to the dead.

Mary Mapes Dodge [1838–1905]

FOREVER

Those we love truly never die,
Though year by year the sad memorial wreath,
A ring and flowers, types of life and death,
Are laid upon their graves.

For death the pure life saves,
And life all pure is love; and love can reach
From heaven to earth, and nobler lessons teach
Than those by mortals read.

Well blest is he who has a dear one dead:
A friend he has whose face will never change—
A dear communion that will not grow strange;
The anchor of a love is death.

The blessed sweetness of a loving breath
Will reach our cheek all fresh through weary years.
For her who died long since, ah! waste not tears,
She's thine unto the end.

Thank God for one dear friend,
With face still radiant with the light of truth,
Whose love comes laden with the scent of youth,
Through twenty years of death.

John Boyle O'Reilly [1844–1890]

NOW AND AFTERWARDS

"Two hands upon the breast, and labor is past"—Russian Proverb

Two hands upon the breast,
And labor's done;
Two pale feet crossed in rest,—
The race is won;
Two eyes with coin-weights shut,
And all tears cease,
Two lips where grief is mute,
Anger at peace;—
So pray we oftentimes, mourning our lot;
God in His kindness answereth not.

Two hands to work addressed
Aye for His praise;
Two feet that never rest
Walking His ways;
Two eyes that look above
Through all their tears;
Two lips still breathing love,
Not wrath, nor fears;—
So pray we afterwards, low on our knees;
Pardon those erring prayers! Father, hear these!

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826–1887]

"NOW THE LABORER'S TASK IS O'ER"

Now the laborer's task is o'er;
Now the battle day is past;
Now upon the farther shore
Lands the voyager at last.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

There the tears of earth are dried;
There its hidden things are clear;
There the work of life is tried
By a juster Judge than here.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

There the penitents, that turn
To the cross their dying eyes,
All the love of Jesus learn
At His feet in Paradise.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

There no more the powers of hell
Can prevail to mar their peace;
Christ the Lord shall guard them well,
He who died for their release.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

"Earth to earth, and dust to dust,"
Calmly now the words we say,
Left behind, we wait in trust
For the resurrection day.
Father, in Thy gracious keeping
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

John Lodge Ellerton [1801–1873]

LOVE AND DEATH

Alas! that men must see
Love, before Death!
Else they content might be
With their short breath;
Aye, glad, when the pale sun
Showed restless day was done,
And endless Rest begun.

Glad, when with strong, cool hand
Death clasped their own,
And with a strange command
Hushed every moan;
Glad to have finished pain,
And labor wrought in vain,
Blurred by Sin's deepening stain.

But Love's insistent voice
Bids self to flee—
"Live that I may rejoice,
Live on, for me!"
So, for Love's cruel mind,
Men fear this Rest to find,
Nor know great Death is kind!

Margaret Deland [1857–

VAN ELSEN

God spake three times and saved Van Elsen's soul;
He spake by sickness first and made him whole;
Van Elsen heard him not,
Or soon forgot.

God spake to him by wealth, the world outpoured
Its treasures at his feet, and called him Lord;
Van Elsen's heart grew fat
And proud thereat.

God spake the third time when the great World smiled,
And in the sunshine slew his little child;
Van Elsen like a tree
Fell hopelessly.

Then in the darkness came a voice which said,
"As thy heart bleedeth, so my heart hath bled,
As I have need of thee,
Thou needest me."

That night Van Elsen kissed the baby feet,
And, kneeling by the narrow winding-sheet,
Praised Him with fervent breath
Who conquered death.

Frederick George Scott [1861–

THE FLIGHT

Upon a cloud among the stars we stood:
The angel raised his hand, and looked, and said,
"Which world, of all yon starry myriad
Shall we make wing to?" The still solitude
Became a harp whereon his voice and mood
Made spheral music round his haloed head.
I spake—for then I had not long been dead—
"Let me look round upon the vasts, and brood
A moment on these orbs ere I decide. . . .
What is yon lower star that beauteous shines
And with soft splendor now incarnadines
Our wings?—*There* would I go and there abide."
Then he, as one who some child's thought divines:
"That is the world where yesternight you died."

Lloyd Mifflin [1846–

RIPE GRAIN

O still, white face of perfect peace,
Untouched by passion, freed from pain,—
He who ordained that work should cease
Took to Himself the ripened grain.

O noble face! your beauty bears
The glory that is wrung from pain,—
The high, celestial beauty wears
Of finished work, of ripened grain.

Of human care you left no trace,
No lightest trace of grief or pain,—
On earth an empty form and face—
In Heaven stands the ripened grain.

Dora Reed Goodale [1866–

"THE LAND WHICH NO ONE KNOWS"

DARK, deep, and cold the current flows
Unto the sea where no wind blows,
Seeking the land which no one knows.

O'er its sad gloom still comes and goes
The mingled wail of friends and foes,
Borne to the land which no one knows.

Why shrieks for help yon wretch, who goes
With millions, from a world of woes,
Unto the land which no one knows?

Though myriads go with him who goes,
Alone he goes where no wind blows,
Unto the land which no one knows.

For all must go where no wind blows,
And none can go for him who goes;
None, none return whence no one knows.

Yet why should he who shrieking goes
With millions, from a world of woes,
Reunion seek with it or those?

Alone with God, where no wind blows,
And Death, his shadow—doomed, he goes:
That God is there the shadow shows.

O shoreless Deep, where no wind blows!
And thou, O Land, which no one knows!
That God is all, His shadow shows.

Ebenezer Elliott [1781–1849]

THE HILLS OF REST

Beyond the last horizon's rim,
Beyond adventure's farthest quest,
Somewhere they rise, serene and dim,
The happy, happy Hills of Rest.

Upon their sunlit slopes uplift
The castles we have built in Spain—
While fair amid the summer drift
Our faded gardens flower again.

Sweet hours we did not live go by
To soothing note, on scented wing;
In golden-lettered volumes lie
The songs we tried in vain to sing.

They all are there: the days of dream
That build the inner lives of men;
The silent, sacred years we deem
The might be, and the might have been.

Some evening when the sky is gold
I'll follow day into the west;
Nor pause, nor heed, till I behold
The happy, happy Hills of Rest.

Albert Bigelow Paine [1861–

AT THE TOP OF THE ROAD

"But, Lord," she said, "my shoulders still are strong—
I have been used to bear the load so long;

"And see, the hill is passed, and smooth the road . . ."
"Yet," said the Stranger, "yield me now thy load."

Gently he took it from her, and she stood
Straight-limbed and lithe, in new-found maidenhood,

Amid long, sunlit fields; around them sprang
A tender breeze, and birds and rivers sang.

"My Lord," she said, "the land is very fair!"
Smiling, he answered: "Was it not so there?"

"There?" In her voice a wondering question lay:
"Was I not always here, then, as to-day?"

He turned to her with strange, deep eyes aflame:
"Knowest thou not this kingdom, nor my name?"

"Nay," she replied: "but this I understand—
That thou art Lord of Life in this dear land!"

"Yea, child," he murmured, scarce above his breath:
"Lord of the Land! but men have named me Death."

Charles Buxton Going [1863–

SHEMUEL

Shemuel, the Bethlehemite,
Watched a fevered guest at night;
All his fellows fared afield
Saw the angel host revealed;
He nor caught the mystic story,
Heard the song, nor saw the glory.

Through the night they gazing stood,
Heard the holy multitude;
Back they came in wonder home,
Knew the Christmas kingdom come,
Eyes aflame and hearts elated;
Shemuel sat alone, and waited.

Works of mercy now, as then,
Hide the angel host from men;
Hearts attuned to earthly love
Miss the angel notes above;
Deeds at which the world rejoices,
Quench the sound of angel voices.

So they thought, nor deemed from whence
His celestial recompense.
Shemuel, by the fever bed,
Touched by beckoning hands that led,
Died, and saw the Uncreated;
All his fellows lived, and waited.

Edward Ernest Bowen [1836–1901]

SHE AND HE

"She is dead!" they said to him. "Come away;
Kiss her and leave her!—thy love is clay!"

They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
On her forehead of marble they laid it fair;

Over her eyes, that gazed too much,
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell:

About her brows, and her dear, pale face,
They tied her veil and her marriage-lace:

And drew on her white feet her white silk shoes;—
Which were the whiter no eye could choose!

And over her bosom they crossed her hands;
"Come away," they said,—"God understands!"

And then there was Silence;—and nothing there
But the Silence—and scents of eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;
And they said, "As a lady should lie, lies she!"

And they held their breath till they left the room,
With a shudder to glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he—who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,—

He lit his lamp, and took the key,
And turned it!—Alone again—he and she!

He and she; but she would not speak,
Though he kissed, in the old place, the quiet cheek;

He and she; yet she would not smile,
Though he called her the name that was fondest erewhile.

He and she; and she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love!

Then he said, "Cold lips! and breast without breath!
Is there no voice?—no language of death

"Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct,—intense?

"See, now,—I listen with soul, not ear,—
What was the secret of dying, Dear?

"Was it the infinite wonder of all
That you ever could let life's flower fall?

"Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?

"Was the miracle greatest to find how deep,
Beyond all dreams, sank downward that sleep?

"Did life roll backward its record, Dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?

"And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out so what a wisdom love is?

"Oh, perfect Dead! Oh, Dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear;

"I listen—as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as to heaven!—and you do not tell!

"There must be pleasures in dying, Sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!

"I would tell *you*, Darling, if I were dead,
And 'twere your hot tears upon *my* brow shed.

"I would say, though the angel of death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.

"*You* should not ask, vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which in Death's touch was the chiefest surprise;

"The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring."

. . . . . .

Ah! foolish world! Oh! most kind Dead!
Though he told me, who will believe it was said?

Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the soft rich voice, in the dear old way:—

"The utmost wonder is this,—I hear,
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, Dear;

"I can speak, now you listen with soul alone;
If your soul could see, it would all be shown

"What a strange delicious amazement is Death,
To be without body and breathe without breath.

"I should laugh for joy if you did not cry;
Oh, listen! Love lasts!—Love never will die.

"I am only your Angel, who was your Bride;
And I know, that though dead, I have never died."

Edwin Arnold [1832–1904]

AFTER DEATH IN ARABIA

He who died at Azan sends
This to comfort all his friends:

Faithful friends! It lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow:
And ye say, "Abdallah's dead!"
Weeping at the feet and head.
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers;
Yet I smile and whisper this:
"*I* am not the thing you kiss;
Cease your tears, and let it lie;
It *was* mine—it is not I."

Sweet friends! what the women lave
For its last bed of the grave,
Is a tent which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which, at last,
Like a hawk my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room,—
The wearer, not the garb;—the plume
Of the falcon, not the bars
That kept him from these splendid stars!

Loving friends! be wise, and dry
Straightway every weeping eye.
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a wistful tear.
'Tis an empty sea-shell,—one
Out of which the pearl is gone.
The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.
'Tis an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
That treasure of his treasury,
A mind that loved him: let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold shines in his store!

Allah glorious! Allah good!
Now Thy world is understood;
Now the long, long wonder ends!
Yet ye weep, my erring friends,
While the man whom ye call dead,
In unspoken bliss, instead,
Lives and loves you; lost, 'tis true,
By such light as shines for you;
But in light ye cannot see
Of unfulfilled felicity,—
In enlarging paradise,
Lives a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! yet not farewell;—
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's time, a little space.
When ye come where I have stepped,
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know, by wise love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain,—
Sunshine still must follow rain;
Only not at death,—for death,
Now I know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life center.

Be ye certain all seems love,
Viewed from Allah's throne above;
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home!
La Allah illa Allah! yea!
Thou love divine! Thou Love alway!

He that died at Azan gave
This to those who made his grave.

Edwin Arnold [1832–1904]

TO THE EARL OF WARWICK, ON THE DEATH OF MR. ADDISON

[1672–1719]

If, dumb too long, the drooping Muse hath stayed,
And left her debt to Addison unpaid,
Blame not her silence, Warwick, but bemoan,
And judge, O, judge my bosom by your own.
What mourner ever felt poetic fires?
Slow comes the verse that real woe inspires:
Grief unaffected suits but ill with art,
Or flowing numbers with a bleeding heart.

Can I forget the dismal night that gave
My soul's best part forever to the grave?
How silent did his old companions tread,
By midnight lamps, the mansions of the dead,
Through breathing statues, then unheeded things,
Through rows of warriors and through walks of kings!
What awe did the slow, solemn knell inspire;
The pealing organ, and the pausing choir;
The duties by the lawn-robed prelate paid;
And the last words, that dust to dust conveyed!
While speechless o'er thy closing grave we bend,
Accept these tears, thou dear, departed friend.
O, gone forever! take this long adieu;
And sleep in peace next thy loved Montague.
To strew fresh laurels let the task be mine,
A frequent pilgrim at thy sacred shrine;
Mine with true sighs thy absence to bemoan,
And grave with faithful epitaphs thy stone.
If e'er from me thy loved memorial part,
May shame afflict this alienated heart;
Of thee forgetful, if I form a song,
My lyre be broken, and untuned my tongue,
My grief be doubled, from thy image free,
And mirth a torment, unchastised by thee!

Oft let me range the gloomy aisles alone

Sad luxury! to vulgar minds unknown;
Along the walls where speaking marbles show
What worthies form the hallowed mold below;
Proud names, who once the reins of empire held;
In arms who triumphed, or in arts excelled;
Chiefs, graced with scars, and prodigal of blood;
Stern patriots, who for sacred freedom stood;
Just men, by whom impartial laws were given;
And saints, who taught and led the way to heaven;
Ne'er to these chambers, where the mighty rest,
Since their foundation came a nobler guest;
Nor e'er was to the bowers of bliss conveyed
A fairer spirit or more welcome shade.

In what new region, to the just assigned,
What new employments please the unbodied mind?
A wingèd Virtue, through the ethereal sky,
From world to world unwearied does he fly?
Or curious trace the long laborious maze
Of Heaven's decrees, where wondering angels gaze?
Does he delight to hear bold seraphs tell
How Michael battled and the dragon fell;
Or, mixed with milder cherubim, to glow
In hymns of love, not ill-essayed below?
Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,—
A task well suited to thy gentle mind?
O, if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
To me thy aid, thou guardian genius, lend!
When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more.

That awful form which, so the heavens decree,
Must still be loved and still deplored by me,
In nightly visions seldom fails to rise,
Or, roused by fancy, meets my waking eyes.
If business calls, or crowded courts invite,
The unblemished statesman seems to strike my sight;
If in the stage I seek to soothe my care,
I meet his soul which breathes in Cato there;

If pensive to the rural shades I rove,
His shape o'ertakes me in the lonely grove;
'Twas there of just and good he reasoned strong,
Cleared some great truth, or raised some serious song:
There patient showed us the wise course to steer,
A candid censor and a friend severe;
There taught us how to live, and (O, too high
The price for knowledge!) taught us how to die.

Thou Hill, whose brow the antique structures grace,
Reared by bold chiefs of Warwick's noble race,
Why, once so loved, whene'er thy bower appears,
O'er my dim eyeballs glance the sudden tears?
How sweet were once thy prospects fresh and fair,
Thy sloping walks, and unpolluted air!
How sweet the glooms beneath thy aged trees,
Thy noontide shadow, and thy evening breeze!
His image thy forsaken bowers restore;
Thy walks and airy prospects charm no more;
No more the summer in thy glooms allayed,
Thy evening breezes, and thy noonday shade.

From other hills, however fortune frowned,
Some refuge in the Muse's art I found;
Reluctant now I touch the trembling string,
Bereft of him who taught me how to sing;
And these sad accents, murmured o'er his urn,
Betray that absence they attempt to mourn.
O, must I then (now fresh my bosom bleeds,
And Craggs in death to Addison succeeds)
The verse, begun to one lost friend, prolong,
And weep a second in the unfinished song!

These works divine, which, on his death-bed laid,
To thee, O Craggs! the expiring sage conveyed,
Great, but ill-omened, monument of fame,
Nor he survived to give, nor thou to claim.
Swift after him thy social spirit flies,
And close to his, how soon! thy coffin lies.
Blest pair! whose union future bards shall tell
In future tongues: each other's boast! farewell!
Farewell! whom, joined in fame, in friendship tried,
No chance could sever, nor the grave divide.

Thomas Tickell [1686–1740]

THE EAGLE THAT IS FORGOTTEN

[JOHN P. ALTGELD, 1847–1902]

SLEEP softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone.
Time has its way with you there, and the clay has its own.
"We have buried him now," thought your foes, and in secret rejoiced.
They made a brave show of their mourning, their hatred unvoiced.
They had snarled at you, barked at you, foamed at you, day after day,
Now you were ended. They praised you . . . and laid you away.
The others, that mourned you in silence and terror and truth,
The widow bereft of her crust, and the boy without youth,
The mocked and the scorned and the wounded, the lame and the poor,
That should have remembered forever, . . . remember no more.
Where are those lovers of yours, on what name do they call,
The lost, that in armies wept over your funeral pall?
They call on the names of a hundred high-valiant ones,
A hundred white eagles have risen, the sons of your sons.
The zeal in their wings is a zeal that your dreaming began,
The valor that wore out your soul in the service of man.
Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone.
Time has its way with you there, and the clay has its own.
Sleep on, O brave-hearted, O wise man that kindled the flame—
To live in mankind is far more than to live in a name,
To live in mankind, far, far more than to live in a name!—

Vachel Lindsay [1879–

ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT

[1753–1827]

I WAS thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I looked, thy image still was there;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! It seemed no sleep,
No mood, which season takes away, or brings:
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah! THEN—if mine had been the Painter's hand
To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream,—

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such Picture would I at that time have made;
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control:
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have been the friend
If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work!—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That Hulk which labors in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
—Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time—
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

—Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here:—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

William Wordsworth [1770–1850]

WILLIAM BLAKE

[1757–1827]

He came to the desert of London town,
Gray miles long;
He wandered up and he wandered down,
Singing a quiet song.

He came to the desert of London town,
Mirk miles broad;
He wandered up and he wandered down,
Ever alone with God.

There were thousands and thousands of human kind
In that desert of brick and stone:
But some were deaf and some were blind,
And he was there alone.

At length the good hour came; he died
As he had lived, alone:
He was not missed from the desert wide,
Perhaps he was found at the Throne.

James Thomson [1834–1882]

EDWIN BOOTH

[1833–1893]

"Ay, every inch a king"

Now is the night, foreshadowed of our fears;
The curtain falls, the lights fade, one by one.
Darkness and silence from the widowed stage
Proclaim the great and final act is done.
Vain are the thundered plaudits of the house,
The laurel wreath, the players' loud acclaim;
Thou art grown dumb to clamoring for response,
Deaf to the ringing of thy jewelled name.
Thy crystal soul hath traversed back the pathway whence it came.

They who the virtues of the mighty dead
Enwrap in majesty of broidered verse,
Call upon Nature, in her solitude,
His beauties and her sorrow to rehearse.
The forest and the field, the fitful wind
They challenge, and the ever-sounding wave,
To seek his spirit in the vast afar,
And drop their dews on his enrichèd grave,
Crowning the poet's lyric woe with some forlorner stave.

Greater than all the universe of space
The mimic world thou didst thyself create:
The subtile sphere, compact of passion's breath,
Where Nature bade thee hold imperial state.
There shall the mourning garments be outworn;
There shall the desolate their dirges sing;
No princeling may ascend the vacant throne,
Laying new triumph's gall to sorrow's sting.
"The King is dead!" we cry, but nevermore, "Long live the King!"

Of all the stops of mortal harmony
Master thou art forever, though in death.
The melancholy of the Dane is thine,
The poisonous blighting of Iago's breath.
Thou didst take on foul Richard's humpbacked soul,
And clasp it close, yet do thine own no wrong:
As 'twere the mantle of Sir Caradoc,
Unerring witness sung in ancient song,
Destined to prove the pure of heart more pure, the strong more strong.

Slave of self-conjured evil, Cawdor's thane!
The jester, bitter-hearted, striking home!
The fox-robed cardinal, creating France,
And launching forth the curse of sovereign Rome!
Gallant Don César, lord of ragged lace!
These wert thou in their turn, and sorrow-blind,
Alas! thou wert the doited father, too,
Pelted by heaven, and stabbed by human kind:
Heartbreakingly confessed, "I am not in my perfect mind!"

Such was thy Protean form, but what wert thou?
A changing cloud, content to borrow hue
From lordly sun-rays that o'errule it quite,
And thus with color and with form endue?
Nay, rather let the time's remembrancing,
When it doth con anew thy mortal span,
Ignore thine art, if such despite may be,
But bow in awe before thy nature's plan,
Crying with trumpet tone, to alien ears, "This was a man!"

Thine was the guilt of filching heavenly fire;
Wherefore Jove's eagle fed upon thy heart.
Yet never word nor strangled cry betrayed
Responsive agony beneath the smart,
A thousand hovering spectres menaced thee
Bound, by eternal fiat, on the rock
Of mortal languishment: yet unappalled
As gallant bird beneath the tempest shock;
For still thy soul soared free, thy silence met each hideous mock.

And can such glory pass? Nay, thus thou art,
Where'er in world diviner thou dost walk,
Mated with love celestial, that doth spring,
Fragrant and fair, from life's divided stalk.
But we who knew thee may not cease to mourn
The moment's grief, the time's perpetual loss.
Not ours to pluck from thine engravèd name
Oblivion's cold and memory-choking moss:
Blest are we for so noble sake to bear affliction's cross.

Henceforward nevermore may Denmark's Prince
Pace through his tragic hour in sabled pride,
But thou, the sceptre's rightful heir, wilt walk,
Eclipsing all his grandeur, by his side.
And dally as we may with pageantry
Wherein some newer actor plays a part,
The scene will fade, while thine enshadowed form
Doth from the slumbrous aisles of memory start,—
Again the lost but ever-reigning monarch of the heart.

Farewell! farewell indeed! But take with thee
Our true allegiance to that orient land,—
The laurels and the rosemary of life
Lying unnoted in thy nerveless hand.
Take with thee, too, our bond of gratitude,
That in a cynic and a tattling age
Thou didst consent to write, in missal script,
Thy name on the poor players' slandered page,
And teach the lords of empty birth a king may walk the stage.

Alice Brown [1857–

GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH ENTERS INTO HEAVEN

[1829–1912]

To be sung to the tune of "The Blood of the Lamb" with indicated instruments

Booth led boldly with his big bass drum.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
The saints smiled gravely, and they said, "He's come."
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? *Bass drums*
Walking lepers followed, rank on rank,
Lurching bravos from the ditches dank,
Drabs from the alleyways and drug-fiends pale—
Minds still passion-ridden, soul-powers frail!
Vermin-eaten saints with mouldy breath
Unwashed legions with the ways of death—
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Every slum had sent its half-a-score
The round world over—Booth had groaned for more.
Every banner that the wide world flies
Bloomed with glory and transcendent dyes.
Big-voiced lasses made their banjos bang! *Banjos*
Tranced, fanatical, they shrieked and sang,
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
Hallelujah! It was queer to see
Bull-necked convicts with that land make free!
Loons with bazoos blowing blare, blare, blare—
On, on, upward through the golden air.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Booth died blind, and still by faith he trod,
Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God. *Bass drums*
Booth led boldly and he looked the chief: *slower and*
Eagle countenance in sharp relief, *softer*
Beard a-flying, air of high command
Unabated in that holy land.
Jesus came from out the Court-House door,
Stretched his hands above the passing poor.

Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there *Flutes*
Round and round the mighty Court-House square.
Yet in an instant all that blear review
Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.
The lame were straightened, withered limbs uncurled
And blind eyes opened on a new sweet world.

Drabs and vixens in a flash made whole! *Bass drums*
Gone was the weasel-head, the snout, the jowl; *louder and*
Sages and sibyls now, and athletes clean, *faster*
Rulers of empires, and of forests green!
The hosts were sandalled and their wings were fire—
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
But their noise played havoc with the angel-choir.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? *Grand*
Oh, shout Salvation! it was good to see *chorus tam-*
Kings and princes by the Lamb set free. *bourines–all*
The banjos rattled and the tambourines *instruments*
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of queens! *in full blast*

And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer
He saw his Master through the flag-filled air.
Christ came gently with a robe and crown *Reverently*
For Booth the soldier while the throng knelt *sung–no*
down; *instruments*
He saw King Jesus—they were face to face,
And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Vachel Lindsay [1879–

E. B. B.

[1806–1861]

THE white-rose garland at her feet,
The crown of laurel at her head,
Her noble life on earth complete,
Lay her in the last low bed
For the slumber calm and deep:
"He giveth His belovèd sleep."

Soldiers find their fittest grave
In the field whereon they died;
So her spirit pure and brave
Leaves the clay it glorified
To the land for which she fought
With such grand impassioned thought.

Keats and Shelley sleep at Rome,
She in well-loved Tuscan earth;
Finding all their death's long home
Far from their old home of birth.
Italy, you hold in trust
Very sacred English dust.

Therefore this one prayer I breathe,—
That you yet may worthy prove
Of the heirlooms they bequeath
Who have loved you with such love:
Fairest land while land of slaves
Yields their free souls no fit graves.

James Thomson [1834–1882]

ROBERT BURNS

[1759–1796]

All Scottish legends did his fancy fashion,
All airs that richly flow,
Laughing with frolic, tremulous with passion,
Broken with love-lorn woe;

Ballads whose beauties years have long been stealing
And left few links of gold,
Under his quaint and subtle touch of healing
Grew fairer, not less old.

Gray Cluden, and the vestal's choral cadence,
His spell awoke therewith;
Till boatmen hung their oars to hear the maidens
Upon the banks of Nith.

His, too, the strains of battle nobly coming
From Bruce, or Wallace wight,
Such as the Highlander shall oft be humming
Before some famous fight.

Nor only these—for him the hawthorn hoary
Was with new wreaths enwrought,
The "crimson-tippèd daisy" wore fresh glory,
Born of poetic thought.

From the "wee cowering beastie" he could borrow
A moral strain sublime,
A noble tenderness of human sorrow,
In wondrous wealth of rhyme.

Oh, but the mountain breeze must have been pleasant
Upon the sunburnt brow
Of that poetic and triumphant peasant
Driving his laureled plow!

William Alexander [1824–1911]

ON A FLY-LEAF OF BURNS'S SONGS

These are the best of him,
Pathos and jest of him;
Earth holds the rest of him.

Passions were strong in him,—
Pardon the wrong in him;
Hark to the song in him!—

Each little lyrical
Grave or satirical
Musical miracle!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869–1905]

ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT

Two souls diverse out of our human sight
Pass, followed one with love and each with wonder:
The stormy sophist with his mouth of thunder,
Clothed with loud words and mantled in the might

Of darkness and magnificence of night;
And one whose eye could smite the night in sunder,
Searching if light or no light were thereunder,
And found in love of loving-kindness light.
Duty divine and Thought with eyes of fire
Still following Righteousness with deep desire
Shone sole and stern before her and above,
Sure stars and sole to steer by; but more sweet
Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly feet,
The light of little children, and their love.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

AT THE GRAVE OF CHAMPERNOWNE

[1614–1687]

HERE poise, like flowers on flowers, the butterflies;
The grasshopper on crookèd crutch leaps up,
The wild bees hum above the clover cup,
The fox-grape wreathes the fence in green disguise
Of ruin; and antique plants set out in tears,
Pink, guelder-rose, and myrtle's purple bells
Struggle 'mid grass and their own wasting years
To show the grave that no inscription tells.
Here rest the bones of Francis Champernowne;
The blazonry of Norman kings he bore;
His fathers builded many a tower and town,
And after Senlac England's lords. Now o'er
His island cairn the lonesome forests frown,
And sailless seas beat the untrodden shore.

John Albee [1833–1915]

THE OPENING OF THE TOMB OF CHARLEMAGNE

[742–814]

AMID the cloistered gloom of Aachen's aisle
Stood Otho, Germany's imperial lord,
Regarding, with a melancholy smile,
A simple stone, where, fitly to record

A world of action by a single word,
Was graven "Carlo-Magno." Regal style
Was needed none; that name such thoughts restored
As sadden, yet make nobler, men the while.
They rolled the marble back. With sudden gasp,
A moment o'er the vault the Kaiser bent,
Where still a mortal monarch seemed to reign.
Crowned on his throne, a scepter in his grasp,
Perfect in each gigantic lineament,
Otho looked face to face on Charlemagne.

Aubrey De Vere [1788–1846]

BY THE STATUE OF KING CHARLES AT CHARING CROSS

[1600–1649]

Sombre and rich, the skies;
Great glooms, and starry plains.
Gently the night wind sighs;
Else a vast silence reigns.

The splendid silence clings
Around me: and around
The saddest of all kings
Crowned, and again discrowned.

Comely and calm, he rides
Hard by his own Whitehall:
Only the night wind glides:
No crowds, nor rebels, brawl.

Gone, too, his Court: and yet,
The stars his courtiers are:
Stars in their stations set;
And every wandering star.

Alone he rides, alone,
The fair and fatal king:
Dark night is all his own,
That strange and solemn thing.

Which are more full of fate:
The stars; or those sad eyes?
Which are more still and great:
Those brows; or the dark skies?

Although his whole heart yearn
In passionate tragedy:
Never was face so stern
With sweet austerity.

Vanquished in life, his death
By beauty made amends:
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life, and hapless? Nay:
Through death, life grew sublime.
Speak after sentence? Yea:
And to the end of time.

Armored he rides, his head
Bare to the stars of doom:
He triumphs now, the dead,
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,
Vexed in the world's employ:
His soul was of the saints;
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe!
Men hunger for thy grace:
And through the night I go,
Loving thy mournful face.

Yet, when the city sleeps;
When all the cries are still:
The stars and heavenly deeps
Work out a perfect will.

Lionel Johnson [1867–1902]

CHAVEZ

(Georges Chavez, after crossing the Alps in his aëroplane, fell and was killed Sept. 23, 1910.)

So hath he fallen, the Endymion of the air,
And so lies down in slumber lapped for aye.
Diana, passing, found his youth too fair,
His soul too fleet and willing to obey.
She swung her golden moon before his eyes—
Dreaming, he rose to follow—and ran—and was away.

His foot was winged as the mounting sun.
Earth he disdained—the dusty ways of men
Not yet had learned. His spirit longed to run
With the bright clouds, his brothers, to answer when
The airs were fleetest and could give him hand
Into the starry fields beyond our plodding ken.

All wittingly that glorious way he chose,
And loved the peril when it was most bright.
He tried anew the long-forbidden snows
And like an eagle topped the dropping height
Of Nagenhorn, and still toward Italy
Past peak and cliff pressed on, in glad, unerring flight.

Oh when the bird lies low with golden wing
Bruised past healing by some bitter chance,
Still must its tireless spirit mount and sing
Of meadows green with morning, of the dance
On windy trees, the darting flight away,
And of that last, most blue, triumphant downward glance.

So murmuring of the snow: "*The snow, and more,*
O God, more snow!" on that last field he lay.
Despair and wonder spent their passionate store
In his great heart, through heaven gone astray,
And early lost. Too far the golden moon
Had swung upon that bright, that long, untraversed way.

Now to lie ended on the murmuring plain—
Ah, this for his bold heart was not the loss,
But that those windy fields he ne'er again
Might try, nor fleet and shimmering mountains cross,
Unfollowed, by a path none other knew:
His bitter woe had here its deep and piteous cause.

Dear toils of youth unfinished! And songs unwritten left
By young and passionate hearts! O melodies
Unheard, whereof we ever stand bereft!
Clear-singing Schubert, boyish Keats—with these
He roams henceforth, one with the starry band,
Still paying to fairy call and far command
His spirit heed, still winged with golden prophecies.

Mildred McNeal Sweeney [1871–

COLERIDGE

[1772–1834]

I SEE thee pine like her in golden story
Who, in her prison, woke and saw, one day,
The gates thrown open—saw the sunbeams play,
With only a web 'tween her and summer's glory;
Who, when that web—so frail, so transitory
It broke before her breath—had fallen away,
Saw other webs and others rise for aye
Which kept her prisoned till her hair was hoary.
Those songs half-sung that yet were all divine—
That woke Romance, the queen, to reign afresh—
Had been but preludes from that lyre of thine,
Could thy rare spirit's wings have pierced the mesh
Spun by the wizard who compels the flesh,
But lets the poet see how heaven can shine.

Theodore Watts-Dunton [1836–1914]

COWPER'S GRAVE

[1731–1800]

IT is a place where poets crowned may feel the heart's decaying;
It is a place where happy saints may weep amid their praying;

Yet let the grief and humbleness as low as silence languish:
Earth surely now may give her calm to whom she gave her anguish.

O poets, from a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless singing!
O Christians, at your cross of hope a hopeless hand was clinging!
O men, this man in brotherhood your weary paths beguiling,
Groaned inly while he taught you peace, and died while ye were smiling!

And now, what time ye all may read through dimming tears his story,
How discord on the music fell and darkness on the glory,
And how when, one by one, sweet sounds and wandering lights departed,
He wore no less a loving face, because so broken-hearted.

He shall be strong to sanctify the poet's high vocation,
And bow the meekest Christian down in meeker adoration;
Nor ever shall he be, in praise, by wise or good forsaken,
Named softly as the household name of one whom God hath taken.

With quiet sadness and no gloom, I learn to think upon him,
With meekness that is gratefulness to God whose heaven hath won him,
Who suffered once the madness-cloud to his own love to blind him,
But gently led the blind along where breath and bird could find him;

And wrought within his shattered brain such quick poetic senses
As hills have language for, and stars, harmonious influences;
The pulse of dew upon the grass kept his within its number,
And silent shadows from the trees refreshed him like a slumber.

Wild timid hares were drawn from woods to share his home-
caresses,
Uplooking to his human eyes with sylvan tendernesses:
The very world, by God's constraint, from falsehood's ways
removing,
Its women and its men became, beside him, true and lov-
ing.

And though, in blindness, he remained unconscious of that
guiding,
And things provided came without the sweet sense of pro-
viding,
He testified this solemn truth, while frenzy desolated,
—Nor man nor nature satisfies, whom only God created.

Like a sick child that knoweth not his mother while she
blesses
And drops upon his burning brow the coolness of her
kisses,—
That turns his fevered eyes around,—"My mother! where's
my mother?"—
As if such tender words and deeds could come from any
other!—

The fever gone, with leaps of heart, he sees her bending o'er
him,
Her face all pale from watchful love, the unweary love she
bore him!
Thus woke the poet from the dream his life's long fever gave
him,
Beneath those deep, pathetic Eyes which closed in death to
save him!

Thus? oh, not *thus!* no type of earth can image that awak-
ing,
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant of seraphs, round him
breaking,
Or felt the new immortal throb of soul from body parted,
But felt those eyes alone, and knew—"*My* Saviour! *not* de-
serted!"

Deserted! Who hath dreamt that when the cross in darkness rested,
Upon the Victim's hidden face no love was manifested?
What frantic hands outstretched have e'er the atoning drops averted?
What tears have washed them from the soul, that *one* should be deserted?

Deserted! God could separate from His own essence rather;
And Adam's sins *have* swept between the righteous Son and Father:
Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry his universe hath shaken—
It went up single, echoless, "My God, I am forsaken!"

It went up from the Holy's lips amid His lost creation,
That, of the lost, no son should use those words of desolation!
That Earth's worst frenzies, marring hope, should mar not hope's fruition,
And I, on Cowper's grave, should see his rapture in a vision.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

ON A BUST OF DANTE

[1265–1321]

See, from this counterfeit of him
Whom Arno shall remember long,
How stern of lineament, how grim,
The father was of Tuscan song:
There but the burning sense of wrong,
Perpetual care, and scorn, abide—
Small friendship for the lordly throng;
Distrust of all the world beside.

Faithful if this wan image be,
No dream his life was—but a fight;
Could any Beatrice see
A lover in that anchorite?

To that cold Ghibelline's gloomy sight
Who could have guessed the visions came
Of Beauty, veiled with heavenly light,
In circles of eternal flame?

The lips as Cumæ's cavern close,
The cheeks with fast and sorrow thin,
The rigid front, almost morose,
But for the patient hope within,
Declare a life whose course hath been
Unsullied still, though still severe,
Which, through the wavering days of sin,
Kept itself icy-chaste and clear.

Not wholly such his haggard look
When wandering once, forlorn, he strayed,
With no companion save his book,
To Corvo's hushed monastic shade;
Where, as the Benedictine laid
His palm upon the convent's guest,
The single boon for which he prayed
Was peace, that pilgrim's one request.

Peace dwells not here—this rugged face
Betrays no spirit of repose;
The sullen warrior sole we trace,
The marble man of many woes.
Such was his mien when first arose
The thought of that strange tale divine—
When hell he peopled with his foes,
Dread scourge of many a guilty line.

War to the last he waged with all
The tyrant canker-worms of earth;
Baron and duke, in hold and hall,
Cursed the dark hour that gave him birth;
He used Rome's harlot for his mirth;
Plucked bare hypocrisy and crime;
But valiant souls of knightly worth
Transmitted to the rolls of Time.

O Time! whose verdicts mock our own,
The only righteous judge art thou;
That poor, old exile, sad and lone,
Is Latium's other Virgil now.
Before his name the nations bow;
His words are parcel of mankind,
Deep in whose hearts, as on his brow,
The marks have sunk of Dante's mind.

Thomas William Parsons [1819–1892]

DICKENS IN CAMP

[1812–1870]

Above the pines the moon was slowly drifting,
The river sang below;
The dim Sierras, far beyond, uplifting
Their minarets of snow.

The roaring camp-fire, with rude humor, painted
The ruddy tints of health
On haggard face and form that drooped and fainted
In the fierce race for wealth;

Till one arose, and from his pack's scant treasure
A hoarded volume drew,
And cards were dropped from hands of listless leisure,
To hear the tale anew.

And then, while round them shadows gathered faster,
And as the firelight fell,
He read aloud the book wherein the Master
Had writ of "Little Nell."

Perhaps 'twas boyish fancy,—for the reader
Was youngest of them all,—
But, as he read, from clustering pine and cedar
A silence seemed to fall;

The fir-trees, gathering closer in the shadows,
Listened in every spray,

While the whole camp, with "Nell," on English meadows
Wandered and lost their way.

And so in mountain solitudes—o'ertaken
As by some spell divine—
Their cares dropped from them like the needles shaken
From out the gusty pine.

Lost is that camp, and wasted all its fire:
And he who wrought that spell?—
Ah, towering pine and stately Kentish spire,
Ye have one tale to tell!

Lost is that camp, but let its fragrant story
Blend with the breath that thrills
With hop-vine's incense all the pensive glory
That fills the Kentish hills.

And on that grave where English oak and holly
And laurel wreaths entwine,
Deem it not all a too presumptuous folly—
This spray of Western pine!

Bret Harte [1839–1902]

DRAKE'S DRUM

[SIR FRANCIS DRAKE, 1540?–1596]

DRAKE he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin',
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),
Rovin' though his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.

"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
Call him when ye sail to meet the foe;
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin',
They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they found him long ago!

Henry Newbolt [1862–

ON THE DEATH OF JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

[1795–1820]

GREEN be the turf above thee,
Friend of my better days!
None knew thee but to love thee,
Nor named thee but to praise.

Tears fell, when thou wert dying,
From eyes unused to weep,
And long where thou art lying,
Will tears the cold turf steep.

When hearts, whose truth was proven,
Like thine, are laid in earth,
There should a wreath be woven
To tell the world their worth;

And I, who woke each morrow
To clasp thy hand in mine,
Who shared thy joy and sorrow,
Whose weal and woe were thine:

It should be mine to braid it
Around thy faded brow,
But I've in vain essayed it,
And feel I cannot now.

While memory bids me weep thee,
Nor thoughts nor words are free,
The grief is fixed too deeply
That mourns a man like thee.

Fitz-Greene Halleck [1790–1867]

"OH, BREATHE NOT HIS NAME!"

[ROBERT EMMET, 1778–1803]

Oh, breathe not his name! let it sleep in the shade,
Where cold and unhonored his relics are laid;
Sad, silent, and dark be the tears that we shed,
As the night-dew that falls on the grave o'er his head.

But the night-dew that falls, though in silence it weeps,
Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps;
And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,
Shall long keep his memory green in our souls.

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

VANQUISHED

[ULYSSES S. GRANT, 1822–1885]

Not by the ball or brand
Sped by a mortal hand,
Not by the lightning stroke
When fiery tempests broke,—
Not mid the ranks of war
Fell the great Conqueror.

Unmoved, undismayed,
In the crash and carnage of the cannonade,—
Eye that dimmed not, hand that failed not,

Brain that swerved not, heart that quailed not,
Steel nerve, iron form,—
The dauntless spirit that o'erruled the storm.

While the Hero peaceful slept
A foeman to his chamber crept,
Lightly to the slumberer came,
Touched his brow and breathed his name:
O'er the stricken form there passed
Suddenly an icy blast.

The Hero woke: rose undismayed:
Saluted Death, and sheathed his blade.

The Conqueror of a hundred fields
To a mightier Conqueror yields;
No mortal foeman's blow
Laid the great Soldier low;
Victor in his latest breath—
Vanquished but by Death.

Francis Fisher Browne [1843–1913]

O. HENRY

[WILLIAM SIDNEY PORTER, 1862–1910]

"He could not forget that he was a Sidney."

Is this Sir Philip Sidney, this loud clown,
The darling of the glad and gaping town?

This is that dubious hero of the press
Whose slangy tongue and insolent address
Were spiced to rouse on Sunday afternoon
The man with yellow journals round him strewn.
We laughed and dozed, then roused and read again
And vowed O. Henry funniest of men.
He always worked a triple-hinged surprise
To end the scene and make one rub his eyes

He comes with vaudeville, with stare and leer.
He comes with megaphone and specious cheer.
His troupe, too fat or short or long or lean,
Step from the pages of the magazine
With slapstick or sombrero or with cane,
The rube, the cowboy or the masher vain.
They overact each part. But at the height
Of revel and absurdity's delight
The masks fall off for one queer instant there
And show real faces: faces full of care
And desperate longing; love that's hot or cold;
And subtle thoughts, and countenances bold.
The masks go back. 'Tis one joke more.
Laugh on!
The goodly grown-up company is gone.

No doubt, had he occasion to address
The brilliant court of purple-clad Queen Bess,
He would have wrought for them the best he knew
And led more loftily his actor-crew.
How coolly he misquoted. 'Twas his art:
Slave-scholar, who misquoted—from the heart!
So when he slapped his back with friendly roar
Æsop awaited him, without the door,—
Æsop the Greek, who made dull masters laugh
With little tales of fox and dog and calf.

And, be it said, 'mid these his pranks so odd,
With something nigh to chivalry he trod,
And oft the drear and driven would defend—
The little shop-girl's knight, unto the end.
Yea, he had passed, ere we could understand
The blade of Sidney glimmered in his hand.
Yea, ere we knew, Sir Philip's sword was drawn
With valiant cut and thrust, and he was gone.

Vachel Lindsay [1879–

ADONAIS

[JOHN KEATS, 1795–1821]

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead!
Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow. Say: "With me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when he lay,
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veilèd eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamored breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

Oh, weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone where all things wise and fair
Descend. Oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania!—He died,
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride

The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third among the sons of light.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene abode.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true-love tears, instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals, nipped before they blew,
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal.—Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace

His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

Oh, weep for Adonais!—The quick Dreams,
The passion-wingèd ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not,—
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries,
"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain."
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

Another Splendor on his mouth alit,
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath

With lightning and with music: the damp death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its eclipse.

And others came . . . Desires and Adorations,
Winged Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Fantasies;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

All he had loved, and molded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?

To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou, Adonais; wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odor, to sighing ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons' bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
And the green lizard and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean,
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst;
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on Chaos; in its stream immersed
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst,
Diffuse themselves, and spend in love's delight,
The beauty and the joy of their renewèd might.

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit tender,
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendor
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death

And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath.
Naught we know, dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning?—the intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless Mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs."
And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried, "Arise!"
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendor sprung.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the Earth a corpse.—Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
And human hearts which, to her airy tread

Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell;
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they,
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living Might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania; her distress
Roused Death; Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenseless as thou wert, oh, where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures, to the conqueror's banner true,

Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,
When, like Apollo, from his golden bow
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;
So is it in the world of living men:
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift—
A Love in desolation masked;—a Power
Girt round with weakness;—it can scarce uplift

The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow;—even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may break.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own,
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who art thou?"
He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—oh! that it should be so!

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the departed one;
Let me not vex with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh,
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?

The nameless worm would now itself disown;
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow;
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings. *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,

Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there,
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing the unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear,
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

The splendors of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,

And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale,—his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved,
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved;
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us," they cry;
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an Heaven of song.
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

Who mourns for Adonais? oh, come forth,
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth;
As from a center, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiate the void circumference; then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre
Oh, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis naught
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend,—they borrow not

Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

And gray walls molder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,

Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?
Thy hopes are gone before; from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is passed from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near;
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792–1822]

TO THE SISTER OF ELIA

[CHARLES LAMB, 1775–1834]

COMFORT thee, O thou mourner, yet awhile!
Again shall Elia's smile
Refresh thy heart, where heart can ache no more.
What is it we deplore?

He leaves behind him, freed from griefs and years,
Far worthier things than tears.
The love of friends without a single foe:
Unequaled lot below!

His gentle soul, his genius, these are thine;
For these dost thou repine?
He may have left the lowly walks of men;
Left them he has; what then?

Are not his footsteps followed by the eyes
Of all the good and wise?
Though the warm day is over, yet they seek
Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that glows
O'er death's perennial snows.
Behold him! from the region of the blest
He speaks: he bids thee rest.

Walter Savage Landor [1775–1864]

IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

[1775–1864]

Back to the flower-town, side by side,
The bright months bring,
New-born, the bridegroom and the bride,
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,
Filled full of sun;
All things come back to her, being free;
All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot
Flowers that were dead
Live, and old suns revive; but not
That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,
Far north, I hear
One face shall never turn to me
As once this year:

Shall never smile and turn and rest
On mine as there,
Nor one most sacred hand be pressed
Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,
Half run before;
The youngest to the eldest singer
That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find
Till all grief end,
In holiest age our mightiest mind,
Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,
If hope there be,
O spirit that man's life left pure,
Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were
Look earthward now;
Let dreams revive the reverend hair,
The imperial brow;

Come back in sleep, for in the life
Where thou art not
We find none like thee. Time and strife
And the world's lot

Move thee no more; but love at least
And reverent heart
May move thee, royal and released
Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust
Receive and keep,
Keep safe his dedicated dust,
His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far
Mix with thy name
As morning-star with evening-star
His faultless fame.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

ON THE DEATH OF MR. ROBERT LEVET, A PRACTISER IN PHYSIC

[1701–1782]

Condemned to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blasts or slow decline
Our social comforts drop away.

Well tried through many a varying year,
See Levet to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills affection's eye,
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind;
Nor, lettered Arrogance, deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting nature called for aid,
And hovering death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy displayed
The power of art without the show.

In Misery's darkest cavern known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless Anguish poured his groan,
And lonely Want retired to die.

No summons mocked by chill delay,
No petty gain disdained by pride;
The modest wants of every day
The toil of every day supplied.

His virtues walked their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the Eternal Master found
The single talent well employed.

The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm—his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no fiery throbbing pain,
No cold gradations of decay
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way.

Samuel Johnson [1709–1784]

"O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!"

[ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1809–1865]

O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths—for you the shores
a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed and
done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

"WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOMED"

I

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed,
And the great star early drooped in the western sky in the
night,
I mourned, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.

Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
And thought of him I love.

II

O powerful western fallen star!
O shades of night—O moody, tearful night!
O great star disappeared—O the black murk that hides the
star!

O cruel hands that hold me powerless—O helpless soul of me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul!

III

In the dooryard fronting an old farmhouse, near the white-washed palings,
Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,
With every leaf a miracle—and from this bush in the dooryard,
With delicate-colored blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
A sprig with its flower I break.

IV

In the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.

Solitary the thrush,
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
Sings by himself a song.

Song of the bleeding throat,
Death's outlet song of life—(for well, dear brother, I know
If thou wast not gifted to sing thou wouldst surely die).

V

Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,
Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the violets peeped from the ground, spotting the gray debris,
Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes, passing the endless grass,
Passing the yellow-speared wheat, every grain from its shroud in the dark-brown fields uprisen,
Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the orchards,

Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
Night and day journeys a coffin.

VI

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,
Through day and night, with the great cloud darkening the land,
With the pomp of the inlooped flags, with the cities draped in black,
With the show of the States themselves as of crape-veiled women standing,
With processions long and winding and the flambeaus of the night,
With the countless torches lit, with the silent sea of faces and the unbared heads,
With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the somber faces,
With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices rising strong and solemn,
With all the mournful voices of the dirges poured around the coffin,
The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs—where amid these you journey,
With the tolling tolling bells' perpetual clang,
Here, coffin that slowly passes,
I give you my sprig of lilac.

VII

(Nor for you, for one alone,
Blossoms and branches green to coffins all I bring,
For fresh as the morning, thus would I chant a song for you,
O sane and sacred death.

All over bouquets of roses,
O death, I cover you over with roses and early lilies,
But mostly and now the lilac that blooms the first,
Copious I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes,
With loaded arms I come, pouring for you,
For you and the coffins all of you, O death.)

VIII

O western orb sailing the heaven,
Now I know what you must have meant as a month since I walked,
As I walked in silence the transparent shadowy night,
As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night after night,
As you drooped from the sky low down as if to my side, (while the other stars all looked on,)
As we wandered together the solemn night, (for something, I know not what, kept me from sleep,)
As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west how full you were of woe,
As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze in the cool transparent night,
As I watched where you passed, and was lost in the netherward black of the night,
As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where yon sad orb,
Concluded, dropped in the night, and was gone.

IX

Sing on there in the swamp,
O singer bashful and tender, I hear your notes, I hear your call,
I hear, I come presently, I understand you,
But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detained me,
The star my departing comrade holds and detains me.

X

O how shall I warble myself for the dead one there I loved?
And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that has gone?
And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

Sea-winds blown from east and west,
Blown from the Eastern sea and blown from the Western sea, till there on the prairies meeting,
These and with these and the breath of my chant,
I'll perfume the grave of him I love.

XI

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

Pictures of growing spring and farms and homes,
With the Fourth-month eve at sundown, and the gray smoke lucid and bright,
With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent, sinking sun, burning, expanding the air,
With the fresh spring herbage under foot, and the pale green leaves of the trees prolific,
In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river, with a wind-dapple here and there,
With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against the sky, and shadows,
And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys,
And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the workmen homeward returning.

XII

Lo, body and soul—this land,
My own Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and hurrying tides, and the ships,
The varied and ample land, the South and the North in the light, Ohio's shores and flashing Missouri,
And ever the far-spreading prairies covered with grass and corn.

Lo, the most excellent sun so calm and haughty,
The violet and purple morn with just-felt breezes,
The gentle soft-born measureless light,
The miracle spreading bathing all, the fulfilled noon,
The coming eve delicious, the welcome night and the stars,
Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land.

XIII

Sing on, sing on, you gray-brown bird,
Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the bushes,
Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.

Sing on, dearest brother, warble your reedy song,
Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe.

O liquid and free and tender!
O wild and loose to my soul—O wondrous singer!
You only I hear—yet the star holds me, (but will soon depart,)
Yet the lilac with mastering odor holds me.

XIV

Now while I sat in the day and looked forth,
In the close of the day with its light and the fields of spring, and the farmers preparing their crops,
In the large unconscious scenery of my land with its lakes and forests,
In the heavenly aerial beauty, (after the perturbed winds and the storms,)
Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing, and the voices of children and women,
The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships how they sailed,
And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields all busy with labor,
And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each with its meals and minutia of daily usages,
And the streets how their throbbings throbbed, and the cities pent—lo, then and there,
Falling upon them all and among them all, enveloping me with the rest,
Appeared the cloud, appeared the long black trail,
And I knew death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge of death.

Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of me,
And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,
And I in the middle as with companions, and as holding the hands of companions,
I fled forth to the hiding receiving night that talks not,
Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in the dimness,
To the solemn shadowy cedars and ghostly pines so still.

And the singer so shy to the rest received me,
The gray-brown bird I know received us comrades three,
And he sang the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.

From deep secluded recesses,
From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still,
Came the carol of the bird.

And the charm of the carol rapt me,
As I held as if by their hands my comrades in the night,
And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird.

Come, lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

Praised be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.

Approach, strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss, O death.

From me to thee glad serenades,
Dances for thee I propose, saluting thee, adornments and feastings for thee,
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky are fitting,
And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.

The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee, O vast and well-veiled death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields and the prairies wide,
Over the dense-packed cities all and the teeming wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee, O death.

XV

To the tally of my soul,
Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,
With pure deliberate notes spreading filling the night.

Loud in the pines and cedars dim,
Clear in the freshness moist and the swamp-perfume,
And I with my comrades there in the night.

While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,
As to long panoramas of visions.

And I saw askant the armies,
I saw as in noiseless dreams hundreds of battle-flags,
Borne through the smoke of the battles and pierced with missiles I saw them,
And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and bloody,
And at last but a few shreds left on the staffs, (and all in silence,)
And the staffs all splintered and broken.

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
And the white skeletons of young men, I saw them,
I saw the debris and debris of all the slain soldiers of the war.

But I saw they were not as was thought,
They themselves were fully at rest, they suffered not,
The living remained and suffered, the mother suffered,
And the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffered,
And the armies that remained suffered.

XVI

Passing the visions, passing the night,
Passing, unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands,
Passing the song of the hermit bird, and the tallying song of my soul,
Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying ever-altering song,
As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling, flooding the night,
Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning and warning, and yet again bursting with joy,
Covering the earth and filling the spread of the heaven,
As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses,
Passing, I leave thee lilac with heart-shaped leaves,
I leave thee there in the dooryard, blooming, returning with spring.

I cease from my song for thee,
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, communing with thee,
O comrade lustrous with silver face in the night.

Yet each to keep and all, retrievements out of the night,
The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,
And the tallying chant, the echo aroused in my soul,
With the lustrous and drooping star with the countenance full of woe,
With the holders holding my hand nearing the call of the bird,
Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever to keep, for the dead I loved so well,
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim.

Walt Whitman [1819–1892]

LINCOLN, THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE

When the Norn Mother saw the Whirlwind Hour
Greatening and darkening as it hurried on,
She left the Heaven of Heroes and came down
To make a man to meet the mortal need.
She took the tried clay of the common road—
Clay warm yet with the genial heat of Earth,
Dashed through it all a strain of prophecy;
Tempered the heap with thrill of human tears;
Then mixed a laughter with the serious stuff.
Into the shape she breathed a flame to light
That tender, tragic, ever-changing face.
Here was a man to hold against the world,
A man to match the mountains and the sea.

The color of the ground was in him, the red earth;
The smack and tang of elemental things:
The rectitude and patience of the cliff;
The good-will of the rain that loves all leaves;
The friendly welcome of the wayside well;
The courage of the bird that dares the sea;
The gladness of the wind that shakes the corn;
The pity of the snow that hides all scars;
The secrecy of streams that make their way
Beneath the mountain to the rifted rock;
The tolerance and equity of light
That gives as freely to the shrinking flower
As to the great oak flaring to the wind—
To the grave's low hill as to the Matterhorn
That shoulders out the sky.

Sprung from the West,
The strength of virgin forests braced his mind,
The hush of spacious prairies stilled his soul.
Up from log cabin to the Capitol,
One fire was on his spirit, one resolve—
To send the keen ax to the root of wrong,
Clearing a free way for the feet of God.
And evermore he burned to do his deed

With the fine stroke and gesture of a king:
He built the rail-pile as he built the State,
Pouring his splendid strength through every blow,
The conscience of him testing every stroke,
To make his deed the measure of a man.

So came the Captain with the mighty heart;
And when the judgment thunders split the house,
Wrenching the rafters from their ancient rest,
He held the ridgepole up, and spiked again
The rafters of the Home. He held his place—
Held the long purpose like a growing tree—
Held on through blame and faltered not at praise.
And when he fell in whirlwind, he went down
As when a lordly cedar, green with boughs,
Goes down with a great shout upon the hills,
And leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

Edwin Markham [1852–

THE MASTER

Supposed to have been written not long after the Civil War

A FLYING word from here and there
Had sown the name at which we sneered,
But soon the name was everywhere,
To be reviled and then revered:
A presence to be loved and feared,
We cannot hide it, or deny
That we, the gentlemen who jeered,
May be forgotten by and by.

He came when days were perilous
And hearts of men were sore beguiled;
And having made his note of us,
He pondered and was reconciled.
Was ever master yet so mild
As he, and so untamable?
We doubted, even when he smiled,
Not knowing what he knew so well.

He knew that undeceiving fate
Would shame us whom he served unsought;
He knew that he must wince and wait—
The jest of those for whom he fought;
He knew devoutly what he thought
Of us and of our ridicule;
He knew that we must all be taught
Like little children in a school.

We gave a glamor to the task
That he encountered and saw through,
But little of us did he ask,
And little did we ever do.
And what appears if we review
The season when we railed and chaffed?
It is the face of one who knew
That we were learning while we laughed.

The face that in our vision feels
Again the venom that we flung,
Transfigured to the world reveals
The vigilance to which we clung.
Shrewd, hallowed, harassed, and among
The mysteries that are untold,
The face we see was never young
Nor could it ever have been old.

For he, to whom we had applied
Our shopman's test of age and worth,
Was elemental when he died,
As he was ancient at his birth:
The saddest among kings of earth,
Bowed with a galling crown, this man
Met rancor with a cryptic mirth,
Laconic—and Olympian.

The love, the grandeur, and the fame,
Are bounded by the world alone;
The calm, the smoldering, and the flame
Of awful patience was his own:

With him they are forever flown
Past all our fond self-shadowings,
Wherewith we cumber the Unknown
As with inept, Icarian wings.

For we were not as other men:
'Twas ours to soar and his to see:
But we are coming down again,
And we shall come down pleasantly;
Nor shall we longer disagree
On what it is to be sublime,
But flourish in our perigee
And have one Titan at a time.

Edwin Arlington Robinson [1869–

ON THE LIFE-MASK OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

This bronze doth keep the very form and mold
Of our great martyr's face. Yes, this is he:
That brow all wisdom, all benignity;
That human, humorous mouth; those cheeks that hold
Like some harsh landscape all the summer's gold;
That spirit fit for sorrow, as the sea
For storms to beat on; the lone agony
Those silent, patient lips too well foretold.
Yes, this is he who ruled a world of men
As might some prophet of the elder day,—
Brooding above the tempest and the fray
With deep-eyed thought and more than mortal ken.
A power was his beyond the touch of art
Or armèd strength—his pure and mighty heart.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844–1909]

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

[Written by the editor of London *Punch*, as that journal's apology and atonement]

You lay a wreath on murdered Lincoln's bier,
You, who, with mocking pencil, wont to trace,
Broad for the self-complaisant British sneer,
His length of shambling limb, his furrowed face,

His gaunt, gnarled hands, his unkempt, bristling hair,
  His garb uncouth, his bearing ill at ease,
His lack of all we prize as debonair,
  Of power or will to shine, of art to please;

You, whose smart pen backed up the pencil's laugh,
  Judging each step as though the way were plain;
Reckless, so it could point its paragraph
  Of chief's perplexity, or people's pain,—

Beside this corpse, that bears for winding-sheet
  The Stars and Stripes he lived to rear anew,
Between the mourners at his head and feet,
  Say, scurrile jester, is there room for *you?*

Yes, he had lived to shame me from my sneer,
  To lame my pencil, and confute my pen;
To make me own this hind of Princes peer,
  This rail-splitter a true-born king of men.

My shallow judgment I had learned to rue,
  Noting how to occasion's height he rose,
How his quaint wit made home-truth seem more true,
  How, iron-like, his temper grew by blows;

How humble, yet how hopeful, he could be;
  How, in good fortune and in ill, the same;
Nor bitter in success, nor boastful he,
  Thirsty for gold, nor feverish for fame.

He went about his work—such work as few
  Ever had laid on head and heart and hand—
As one who knows, where there's a task to do,
  Man's honest will must Heaven's good grace command;

Who trusts the strength will with the burden grow,
  That God makes instruments to work His will,
If but that will we can arrive to know,
  Nor tamper with the weights of good and ill.

So he went forth to battle, on the side
That he felt clear was Liberty's and Right's,
As in his peasant boyhood he had plied
His warfare with rude Nature's thwarting mights,—

The uncleared forest, the unbroken soil,
The iron bark that turns the lumberer's ax,
The rapid, that o'erbears the boatman's toil,
The prairie, hiding the mazed wanderer's tracks,

The ambushed Indian, and the prowling bear,—
Such were the needs that helped his youth to train:
Rough culture—but such trees large fruit may bear,
If but their stocks be of right girth and grain.

So he grew up, a destined work to do,
And lived to do it: four long-suffering years'
Ill-fate, ill-feeling, ill-report, lived through,
And then he heard the hisses change to cheers,

The taunts to tribute, the abuse to praise,
And took both with the same unwavering mood;
Till, as he came on light, from darkling days,
And seemed to touch the goal from where he stood,

A felon hand, between the goal and him,
Reached from behind his back, a trigger pressed—
And those perplexed and patient eyes were dim,
Those gaunt, long-laboring limbs were laid to rest.

The words of mercy were upon his lips,
Forgiveness in his heart and on his pen,
When this vile murderer brought swift eclipse
To thoughts of peace on earth, good will to men.

The Old World and the New, from sea to sea,
Utter one voice of sympathy and shame.
Sore heart, so stopped when it at last beat high!
Sad life, cut short just as its triumph came!

A deed accursed! Strokes have been struck before
  By the assassin's hand, whereof men doubt
If more of horror or disgrace they bore;
  But thy foul crime, like Cain's, stands darkly out,

Vile hand, that brandest murder on a strife,
  Whate'er its grounds, stoutly and nobly striven,
And with the martyr's crown, crownest a life
  With much to praise, little to be forgiven.

Tom Taylor [1817–1880]
or Shirley Brooks (?) [1816–1874]

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

[1807–1882]

Nec turpem senectam
Degere, nec cithara carentem.—Hor. i. 31

"Not to be tuneless in old age!"
Ah! surely blest his pilgrimage,
  Who, in his Winter's snow,
Still sings with note as sweet and clear
As in the morning of the year
  When the first violets blow.

Blest!—but more blest, whom Summer's heat,
Whom Spring's impulsive stir and beat,
  Have taught no feverish lure;
Whose Muse, benignant and serene,
Still keeps his Autumn chaplet green
  Because his verse is pure!

Lie calm, O white and laureate head!
Lie calm, O Dead, that art not dead,
  Since from the voiceless grave,
Thy voice shall speak to old and young
While song yet speaks an English tongue
  By Charles' or Thamis' wave!

Austin Dobson [1840–

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

[1542–1587]

When the young hand of Darnley locked in hers
Had knit her to her northern doom—amid
The spousal pomp of flags and trumpeters,
Her fate looked forth and was no longer hid;
A jealous brain beneath a southern crown
Wrought spells upon her; from afar she felt
The waxen image of her fortunes melt
Beneath the Tudor's eye, while the grim frown
Of her own lords o'ermastered her sweet smiles,
And nipped her growing gladness, till she mourned,
And sank, at last, beneath their cruel wiles;
But, ever since, all generous hearts have burned
To clear her fame, yea, very babes have yearned
Over this saddest story of the isles.

Charles Tennyson Turner [1808–1879]

THE ANGELUS

[Jean François Millet, 1814–1875]

Not far from Paris, in fair Fontainebleau,
A lovely memory-haunted hamlet lies,
Whose tender spell makes captive, and defies
Forgetfulness. The peasants come and go—
Their backs too used to stoop, and patient sow
The harvest which a narrow want supplies—
Even as when, Earth's pathos in his eyes,
Millet dwelt here, companion of their woe.

Ah, Barbizon! With thorns, not laurels, crowned,
He looked thy sorrows in the face, and found—
Vital as seed warm-nestled in the sod—
The hidden sweetness at the heart of pain;
Trusting thy sun and dew, thy wind and rain—
At home with Nature, and at one with God!

Florence Earle Coates [1850–

UNDER THE PORTRAIT OF MILTON

IN TONSON'S FOLIO EDITION OF PARADISE LOST, 1688

[1608–1674]

THREE Poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The next in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go:
To make a third she joined the former two.

John Dryden [1631–1700]

IN MEMORY OF "BARRY CORNWALL"

[BRYAN WALLER PROCTER, 1787–1874]

IN the garden of death, where the singers whose names are deathless,
One with another make music unheard of men,
Where the dead sweet roses fade not of lips long breathless,
And the fair eyes shine that shall weep not or change again,
Who comes now crowned with the blossom of snow-white years?
What music is this that the world of the dead men hears?

Beloved of men, whose words on our lips were honey,
Whose name in our ears and our fathers' ears was sweet,
Like summer gone forth of the land his songs made sunny,
To the beautiful veiled bright world where the glad ghosts meet,
Child, father, bridegroom and bride, and anguish and rest,
No soul shall pass of a singer than this more blest.

Blest for the years' sweet sake that were filled and brightened,
As a forest with birds, with the fruit and the flower of his song;
For the souls' sake blest that heard, and their cares were lightened,
For the hearts' sake blest that have fostered his name so long;

By the living and dead lips blest that have loved his name,
And clothed with their praise and crowned with their love
for fame.

Ah, fair and fragrant his fame as flowers that close not,
That shrink not by day for heat or for cold by night,
As a thought in the heart shall increase when the heart's
self knows not,
Shall endure in our ears as a sound, in our eyes as a light;
Shall wax with the years that wane and the seasons' chime,
As a white rose thornless that grows in the garden of time.

The same year calls, and one goes hence with another,
And men sit sad that were glad for their sweet songs' sake;
The same year beckons, and elder with younger brother
Takes mutely the cup from his hand that we all shall take.
They pass ere the leaves be past or the snows be come;
And the birds are loud, but the lips that outsang them dumb.

Time takes them home that we loved, fair names and famous,
To the soft long sleep, to the broad sweet bosom of death;
But the flower of their souls he shall take not away to shame
us,
Nor the lips lack song forever that now lack breath.
For with us shall the music and perfume that die not dwell,
Though the dead to our dead bid welcome, and we farewell.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837–1909]

IN MEMORIAM

[LORD RAGLAN, 1788–1855]

AH, not because our Soldier died before his field was won;
Ah, not because life would not last till life's long task were
done,
Wreathe one less leaf, grieve with less grief,—of all our hosts
that led
Not last in work and worth approved, Lord Raglan lieth
dead.

His nobleness he had of none, War's Master taught him war,
And prouder praise that Master gave than meaner lips can mar;
Gone to his grave, his duty done; if farther any seek,
He left his life to answer them,—a soldier's,—let it speak!

'Twas his to sway a blunted sword,—to fight a fated field,
While idle tongues talked victory, to struggle not to yield;
Light task for placeman's ready pen to plan a field for fight,
Hard work and hot with steel and shot to win that field aright.

Tears have been shed for the brave dead; mourn him who mourned for all!
Praise hath been given for strife well striven, praise him who strove o'er all,
Nor count that conquest little, though no banner flaunt it far,
That under him our English hearts beat Pain and Plague and War.

And if he held those English hearts too good to pave the path
To idle victories, shall we grudge what noble palm he hath?
Like ancient Chief he fought a-front, and 'mid his soldiers seen,
His work was aye as stern as theirs; oh! make his grave as green.

They know him well,—the Dead who died that Russian wrong should cease,
Where Fortune doth not measure men,—their souls and his have peace;
Aye! as well spent in sad sick tent as they in bloody strife,
For English Homes our English Chief gave what he had—his life.

Edwin Arnold [1832–1904]

TO THE MEMORY OF MY BELOVED MASTER WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, AND WHAT HE HATH LEFT US

[1564–1616]

To draw no envy, Shakespeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book and fame;
While I confess thy writings to be such
As neither Man, nor Muse, can praise too much.
'Tis true, and all men's suffrage. But these ways
Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise;
For silliest ignorance on these may light,
Which, when it sounds at best, but echoes right;
Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
Or crafty malice might pretend this praise,
And think to ruin, where it seemed to raise.
These are, as some infamous bawd or whore
Should praise a matron. What could hurt her more?
But thou art proof against them, and, indeed,
Above the ill fortune of them, or the need.
I therefore will begin: Soul of the age!
The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage!
My Shakespeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room:
Thou art a monument without a tomb,
And art alive still while thy book doth live
And we have wits to read and praise to give.
That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses,
I mean with great, but disproportioned Muses;
For if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers,
And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.
And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence to honor thee, I would not seek
For names; but call forth thundering Æschylus,
Euripides, and Sophocles to us;

Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
To life again, to hear thy buskin tread,
And shake a stage; or, when thy socks were on,
Leave thee alone for the comparison
Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm!
Nature herself was proud of his designs
And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines!
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.
The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,
Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please;
But antiquated and deserted lie,
As they were not of Nature's family.
Yet must I not give Nature all; thy Art
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.
For though the poet's matter nature be,
His art doth give the fashion; and, that he
Who casts to write a living line, must sweat,
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Upon the Muses' anvil; turn the same
(And himself with it) that he thinks to frame,
Or, for the laurel, he may gain a scorn;
For a good poet's made, as well as born.
And such wert thou! Look how the father's face
Lives in his issue, even so the race
Of Shakespeare's mind and manners brightly shines
In his well-turnèd, and true-filèd lines;
In each of which he seems to shake a lance,
As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.
Sweet Swan of Avon! what a sight it were
To see thee in our waters yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,
That so did take Eliza, and our James!

But stay, I see thee in the hemisphere
Advanced, and made a constellation there!
Shine forth, thou Star of Poets, and with rage
Or influence, chide or cheer the drooping stage,
Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mourned like night,
And despairs day, but for thy volume's light.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

ON THE PORTRAIT OF SHAKESPEARE PREFIXED TO THE FIRST FOLIO EDITION, 1623

This figure, that thou here seest put,
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
Wherein the Graver had a strife
With Nature to outdo the life:
O, could he but have drawn his wit
As well in brass, as he hath hit
His face; the Print would then surpass
All that was ever writ in brass.
But since he cannot, Reader, look
Not at his picture, but his book.

Ben Jonson [1573?–1637]

TO SHAKESPEARE

The soul of man is larger than the sky,
Deeper than ocean, or the abysmal dark
Of the unfathomed center. Like that ark,
Which in its sacred hold uplifted high,
O'er the drowned hills, the human family,
And stock reserved of every living kind,
So, in the compass of the single mind,
The seeds and pregnant forms in essence lie,
That make all worlds. Great poet, 'twas thy art
To know thyself, and in thyself to be
Whate'er love, hate, ambition, destiny,
Or the firm, fatal purpose of the heart
Can make of Man. Yet thou wert still the same,
Serene of thought, unhurt by thy own flame.

Hartley Coleridge [1796–1849]

SHAKESPEARE

Others abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foiled searching of mortality;
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honored, self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguessed at.—Better so!
All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

AN EPITAPH ON THE ADMIRABLE DRAMATIC POET, W. SHAKESPEARE

What needs my Shakespeare for his honored bones
The labor of an age in pilèd stones?
Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavoring art,
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make *us* marble with too much conceiving;
And so sepùlchered in such pomp dost lie,
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

John Milton [1608–1674]

TO WILLIAM SHARP

FIONA MACLEOD

[1856–1905]

THE waves about Iona dirge,
The wild winds trumpet over Skye;
Shrill around Arran's cliff-bound verge
The gray gulls cry.

Spring wraps its transient scarf of green,
Its heathery robe, round slope and scar;
And night, the scudding wrack between,
Lights its lone star.

But you who loved these outland isles,
Their gleams, their glooms, their mysteries,
Their eldritch lures, their druid wiles,
Their tragic seas,

Will heed no more, in mortal guise,
The potent witchery of their call,
If dawn be regnant in the skies,
Or evenfall.

Yet, though where suns Sicilian beam
The loving earth enfolds your form,
I can but deem these coasts of dream
And hovering storm

Still thrall your spirit—that it bides
By far Iona's kelp-strewn shore,
There lingering till time and tides
Shall surge no more.

Clinton Scollard [1860–]

AN ODE

ON THE UNVEILING OF THE SHAW MEMORIAL ON BOSTON COMMON, MAY THIRTY-FIRST, 1897

[ROBERT GOULD SHAW, 1837-1863]

I

Not with slow, funereal sound
Come we to this sacred ground;
Not with wailing fife and solemn muffled drum,
Bringing a cypress wreath
To lay, with bended knee,
On the cold brows of Death—
Not so, dear God, we come,
But with the trumpets' blare
And shot-torn battle-banners flung to air,
As for a victory!

Hark to the measured tread of martial feet,
The music and the murmurs of the street!
No bugle breathes this day
Disaster and retreat!—
Hark, how the iron lips
Of the great battle-ships
Salute the City from her azure Bay!

II

Time was—time was, ah, unforgotten years!—
We paid our hero tribute of our tears.
But now let go
All sounds and signs and formulas of woe:
'Tis Life, not Death, we celebrate;
To Life, not Death, we dedicate
This storied bronze, whereon is wrought
The lithe immortal figure of our thought,
To show forever to men's eyes,
Our children's children's children's eyes,
How once he stood
In that heroic mood,

He and his dusky braves
So fain of glorious graves!—
One instant stood, and then
Drave through that cloud of purple steel and flame,
Which wrapped him, held him, gave him not again,
But in its trampled ashes left to Fame
An everlasting name!

III

That was indeed to live—
At one bold swoop to wrest
From darkling death the best
That death to life can give.
He fell as Roland fell
That day at Roncevaux,
With foot upon the ramparts of the foe!
A pæan, not a knell,
For heroes dying so!
No need for sorrow here,
No room for sigh or tear,
Save such rich tears as happy eyelids know.
See where he rides, our Knight!
Within his eyes the light
Of battle, and youth's gold about his brow;
Our Paladin, our Soldier of the Cross,
Not weighing gain with loss—
World-loser, that won all
Obeying duty's call!
Not his, at peril's frown,
A pulse of quicker beat;
Not his to hesitate
And parley hold with Fate,
But proudly to fling down
His gauntlet at her feet.
O soul of loyal valor and white truth,
Here, by this iron gate,
Thy serried ranks about thee as of yore,
Stand thou for evermore
In thy undying youth!

The tender heart, the eagle eye!
Oh, unto him belong
The homages of Song;
Our praises and the praise
Of coming days
To him belong—
To him, to him, the dead that shall not die!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837–1907]

MEMORABILIA

[1792–1822]

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,
And did he stop and speak to you,
And did you speak to him again?
How strange it seems and new!

But you were living before that,
And also you were living after;
And the memory I started at—
My starting moves your laughter!

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own
And a certain use in the world no doubt,
Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
'Mid the blank miles round about:

For there I picked up on the heather
And there I put inside my breast
A molted feather, an eagle-feather!
Well, I forget the rest.

Robert Browning [1816–1889]

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

[1850–1894]

In his old gusty garden of the North,
He heard lark-time the uplifting Voices call;
Smitten through with Voices was the evenfall—
At last they drove him forth.

Now there were two rang silverly and long;
And of Romance, that spirit of the sun,
And of Romance, Spirit of Youth, was one;
And one was that of Song.

Gold-belted sailors, bristling buccaneers,
The flashing soldier, and the high, slim dame,
These were the Shapes that all around him came,—
That we let go with tears.

His was the unstinted English of the Scot,
Clear, nimble, with the scriptural tang of Knox
Thrust through it like the far, sweet scent of box,
To keep it unforgot.

No frugal Realist, but quick to laugh,
To see appealing things in all he knew,
He plucked the sun-sweet corn his fathers grew,
And would have naught of chaff.

David and Keats, and all good singing men,
Take to your heart this Covenanter's son,
Gone in mid-years, leaving our years undone,
Where you do sing again!

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856–

BAYARD TAYLOR

[1825–1878]

"And where now, Bayard, will thy footsteps tend?"
My sister asked our guest one winter's day.
Smiling he answered in the Friends' sweet way
Common to both: "Wherever thou shalt send!
What wouldst thou have me see for thee?" She laughed,
Her dark eyes dancing in the wood-fire's glow:
"Loffoden isles, the Kilpis, and the low
Unsetting sun on Finmark's fishing-craft."
"All these and more I soon shall see for thee!"
He answered cheerily: and he kept his pledge
On Lapland snows, the North Cape's windy wedge,
And Tromsö freezing in its winter sea.
He went and came. But no man knows the track
Of his last journey, and he comes not back!

He brought us wonders of the new and old;
We shared all climes with him. The Arab's tent
To him its story-telling secret lent,
And, pleased, we listened to the tales he told.
His task, beguiled with songs that shall endure,
In manly, honest thoroughness he wrought;
From humble home-lays to the heights of thought
Slowly he climbed, but every step was sure.
How, with the generous pride that friendship hath,
We, who so loved him, saw at last the crown
Of civic honor on his brows pressed down,
Rejoiced, and knew not that the gift was death.
And now for him, whose praise in deafened ears
Two nations speak, we answer but with tears!

O Vale of Chester! trod by him so oft,
Green as thy June turf keep his memory. Let
Nor wood, nor dell, nor storied stream forget,
Nor winds that blow round lonely Cedarcroft;
Let the home voices greet him in the far,
Strange lands that hold him; let the messages
Of love pursue him o'er the chartless seas
And unmapped vastness of his unknown star!
Love's language, heard beyond the loud discourse
Of perishable fame, in every sphere
Itself interprets; and its utterance here
Somewhere in God's unfolding universe
Shall reach our traveler, softening the surprise
Of his rapt gaze on unfamiliar skies!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807–1892]

LACRIMÆ MUSARUM

[ALFRED TENNYSON, 1809–1892]

Low, like another's, lies the laureled head:
The life that seemed a perfect song is o'er:
Carry the last great bard to his last bed.
Land that he loved, thy noblest voice is mute.
Land that he loved, that loved him! nevermore
Meadow of thine, smooth lawn or wild sea-shore,
Gardens of odorous bloom and tremulous fruit,

Or woodlands old, like Druid couches spread,
The master's feet shall tread.
Death's little rift hath rent the faultless lute:
The singer of undying songs is dead.

Lo, in this season pensive-hued and grave,
While fades and falls the doomed, reluctant leaf
From withered Earth's fantastic coronal,
With wandering sighs of forest and of wave
Mingles the murmur of a people's grief
For him whose leaf shall fade not, neither fall.
He hath fared forth, beyond these suns and showers
For us, the autumn glow, the autumn flame,
And soon the winter silence shall be ours:
Him the eternal spring of fadeless fame
Crowns with no mortal flowers.

What needs his laurel our ephemeral tears,
To save from visitation of decay?
Not in this temporal light alone, that bay
Blooms, nor to perishable mundane ears
Sings he with lips of transitory clay.
Rapt though he be from us,
Virgil salutes him, and Theocritus;
Catullus, mightiest-brained Lucretius, each
Greets him, their brother, on the Stygian beach;
Proudly a gaunt right hand doth Dante reach;
Milton and Wordsworth bid him welcome home;
Keats, on his lips the eternal rose of youth,
Doth in the name of Beauty that is Truth
A kinsman's love beseech;
Coleridge, his locks aspersed with fairy foam,
Calm Spenser, Chaucer suave,
His equal friendship crave:
And godlike spirits hail him guest, in speech
Of Athens, Florence, Weimar, Stratford, Rome.

Nay, he returns to regions whence he came.
Him doth the spirit divine

Of universal loveliness reclaim.
All nature is his shrine.
Seek him henceforward in the wind and sea,
In earth's and air's emotion or repose,
In every star's august serenity,
And in the rapture of the flaming rose.
There seek him if ye would not seek in vain,
There, in the rhythm and music of the Whole;
Yea, and for ever in the human soul
Made stronger and more beauteous by his strain.

For lo! creation's self is one great choir,
And what is nature's order but the rhyme
Whereto in holiest unanimity
All things with all things move unfalteringly,
Infolded and communal from their prime?
Who shall expound the mystery of the lyre?
In far retreats of elemental mind
Obscurely comes and goes
The imperative breath of song, that as the wind
Is trackless, and oblivious whence it blows.
Demand of lilies wherefore they are white,
Extort her crimson secret from the rose,
But ask not of the Muse that she disclose
The meaning of the riddle of her might:
Somewhat of all things sealed and recondite,
Save the enigma of herself, she knows.
The master could not tell, with all his lore,
Wherefore he sang, or whence the mandate sped:
Even as the linnet sings, so I, he said:
Ah, rather as the imperial nightingale,
That held in trance the ancient Attic shore,
And charms the ages with the notes that o'er
All woodland chants immortally prevail!
And now, from our vain plaudits greatly fled,
He with diviner silence dwells instead,
And on no earthly sea with transient roar,
Unto no earthly airs, he sets his sail,
But far beyond our vision and our hail
Is heard for ever and is seen no more.

No more, O never now,
Lord of the lofty and the tranquil brow,
Shall men behold those wizard locks where Time
Let fall no wintry rime.
Once, in his youth obscure,
The weaver of this verse, that shall endure
By splendor of its theme which cannot die,
Beheld thee eye to eye,
And touched through thee the hand
Of every hero of thy race divine,
Even to the sire of all the laureled line,
The sightless wanderer on the Ionian strand.
Yea, I beheld thee, and behold thee yet:
Thou hast forgotten, but can I forget?
Are not thy words all goldenly impressed
On memory's palimpsest?
I hear the utterance of thy sovereign tongue,
I tread the floor thy hallowing feet have trod;
I see the hands a nation's lyre that strung,
The eyes that looked through life and gazed on God.

The seasons change, the winds they shift and veer;
The grass of yesteryear
Is dead; the birds depart, the groves decay:
Empires dissolve and peoples disappear:
Song passes not away.
Captains and conquerors leave a little dust,
And kings a dubious legend of their reign;
The swords of Cæsars, they are less than rust:
The poet doth remain.
Dead is Augustus, Maro is alive;
And thou, the Mantuan of this age and soil,
With Virgil shalt survive.
Enriching Time with no less honeyed spoil,
The yielded sweet of every Muse's hive;
Heeding no more the sound of idle praise
In that great calm our tumults cannot reach,—
Master who crown'st our immelodious days
With flower of perfect speech.

William Watson [1858–

TENNYSON

[WESTMINSTER ABBEY: OCTOBER TWELFTH, 1892]

GIB DIESEN TODTEN MIR HERAUS!

(*The Minster speaks*)

BRING me my dead!
To me that have grown,
Stone laid upon stone,
As the stormy brood
Of English blood
Has waxed and spread
And filled the world,
With sails unfurled;
With men that may not lie;
With thoughts that cannot die.

Bring me my dead!
Into the storied hall,
Where I have garnered all
My harvest without weed;
My chosen fruits of goodly seed,
And lay him gently down among
The men of state, the men of song:
The men that would not suffer wrong:
The thought-worn chieftains of the mind:
Head-servants of the human kind.

Bring me my dead!
The autumn sun shall shed
Its beams athwart the bier's
Heaped blooms: a many tears
Shall flow; his words, in cadence sweet and strong,
Shall voice the full hearts of the silent throng.
Bring me my dead!
And oh! sad wedded mourner, seeking still
For vanished hand-clasp: drinking in thy fill
Of holy grief; forgive, that pious theft
Robs thee of all, save memories, left:

Not thine to kneel beside the grassy mound
While dies the western glow; and all around
Is silence; and the shadows closer creep
And whisper softly: All must fall asleep.

Thomas Henry Huxley [1825–1895]

FOR A COPY OF THEOCRITUS

[c. 270 B. c.]

O SINGER of the field and fold,
Theocritus! Pan's pipe was thine,—
Thine was the happier Age of Gold.

For thee the scent of new-turned mold,
The bee-hives, and the murmuring pine,
O Singer of the field and fold!

Thou sang'st the simple feasts of old,—
The beechen bowl made glad with wine . . .
Thine was the happier Age of Gold.

Thou bad'st the rustic loves be told,—
Thou bad'st the tuneful reeds combine,
O Singer of the field and fold!

And round thee, ever-laughing, rolled
The blithe and blue Sicilian brine . . .
Thine was the happier Age of Gold.

Alas for us! Our songs are cold;
Our Northern suns too sadly shine:—
O Singer of the field and fold,
Thine was the happier Age of Gold!

Austin Dobson [1840–

THEOCRITUS

O SINGER of Persephone!
In the dim meadows desolate,
Dost thou remember Sicily?

Still through the ivy flits the bee
  Where Amaryllis lies in state;
O Singer of Persephone!

Simætha calls on Hecate
  And hears the wild dogs at the gate:
Dost thou remember Sicily?

Still by the light and laughing sea
  Poor Polypheme bemoans his fate:
O Singer of Persephone!

And still in boyish rivalry
  Young Daphnis challenges his mate:
Dost thou remember Sicily?

Slim Lacon keeps a goat for thee,
  For thee the jocund shepherds wait,
O singer of Persephone!
Dost thou remember Sicily?

Oscar Wilde [1856–1900]

THE QUIET SINGER

[AVE! FRANCIS THOMPSON,—1859–1907]

He had been singing—but I had not heard his voice;
He had been weaving lovely dreams of song,
O many a morning long.
But I, remote and far,
Under an alien star,
Listened to other singers, other birds,
And other silver words.
But does the skylark, singing sweet and clear,
Beg the cold world to hear?
Rather he sings for very rapture of singing,
At dawn, or in the blue, mild Summer noon,
Knowing that, late or soon,
His wealth of beauty, and his high notes, ringing
Above the earth, will make some heart rejoice.

He sings, albeit alone,
Spendthrift of each pure tone,
Hoarding no single song,
No cadence wild and strong.
But one day, from a friend far overseas,
As if upon the breeze,
There came the teeming wonder of his words—
A golden troop of birds,
Caged in a little volume made to love;
Singing, singing,
Flinging, flinging
Their breaking hearts on mine, and swiftly bringing
Tears, and the peace thereof.

How the world woke anew!
How the days broke anew!
Before my tear-blind eyes a tapestry
I seemed to see,
Woven of all the dreams dead or to be.
Hills, hills of song, Springs of eternal bloom,
Autumns of golden pomp and purple gloom
Were hung upon his loom.
Winters of pain, roses with awful thorns,
Yet wondrous faith in God's dew-drenchèd morns—
These, all these I saw,
With that ecstatic awe
Wherewith one looks into Eternity.

And then I knew that, though I had not heard
His voice before,
His quiet singing, like some quiet bird
At some one's distant door,
Had made my own more sweet; and made it more
Lovely, in one of God's miraculous ways.
I knew then why the days
Had seemed more perfect to me when the Spring
Came with old burgeoning;
For somewhere in the world his voice was raised,
And somewhere in the world his heart was breaking;
And never a flower but knew it, sweetly taking

Beauty more high and novel for his sake,
As a whole wood grows lovelier for the wail
Of one sad nightingale.

Yet, if the Springs long past
Seemed wonderful before I heard his voice,
I tremble at the beauty I shall see
In seasons still to be,
Now that his songs are mine while Life shall last.
O now for me
New floods of visions open suddenly. . . .
Rejoice, my heart! Rejoice
That you have heard the Quiet Singer's voice!

Charles Hanson Towne [1877–

THOREAU'S FLUTE

[HENRY DAVID THOREAU, 1817–1862]

We, sighing, said, "Our Pan is dead;
His pipe hangs mute beside the river;
Around it wistful sunbeams quiver,
But Music's airy voice is fled.
Spring mourns as for untimely frost;
The bluebird chants a requiem;
The willow-blossom waits for him:—
The Genius of the wood is lost."

Then from the flute, untouched by hands,
There came a low, harmonious breath:
"For such as he there is no death;
His life the eternal life commands;
Above man's aims his nature rose:
The wisdom of a just content
Made one small spot a continent,
And turned to poetry Life's prose.

"Haunting the hills, the stream, the wild,
Swallow and aster, lake and pine,
To him grew human or divine,—
Fit mates for this large-hearted child.

Such homage Nature ne'er forgets,
And yearly on the coverlid
'Neath which her darling lieth hid
Will write his name in violets.

"To him no vain regrets belong,
Whose soul, that finer instrument,
Gave to the world no poor lament,
But wood-notes ever sweet and strong.
O lonely friend! he still will be
A potent presence, though unseen,
Steadfast, sagacious, and serene:
Seek not for him,—he is with thee."

Louisa May Alcott [1832–1888]

AVE ATQUE VALE

IN MEMORIAM ARTHUR UPSON

[1877–1908]

I

You found the green before the Spring was sweet
And in the boughs the color of a rose,
The haunting fragrance that the south-wind knows
When May has wandered far on questing feet;
And in your heart—a wild note, full and fleet,
The first cry of a gladdened bird that goes
North to the fields of winter-laden snows,
Joyous against the blast and stinging sleet.

And now the Spring is here, the snows are gone,
The apple-blossoms fall from every tree
And all the branches throb with love and Spring;
But never comes one note to greet the dawn,
Never again a wild-glad melody—
God speed, great soul, your valiant wandering!

II

Your hand that traced these lines, and now is dust!
How strange, to-night, this thing of life and death
Where my low candle-flame o'ershadoweth
What once knew youth in its first joyous trust;
So simple and so near, as if you must
Still linger somewhere—yet no answer saith
Its golden word, no magic-freighted breath,
Only a heart-beat stilled in rainbow-rust,

Stilled in the music of a yester-year
That ever echoes its sweet instrument,
And richly sings across an unknown sea;
But these dim lines—so vital they appear,
So full of youth and joy and life's intent.
Ah, this it is that seems so strange to me!

III

How quiet are their voices on the wind
As they toss sadly in a darkened sky,
And yet, mayhap, to you old words imply
That all my questing days I shall not find;
For never more may earthly vestures bind,
But stripped away from things that needs must die,
Deep in that youth where death's strange secrets lie
And whose faint whispers fall on us behind.

Therefore to you the voices harbor peace,
Their ancient patience do you know at last,—
Yet more, the inmost murmuring of these;
And in that mystic lore beyond release,
In one full instant from a treasured past,
Mayhap, you heard the Message of the Trees!

IV

I stood to-day upon time's border-land
And looked far off across each rolling year,
Yet scarcely their great thunder did I hear
Nor marked the wreckage of the changing sand;

For one soft note persuasive did command
All other tones that reached my quickened ear,
And in that note a message low and clear
That I so plainly seemed to understand.

As in the saddened passing of fair things,
The sorrow of the sunset and the dawn,
For death that comes when life's hour least should fail—
Ever the moment's hush of lifted wings,
A gleam of wonder ere the flood is gone. . . .
The host uncovered from its mortal veil!

V

October almost holds her golden sway
Across these hills and through the slopes between,
As if for you some sacrament unseen
Were now unfolded in a silent way,—
As if for you pale memory astray
Had touched each spot of misted summer green,
And in the coolness where the shadows lean
Had whispered of a cherished yesterday.

For one to whom you gave your youth's full praise
Now takes you back into her hallowed rest
With all the loveliness that is your due,
Yielding the precious beauty of her days
To your deep sleep upon her tranquil breast,—
Giving you back her deathless love of you!

Thomas S. Jones, Jr. [1882–

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS

[THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, 1769–1852]

A MIST was driving down the British Channel,
The day was just begun,
And through the window-panes, on floor and panel,
Streamed the red autumn sun.

It glanced on flowing flag and rippling pennon,
And the white sails of ships;
And, from the frowning rampart, the black cannon
Hailed it with feverish lips.

Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hithe, and Dover,
Were all alert that day,
To see the French war-steamers speeding over
When the fog cleared away.

Sullen and silent, and like couchant lions,
Their cannon, through the night,
Holding their breath, had watched, in grim defiance
The seacoast opposite.

And now they roared at drum-beat from their stations
On every citadel;
Each answering each, with morning salutations,
That all was well.

And down the coast, all taking up the burden,
Replied the distant forts,
As if to summon from his sleep the Warden
And Lord of the Cinque Ports.

Him shall no sunshine from the fields of azure,
No drum-beat from the wall,
No morning gun from the black fort's embrasure,
Awaken with its call!

No more, surveying with an eye impartial
The long line of the coast,
Shall the gaunt figure of the old Field Marshal
Be seen upon his post!

For in the night, unseen, a single warrior,
In somber harness mailed,
Dreaded of man, and surnamed the Destroyer,
The rampart wall had scaled.

He passed into the chamber of the sleeper,
The dark and silent room;
And, as he entered, darker grew, and deeper,
The silence and the gloom.

He did not pause to parley or dissemble,
But smote the Warden hoar;
Ah! what a blow! that made all England tremble
And groan from shore to shore.

Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon waited,
The sun rose bright o'erhead;
Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated
That a great man was dead.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807–1882]

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

I

Bury the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation;
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation;
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,

Let the long, long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute!
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fallen at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V

All is over and done.
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be tolled.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold

That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be tolled,
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds.
Bright let it be with its blazoned deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be tolled,
And a deeper knell in the heart be knolled;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem rolled
Through the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame,
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attempered frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song!

VI

"Who is he that cometh, like an honored guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?"—
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.

Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
Oh, give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gained a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clashed with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labored rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Followed up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheeled on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud Sabbath shook the spoiler down;
A day of onsets of despair!
Dashed on every rocky square,

Their surging charges foamed themselves away;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;
Through the long-tormented air
Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
And through the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
Though all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers,
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control!
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,

And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings!
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
Remember him who led your hosts;
He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor paltered with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow
Through either babbling world of high and low;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right.
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

VIII

Lo! the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne
Followed by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honor showered all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.

Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story
The path of duty was the way to glory.
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story
The path of duty was the way to glory.
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Through the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevailed,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure;
Till in all lands and through all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory.
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue

Far on in summers that we shall not see.
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung.
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain!
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane:
We revere, and while we hear
The tide of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For though the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will,
Though world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears;
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears;
The black earth yawns; the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seemed so great.—
Gone, but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own

Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him,
God accept him, Christ receive him!

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

MEMORIAL VERSES

[WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1770–1850]

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,
Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.
But one such death remained to come;
The last poetic voice is dumb—
We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
We bowed our head and held our breath.
He taught us little; but our soul
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.
With shivering heart the strife we saw
Of passion with eternal law;
And yet with reverential awe
We watched the fount of fiery life
Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said:
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.
Physician of the iron age,
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.

He took the suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness clear:
And struck his finger on the place,
And said: *Thou ailest here, and here!*
He looked on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power;
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,
The turmoil of expiring life—
He said: *The end is everywhere,*
Art still has truth, take refuge there!
And he was happy, if to know
Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror, and insane distress,
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth!—Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice!
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world conveyed,
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.
Wordsworth has gone from us—and ye,
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we!
He too upon a wintery clime
Had fallen—on this iron time
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
He found us when the age had bound
Our souls in its benumbing round;
He spoke, and loosed our hearts in tears.
He laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth,
Smiles broke from us, and we had ease;
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
Our youth returned; for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furled,
The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light
Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
Time may restore us in his course
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;
But where will Europe's latter hour
Again find Wordsworth's healing power?
Others will teach us how to dare,
And against fear our breast to steel;
Others will strengthen us to bear—
But who, ah! who, will make us feel?
The cloud of mortal destiny,
Others will front it fearlessly—
But who, like him, will put it by?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha, with thy living wave!
Sing him thy best! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

Matthew Arnold [1822–1888]

WORDSWORTH'S GRAVE

I

The old rude church, with bare, bald tower, is here;
Beneath its shadow high-born Rotha flows;
Rotha, remembering well who slumbers near,
And with cool murmur lulling his repose.

Rotha, remembering well who slumbers near,
His hills, his lakes, his streams are with him yet.
Surely the heart that reads her own heart clear
Nature forgets not soon: 'tis we forget.

We that with vagrant soul his fixity
Have slighted; faithless, done his deep faith wrong;
Left him for poorer loves, and bowed the knee
To misbegotten strange new gods of song.

Yet, led by hollow ghost or beckoning elf
Far from her homestead to the desert bourn,
The vagrant soul returning to herself
Wearily wise, must needs to him return.

To him and to the powers that with him dwell:—
  Inflowings that divulged not whence they came;
And that secluded Spirit unknowable,
  The mystery we make darker with a name;

The Somewhat which we name but cannot know,
  Even as we name a star and only see
His quenchless flashings forth, which ever show
  And ever hide him, and which are not he.

II

Poet who sleepest by this wandering wave!
  When thou wast born, what birth-gift hadst thou then?
To thee what wealth was that the Immortals gave,
  The wealth thou gavest in thy turn to men?

Not Milton's keen, translunar music thine;
  Not Shakespeare's cloudless, boundless human view;
Not Shelley's flush of rose on peaks divine;
  Nor yet the wizard twilight Coleridge knew.

What hadst thou that could make so large amends
  For all thou hadst not and thy peers possessed,
Motion and fire, swift means to radiant ends?—
  Thou hadst, for weary feet, the gift of rest.

From Shelley's dazzling glow or thunderous haze,
  From Byron's tempest-anger, tempest-mirth,
Men turned to thee and found—not blast and blaze,
  Tumult of tottering heavens, but peace on earth.

Nor peace that grows by Lethe, scentless flower,
  There in white languors to decline and cease;
But peace whose names are also rapture, power,
  Clear sight, and love: for these are parts of peace.

III

I hear it vowed the Muse is with us still;—
  If less divinely frenzied than of yore,
In lieu of feelings she has wondrous skill
  To simulate emotion felt no more.

Not such the authentic Presence pure, that made
This valley vocal in the great days gone!—
In *his* great days, while yet the spring-time played
About him, and the mighty morning shone.

No word-mosaic artificer, he sang
A lofty song of lowly weal and dole.
Right from the heart, right to the heart it sprang,
Or from the soul leapt instant to the soul.

He felt the charm of childhood, grace of youth,
Grandeur of age, insisting to be sung.
The impassioned argument was simple truth
Half-wondering at its own melodious tongue.

Impassioned? ay, to the song's ecstatic core!
But far removed were clangor, storm, and feud;
For plenteous health was his, exceeding store
Of joy, and an impassioned quietude.

IV

A hundred years ere he to manhood came,
Song from celestial heights had wandered down,
Put off her robe of sunlight, dew, and flame,
And donned a modish dress to charm the Town.

Thenceforth she but festooned the porch of things;
Apt at life's lore, incurious what life meant.
Dextrous of hand, she struck her lute's few strings;
Ignobly perfect, barrenly content.

Unflushed with ardor and unblanched with awe,
Her lips in profitless derision curled,
She saw with dull emotion—if she saw—
The vision of the glory of the world.

The human masque she watched, with dreamless eyes
In whose clear shallows lurked no trembling shade:
The stars, unkenned by her, might set and rise;
Unmarked by her, the daisies bloom and fade.

The age grew sated with her sterile wit.
Herself waxed weary on her loveless throne.
Men felt life's tide, the sweep and surge of it,
And craved a living voice, a natural tone.

For none the less, though song was but half true,
The world lay common, one abounding theme.
Man joyed and wept, and fate was ever new,
And love was sweet, life real, death no dream.

In sad, stern verse the rugged scholar-sage
Bemoaned his toil unvalued, youth uncheered.
His numbers wore the vesture of the age,
But, 'neath it beating, the great heart was heard.

From dewy pastures, uplands sweet with thyme,
A virgin breeze freshened the jaded day.
It wafted Collins' lonely vesper-chime,
It breathed abroad the frugal note of Gray.

It fluttered here and there, nor swept in vain
The dusty haunts where futile echoes dwell,—
Then, in a cadence soft as summer rain,
And sad from Auburn voiceless, drooped and fell.

It drooped and fell, and one 'neath northern skies,
With southern heart, who tilled his father's field,
Found Poesy a-dying, bade her rise
And touch quick Nature's hem and go forth healed.

On life's broad plain the plowman's conquering share
Upturned the fallow lands of truth anew,
And o'er the formal garden's trim parterre
The peasant's team a ruthless furrow drew.

Bright was his going forth, but clouds ere long
Whelmed him; in gloom his radiance set, and those
Twin morning stars of the new century's song,
Those morning stars that sang together, rose.

In elvish speech the *Dreamer* told his tale
Of marvelous oceans swept by fateful wings.—
The *Seër* strayed not from earth's human pale
But the mysterious face of common things

He mirrored as the moon in Rydal Mere
Is mirrored, when the breathless night hangs blue:
Strangely remote she seems and wondrous near,
And by some nameless difference born anew.

V

Peace—peace—and rest! Ah, how the lyre is loth,
Or powerless now, to give what all men seek!
Either it deadens with ignoble sloth
Or deafens with shrill tumult, loudly weak.

Where is the singer whose large notes and clear
Can heal, and arm, and plenish, and sustain?
Lo, one with empty music floods the ear,
And one, the heart refreshing, tires the brain.

And idly tuneful, the loquacious throng
Flutter and twitter, prodigal of time,
And little masters make a toy of song,
Till grave men weary of the sound of rhyme.

And some go pranked in faded antique dress,
Abhorring to be hale and glad and free;
And some parade a conscious naturalness,
The scholar's not the child's simplicity.

Enough;—the wisest who from words forbear
The gentle river rails not as it glides;
And suave and charitable, the winsome air
Chides not at all, or only him who chides.

VI

Nature! we storm thine ear with choric notes.
Thou answerest through the calm great nights and days,
"Laud me who will: not tuneless are your throats;
Yet if ye paused I should not miss the praise."

We falter, half-rebuked, and sing again.
  We chant thy desertness and haggard gloom,
Or with thy splendid wrath inflate the strain,
  Or touch it with thy color and perfume.

One, his melodious blood aflame for thee,
  Wooed with fierce lust, his hot heart world-defiled.
One, with the upward eye of infancy,
  Looked in thy face, and felt himself thy child.

Thee he approached without distrust or dread—
  Beheld thee throned, an awful queen, above—
Climbed to thy lap and merely laid his head
  Against thy warm wild heart of mother-love.

He heard that vast heart beating—thou didst press
  Thy child so close, and lov'dst him unaware.
Thy beauty gladdened him; yet he scarce less
  Had loved thee, had he never found thee fair!

For thou wast not as legendary lands
  To which with curious eyes and ears we roam.
Nor wast thou as a fane 'mid solemn sands,
  Where palmers halt at evening. Thou wast home.

And here, at home, still bides he; but he sleeps;
  Not to be wakened even at thy word;
Though we, vague dreamers, dream he somewhere keeps
  An ear still open to thy voice still heard,—

Thy voice, as heretofore, about him blown,
  For ever blown about his silence now;
Thy voice, though deeper, yet so like his own
  That almost, when he sang, we deemed 'twas thou!

VII

Behind Helm Crag and Silver Howe the sheen
  Of the retreating day is less and less.
Soon will the lordlier summits, here unseen,
  Gather the night about their nakedness.

The half-heard bleat of sheep comes from the hill.
Faint sounds of childish play are in the air.
The river murmurs past. All else is still.
The very graves seem stiller than they were.

Afar though nation be on nation hurled,
And life with toil and ancient pain depressed,
Here one may scarce believe the whole wide world
Is not at peace, and all man's heart at rest.

Rest! 'twas the gift *he* gave, and peace! the shade
He spread, for spirits fevered with the sun.
To him his bounties are come back—here laid
In rest, in peace, his labor nobly done.

William Watson [1858–

JERUSALEM THE GOLDEN

JERUSALEM *

For thee, O dear dear Country!
Mine eyes their vigils keep;
For very love, beholding
Thy happy name, they weep:
The mention of thy glory
Is unction to the breast,
And medicine in sickness,
And love, and life, and rest.

O come, O onely Mansion!
O Paradise of Joy!
Where tears are ever banished,
And smiles have no alloy;
Beside thy living waters
All plants are, great and small,
The cedar of the forest,
The hyssop of the wall:
With jaspers glow thy bulwarks;
Thy streets with emeralds blaze;
The sardius and the topaz
Unite in thee their rays:
Thine ageless walls are bonded
With amethyst unpriced:
Thy Saints build up its fabric,
And the corner-stone is Christ.

The Cross is all thy splendor,
The Crucified thy praise:
His laud and benediction
Thy ransomed people raise:

* For the original of this poem see page 3824.

Jesus, the Gem of Beauty,
  True God and Man, they sing:
The never-failing Garden,
  The ever-golden Ring:
The Door, the Pledge, the Husband,
  The Guardian of his Court:
The Day-star of Salvation,
  The Porter and the Port.
Thou hast no shore, fair ocean!
  Thou hast no time, bright day!
Dear fountain of refreshment
  To pilgrims far away!

Upon the Rock of Ages
  They raise thy holy tower:
Thine is the victor's laurel,
  And thine the golden dower:
Thou feel'st in mystic rapture,
  O Bride that know'st no guile,
The Prince's sweetest kisses,
  The Prince's loveliest smile:

Unfading lilies, bracelets
  Of living pearl thine own:
The Lamb is ever near thee,
  The Bridegroom thine alone:
The Crown is He to guerdon,
  The Buckler to protect,
And He Himself the Mansion,
  And He the Architect.
The only art thou needest,
  Thanksgiving for thy lot:
The only joy thou seekest,
  The Life where Death is not.
And all thine endless leisure
  In sweetest accents sings,
The ill that was thy merit,—
  The wealth that is thy King's!

Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice oppressed;
I know not, O I know not,
What social joys are there!
What radiancy of glory,
What light beyond compare!

And when I fain would sing them
My spirit fails and faints,
And vainly would it image
The assembly of the Saints.

They stand, those halls of Syon,
Conjubilant with song,
And bright with many an angel,
And all the martyr throng:
The Prince is ever in them;
The daylight is serene:
The pastures of the Blessèd
Are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the Throne of David,—
And there, from care released,
The song of them that triumph,
The shout of them that feast:
And they who, with their Leader
Have conquered in the fight,
For ever and for ever
Are clad in robes of white!

O holy, placid harp-notes
Of that eternal hymn!
O sacred, sweet refection,
And peace of Seraphim!
O thirst, for ever ardent,
Yet evermore content!
O true, peculiar vision
Of God cunctipotent!

Ye know the many mansions
For many a glorious name
And divers retributions
That divers merits claim:
For midst the constellations
That deck our earthly sky,
This star than that is brighter,—
And so it is on high.

Jerusalem the glorious!
The glory of the Elect!
O dear and future vision
That eager hearts expect:
Even now by faith I see thee
Even here thy walls discern:
To thee my thoughts are kindled,
And strive and pant and yearn:
Jerusalem the onely,
That look'st from heaven below,
In thee is all my glory;
In me is all my woe!
And though my body may not,
My spirit seeks thee fain,
Till flesh and earth return me
To earth and flesh again.
O none can tell thy bulwarks,
How gloriously they rise:
O none can tell thy capitals
Of beautiful device:
Thy loveliness oppresses
All human thought and heart:
And none, O peace, O Syon,
Can sing thee as thou art.
New mansion of new people,
Whom God's own love and light
Promote, increase, make holy,
Identify, unite.
Thou City of the Angels!
Thou City of the Lord!

Whose everlasting music
  Is the glorious decachord!
And there the band of Prophets
  United praise ascribes,
And there the twelvefold chorus
  Of Israel's ransomed tribes:
The lily-beds of virgins,
  The roses' martyr-glow,
The cohort of the Fathers
  Who kept the faith below!
And there the Sole-Begotten
  Is Lord in regal state;
He, Judah's mystic Lion,
  He, Lamb Immaculate.

O fields that know no sorrow!
  O state that fears no strife!
O princely bowers! O land of flowers!
  O realm and home of life!

John Mason Neale [1818–1866]

THE NEW JERUSALEM *

From "Song of Mary the Mother of Christ"

Jerusalem, my happy home,
  When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end?
  Thy joys when shall I see?

O happy harbor of the Saints!
  O sweet and pleasant soil!
In thee no sorrow may be found,
  No grief, no care, no toil.

There lust and lucre cannot dwell,
  There envy bears no sway;
There is no hunger, heat, nor cold,
  But pleasure every way.

* For the original of this poem see page 3826.

Thy walls are made of precious stones,
Thy bulwarks diamonds square;
Thy gates are of right orient pearl,
Exceeding rich and rare.

Thy turrets and thy pinnacles
With carbuncles do shine;
Thy very streets are paved with gold,
Surpassing clear and fine.

Ah, my sweet home, Jerusalem,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!

Thy gardens and thy gallant walks
Continually are green;
There grow such sweet and pleasant flowers
As nowhere else are seen.

Quite through thy streets, with silver sound,
The flood of Life doth flow;
Upon whose banks on every side
The wood of Life doth grow.

There trees for evermore bear fruit,
And evermore do spring;
There evermore the angels sit,
And evermore do sing.

Our Lady sings *Magnificat*
With tones surpassing sweet;
And all the virgins bear their part,
Sitting about her feet.

Jerusalem, my happy home,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!

Unknown

PEACE

My soul, there is a country
  Afar beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry
  All skilful in the wars:
There, above noise and danger,
  Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
  Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious Friend,
  And—O my soul, awake!—
Did in pure love descend
  To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
  There grows the flower of Peace,
The Rose that cannot wither,
  Thy fortress, and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges;
  For none can thee secure
But One who never changes—
  Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

Henry Vaughan [1622–1695]

PARADISE

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  Who doth not crave for rest,
Who would not seek the happy land
  Where they that loved are blest?
    Where loyal hearts and true
      Stand ever in the light,
    All rapture through and through,
      In God's most holy sight.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  The world is growing old;
Who would not be at rest and free
  Where love is never cold?

O Paradise, O Paradise,
Wherefore doth death delay?
Bright death, that is the welcome dawn
Of our eternal day.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
'Tis weary waiting here;
I long to be where Jesus is,
To feel, to see Him near.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
I want to sin no more,
I want to be as pure on earth
As on thy spotless shore.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
I greatly long to see
The special place my dearest Lord
Is destining for me.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
I feel 'twill not be long;
Patience! I almost think I hear
Faint fragments of thy song;
Where loyal hearts and true
Stand ever in the light,
All rapture through and through,
In God's most holy sight.

Frederick William Faber [1814–1863]

THE WORLD

I SAW Eternity the other night,
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright;
And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow moved; in which the world
And all her train were hurled.

The doting lover in his quaintest strain
Did there complain;
Near him, his lute, his fancy, and his flights,
Wit's sour delights;
With gloves, and knots and silly snares of pleasure,
Yet his dear treasure
All scattered lay, while he his eyes did pour
Upon a flower.

The darksome statesman, hung with weights and woe,
Like a thick midnight-fog, moved there so slow,
He did nor stay, nor go;
Condemning thoughts—like sad eclipses—scowl
Upon his soul,
And clouds of crying witnesses without
Pursued him with one shout.
Yet digged the mole, and lest his ways be found,
Worked under ground,
Where he did clutch his prey; but one did see
That policy:
Churches and altars fed him; perjuries
Were gnats and flies;
It rained about him blood and tears, but he
Drank them as free.

The fearful miser on a heap of rust
Sate pining all his life there, did scarce trust
His own hands with the dust,
Yet would not place one piece above, but lives
In fear of thieves.
Thousands there were as frantic as himself,
And hugged each one his pelf;
The down-right epicure placed heaven in sense,
And scorned pretense;
While others, slipped into a wide excess,
Said little less;
The weaker sort slight, trival wares enslave,
Who think them brave;
And poor, despised Truth sate counting by
Their victory.

Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
And sing and weep, soared up into the ring;
But most would use no wing.
O fools—said I—thus to prefer dark night
Before true light!
To live in grots and caves, and hate the day
Because it shows the way;
The way, which from this dead and dark abode
Leads up to God;
A way where you might tread the sun, and be
More bright then he!
But as I did their madness so discuss,
One whispered thus,
"This ring the Bride-groom did for none provide,
But for His Bride."

Henry Vaughan [1622–1695]

THE WHITE ISLAND

In this world, the Isle of Dreams,
While we sit by sorrow's streams,
Tears and terror are our themes
Reciting:

But when once from hence we fly,
More and more approaching nigh
Unto young Eternity
Uniting:

In that whiter island, where
Things are evermore sincere;
Candor here, and luster there
Delighting:

There no monstrous fancies shall
Out of Hell an horror call,
To create (or cause at all)
Affrighting.

There in calm and cooling sleep
We our eyes shall never steep;
But eternal watch shall keep
Attending

Pleasures such as shall pursue
Me immortalized, and you;
And fresh joys, as never too
Have ending.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

"THIS WORLD IS ALL A FLEETING SHOW"

This world is all a fleeting show,
For man's illusion given;
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,—
There's nothing true but Heaven!

And false the light on glory's plume,
As fading hues of even;
And love, and hope, and beauty's bloom
Are blossoms gathered for the tomb,—
There's nothing bright but Heaven!

Poor wanderers of a stormy day,
From wave to wave we're driven,
And fancy's flash and reason's ray
Serve but to light the troubled way,—
There's nothing calm but Heaven!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

THE LAND O' THE LEAL

I'm wearin' awa', John,
Like snaw-wreaths in thaw, John,
I'm wearin' awa'
To the land o' the leal.

There's nae sorrow there, John,
There's neither cauld nor care, John,
The day is aye fair
In the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairn's there, John,
She was baith gude and fair, John;
And O! we grudged her sair
To the land o' the leal.
But sorrow's sel' wears past, John,
And joy's a-comin' fast, John,
The joy that's aye to last
In the land o' the leal.

Sae dear's that joy was bought, John,
Sae free the battle fought, John,
That sinfu' man e'er brought
To the land o' the leal.
O, dry your glistening e'e, John!
My saul langs to be free, John,
And angels beckon me
To the land o' the leal.

O, haud ye leal and true, John!
Your day it's wearin' through, John,
And I'll welcome you
To the land o' the leal.
Now fare-ye-weel, my ain John,
This warld's cares are vain, John,
We'll meet, and we'll be fain,
In the land o' the leal.

Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]

HEAVENWARD

Would you be young again?
So would not I—
One tear to memory given,
Onward I'd hie.

Life's dark flood forded o'er,
All but at rest on shore,
Say, would you plunge once more,
With home so nigh?

If you might, would you now
Retrace your way?
Wander through thorny wilds,
Faint and astray?
Night's gloomy watches fled,
Morning all beaming red,
Hope's smiles around us shed,
Heavenward—away.

Where are they gone, of yore
My best delight?
Dear and more dear, though now
Hidden from sight.
Where they rejoice to be,
There is the land for me;
Fly time—fly speedily,
Come life and light.

Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]

"REST IS NOT HERE"

What's this vain world to me?
Rest is not here;
False are the smiles I see,
The mirth I hear.
Where is youth's joyful glee?
Where all once dear to me?
Gone as the shadows flee—
Rest is not here.

Why did the morning shine
Blithely and fair?
Why did those tints so fine
Vanish in air?

Does not the vision say,
Faint lingering heart, away,
Why in this desert stay—
Dark land of care!

Where souls angelic soar,
Thither repair:
Let this vain world no more
Lull and ensnare.
That heaven I love so well
Still in my heart shall dwell;
All things around me tell
Rest is found there.

Carolina Nairne [1766–1845]

AT HOME IN HEAVEN

PART I

"For ever with the Lord!"
Amen! so let it be!
Life from the dead is in that word,
'Tis immortality.

Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer home.

My Father's house on high,
Home of my soul! how near,
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye,
Thy golden gates appear!

Ah! then my spirit faints
To reach the land I love,
The bright inheritance of saints,
Jerusalem above!

Yet clouds will intervene,
And all my prospect flies;
Like Noah's dove, I flit between
Rough seas and stormy skies.

Anon the clouds depart,
The winds and waters cease;
While sweetly o'er my gladdened heart
Expands the bow of peace!

Beneath its glowing arch,
Along the hallowed ground,
I see cherubic armies march,
A camp of fire around.

I hear at morn and even,
At noon and midnight hour,
The choral harmonies of heaven
Earth's Babel-tongues o'erpower.

Then, then I feel that He,
(Remembered or forgot,)
The Lord, is never far from me,
Though I perceive Him not.

PART II

In darkness as in light,
Hidden alike from view,
I sleep, I wake, as in His sight
Who looks all nature through.

From the dim hour of birth,
Through every changing state
Of mortal pilgrimage on earth,
Till its appointed date;

All that I am, have been,
All that I yet may be,
He sees at once, as He hath seen,
And shall forever see.

How can I meet His eyes?
Mine on the cross I cast,
And own my life a Saviour's prize,
Mercy from first to last

"Forever with the Lord:"
Father, if 'tis Thy will,
The promise of that faithful word
Even here to me fulfil!

So, when my latest breath
Shall rend the veil in twain,
By death I shall escape from death,
And life eternal gain.

Knowing as I am known
How shall I love that word,
And oft repeat before the throne,
"For ever with the Lord!"

Then though the soul enjoy
Communion high and sweet,
While worms this body must destroy,
Both shall in glory meet.

The trump of final doom
Will speak the self-same word,
And heaven's voice thunder through the tomb,
"For ever with the Lord!"

The tomb shall echo deep
That death-awakening sound;
The saints shall hear it in their sleep
And answer from the ground.

Then upward as they fly,
That resurrection-word
Shall be their shout of victory,
"For ever with the Lord!"

That resurrection-word,
That shout of victory,
Once more,—"For ever with the Lord!"
Amen, so let it be.

James Montgomery [1771–1854]

PARADISE

Once in a dream I saw the flowers
  That bud and bloom in Paradise;
  More fair they are than waking eyes
Have seen in all this world of ours,
And faint the perfume-bearing rose,
  And faint the lily on its stem,
And faint the perfect violet,
  Compared with them.

I heard the songs of Paradise;
  Each bird sat singing in its place;
  A tender song so full of grace
It soared like incense to the skies.
Each bird sat singing to its mate
  Soft cooing notes among the trees:
The nightingale herself were cold
  To such as these.

I saw the fourfold River flow,
  And deep it was, with golden sand;
  It flowed between a mossy land
With murmured music grave and low.
It hath refreshment for all thirst,
  For fainting spirit strength and rest:
Earth holds not such a draught as this
  From east to west.

The Tree of Life stood budding there,
  Abundant with its twelvefold fruits;
  Eternal sap sustains its roots,
Its shadowing branches fill the air.
Its leaves are healing for the world,
  Its fruit the hungry world can feed,
Sweeter than honey to the taste
  And balm indeed.

I saw the Gate called Beautiful;
  And looked, but scarce could look within;
  I saw the golden streets begin,
And outskirts of the glassy pool.

Oh harps, oh crowns of plenteous stars,
Oh green palm branches, many-leaved—
Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard,
Nor heart conceived.

I hope to see these things again,
But not as once in dreams by night;
To see them with my very sight,
And touch and handle and attain:
To have all heaven beneath my feet
For narrow way that once they trod;
To have my part with all the saints,
And with my God.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

"HEAVEN OVERARCHES EARTH AND SEA"

Heaven overarches earth and sea,
Earth-sadness and sea-bitterness.
Heaven overarches you and me:
A little while and we shall be—
Please God—where there is no more sea
Nor barren wilderness.

Heaven overarches you and me,
And all earth's gardens and her graves.
Look up with me, until we see
The day break and the shadows flee.
What though to-night wrecks you and me,
If so to-morrow saves?

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830–1894]

THE SUNSET CITY

There's a city that lies in the Kingdom of Clouds,
In the glorious country on high,
Which an azure and silvery curtain enshrouds,
To screen it from mortal eye;

A city of temples and turrets of gold,
That gleam by a sapphire sea,
Like jewels more splendid than earth may behold,
Or are dreamed of by you and by me.

And about it are highlands of amber that reach
Far away till they melt in the gloom;
And waters that hem an immaculate beach
With fringes of luminous foam.

Aerial bridges of pearl there are,
And belfries of marvelous shapes,
And lighthouses lit by the evening star,
That sparkle on violet capes;

And hanging gardens that far away
Enchantedly float aloof;
Rainbow pavilions in avenues gay,
And banners of glorious woof!

When the Summer sunset's crimsoning fires
Are aglow in the western sky,
The pilgrim discovers the domes and spires
Of this wonderful city on high;

And gazing enrapt as the gathering shade
Creeps over the twilight lea,
Sees palace and pinnacle totter and fade,
And sink in the sapphire sea;

Till the vision loses by slow degrees
The magical splendor it wore;
The silvery curtain is drawn, and he sees
The beautiful city no more!

Henry Sylvester Cornwell [1831–1886]

GRADATIM

Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

I count this thing to be grandly true:
That a noble deed is a step toward God,
Lifting the soul from the common clod
To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by the things that are under feet;
By what we have mastered of good and gain;
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

We hope, we aspire, we resolve, we trust,
When the morning calls us to life and light,
But our hearts grow weary, and, ere the night,
Our lives are trailing the sordid dust.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we pray,
And we think that we mount the air on wings
Beyond the recall of sensual things,
While our feet still cling to the heavy clay.

Wings for the angels, but feet for men!
We may borrow the wings to find the way—
We may hope, and resolve, and aspire, and pray;
But our feet must rise, or we fall again.

Only in dreams is a ladder thrown
From the weary earth to the sapphire walls;
But the dreams depart, and the vision falls,
And the sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit, round by round.

Josiah Gilbert Holland [1819–1881]

THE OTHER WORLD

It lies around us like a cloud—
The world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be.

Its gentle breezes fan our cheeks
  Amid our worldly cares;
Its gentle voices whisper love,
  And mingle with our prayers.

Sweet hearts around us throb and beat,
  Sweet helping hands are stirred,
And palpitates the veil between
  With breathings almost heard.

The silence—awful, sweet, and calm
  They have no power to break;
For mortal words are not for them
  To utter or partake.

So thin, so soft, so sweet they glide,
  So near to press they seem,
They lull us gently to our rest,
  And melt into our dream.

And, in the hush of rest they bring,
  'Tis easy now to see
How lovely and how sweet a pass
  The hour of death may be!

To close the eye and close the ear,
  Wrapped in a trance of bliss,
And, gently drawn in loving arms,
  To swoon to that—from this.

Scarce knowing if we wake or sleep,
  Scarce asking where we are,
To feel all evil sink away,
  All sorrow and all care.

Sweet souls around us! watch us still,
  Press nearer to our side,
Into our thoughts, into our prayers,
  With gentle helping glide.

Let death between us be as naught,
A dried and vanished stream;
Your joy be the reality,
Our suffering life the dream.

Harriet Beecher Stowe [1811–1896]

MY AIN COUNTREE

I AM far frae my hame, an' I'm weary often whiles
For the longed-for hame-bringing an' my Father's welcome smiles;
I'll ne'er be fu' content until my een do see
The gowden gates o' heaven, an' my ain countree.

The earth is flecked wi' flowers, mony-tinted, fresh an' gay,
The birdies warble blithely, for my Father made them sae;
But these sights an' these soun's will as naething be to me,
When I hear the angels singing in my ain countree.

I've his gude word of promise, that some gladsome day the King
To his ain royal palace his banished hame will bring;
Wi' een an' wi' heart running over we shall see
"The King in his beauty," an' our ain countree.

My sins hae been mony an' my sorrows hae been sair,
But there they'll never vex me, nor be remembered mair;
His bluid has made me white, his hand shall wipe mine ee,
When he brings me hame at last to my ain countree.

Like a bairn to his mither, a wee birdie to its nest,
I wud fain be ganging noo unto my Saviour's breast;
For he gathers in his bosom witless, worthless lambs like me,
An' he carries them himsel' to his ain countree.

He's faithfu' that hath promised, he'll surely come again;
He'll keep his tryst wi' me, at what hour I dinna ken;
But he bids me still to watch, an' ready aye to be
To gang at ony moment to my ain countree.

So I'm watching aye an' singing o' my hame as I wait,
For the soun'ing o' his footsteps this side the gowden gate.
God gie his grace to ilka ane wha listens noo to me,
That we may a' gang in gladness to our ain countree.

Mary Lee Demarest [1838–1888]

HOME

THERE lies a little city in the hills;
White are its roofs, dim is each dwelling's door,
And peace with perfect rest its bosom fills.

There the pure mist, the pity of the sea,
Comes as a white, soft hand, and reaches o'er
And touches its still face most tenderly.

Unstirred and calm, amid our shifting years,
Lo! where it lies, far from the clash and roar,
With quiet distance blurred, as if through tears.

O heart that prayest so for God to send
Some loving messenger to go before
And lead the way to where thy longings end,

Be sure, be very sure, that soon will come
His kindest angel, and through that still door
Into the Infinite love will lead thee home.

Edward Rowland Sill [1841–1887]

CHARTLESS

I NEVER saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;
Yet know I how the heather looks,
And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,
Nor visited in heaven;
Yet certain am I of the spot
As if the chart were given.

Emily Dickinson [1830–1886]

"IT CANNOT BE"

It cannot be that He who made
This wondrous world for our delight,
Designed that all its charms should fade
And pass forever from our sight;
That all shall wither and decay,
And know on earth no life but this,
With only one finite survey
Of all its beauty and its bliss.

It cannot be that all the years
Of toil and care and grief we live
Shall find no recompense but tears,
No sweet return that earth can give;
That all that leads us to aspire,
And struggle onward to achieve,
And every unattained desire
Were given only to deceive.

It cannot be that, after all
The mighty conquests of the mind,
Our thoughts shall pass beyond recall
And leave no record here behind;
That all our dreams of love and fame,
And hopes that time has swept away,—
All that enthralled this mortal frame,—
Shall not return some other day.

It cannot be that all the ties
Of kindred souls and loving hearts
Are broken when this body dies,
And the immortal mind departs;
That no serener light shall break
At last upon our mortal eyes,
To guide us as our footsteps make
The pilgrimage to Paradise.

David Banks Sickels [1837–

A THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR HIS HOUSE

LORD, Thou hast given me a cell
Wherein to dwell;
A little house, whose humble roof
Is weather-proof;
Under the spars of which I lie
Both soft and dry;
Where Thou, my chamber for to ward,
Hast set a guard
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep
Me, while I sleep.
Low is my porch, as is my fate;
Both void of state;
And yet the threshold of my door
Is worn by the poor,
Who thither come, and freely get
Good words, or meat.
Like as my parlor, so my hall
And kitchen's small;
A little buttery, and therein
A little bin,
Which keeps my little loaf of bread
Unchipped, unflead;
Some brittle sticks of thorn or briar
Make me a fire,
Close by whose living coal I sit,
And glow like it.
Lord, I confess too, when I dine,
The pulse is Thine,
And all those other bits that be
There placed by Thee:
The worts, the purslain, and the mess
Of water-cress;
Which of Thy kindness Thou hast sent;
And my content
Makes those, and my belovèd beet,
To be more sweet.
'Tis Thou that crown'st my glittering hearth
With guiltless mirth,

And giv'st me wassail bowls to drink,
Spiced to the brink.
Lord, 'tis Thy plenty-dropping hand
That soils my land,
And giv'st me, for my bushel sown,
Twice ten for one;
Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay
Her egg each day;
Besides, my healthful ewes to bear
Me twins each year;
The while the conduits of my kine
Run cream, for wine:
All these, and better, Thou dost send
Me, to this end,—
That I should render, for my part,
A thankful heart;
Which, fired with incense, I resign,
As wholly Thine;
—But the acceptance, that must be,
My Christ, by Thee.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

THE SHEPHERD BOY SINGS IN THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION

From "The Pilgrim's Progress"

He that is down needs fear no fall,
He that is low, no pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little be it or much:
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,
Because Thou savest such.

Fullness to such a burden is
That go on pilgrimage:
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.

John Bunyan [1628–1688]

THE PILGRIM

From "The Pilgrim's Progress"

WHO would true valor see,
Let him come hither!
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather;
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first-avowed intent
To be a Pilgrim.

Whoso beset him round
With dismal stories,
Do but themselves confound;
His strength the more is.
No lion can him fright;
He'll with a giant fight;
But he will have a right
To be a Pilgrim.

Hobgoblin, nor foul fiend,
Can daunt his spirit;
He knows he at the end
Shall Life inherit:—
Then, fancies, fly away;
He'll not fear what men say;
He'll labor, night and day,
To be a Pilgrim.

John Bunyan [1628–1688]

"THE BIRD, LET LOOSE IN EASTERN SKIES"

THE bird, let loose in eastern skies,
When hastening fondly home,
Ne'er stoops to earth her wing, nor flies
Where idle warblers roam;

But high she shoots through air and light,
Above all low delay,
Where nothing earthly bounds her flight,
Nor shadow dims her way.

So grant me, God! from every care
And stain of passion free,
Aloft, through virtue's purer air,
To hold my course to Thee!
No sin to cloud,—no lure to stay
My soul, as home she springs;—
Thy sunshine on her joyful way,
Thy freedom in her wings!

Thomas Moore [1779–1852]

"HE LIVETH LONG WHO LIVETH WELL"

He liveth long who liveth well!
All other life is short and vain;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of living most for heavenly gain.

He liveth long who liveth well!
All else is being flung away;
He liveth longest who can tell
Of true things truly done each day.

Waste not thy being; back to Him
Who freely gave it, freely give;
Else is that being but a dream;
'Tis but to *be*, and not to *live*.

Be what thou seemest! live thy creed!
Hold up to earth the torch divine;
Be what thou prayest to be made;
Let the great Master's steps be thine.

Fill up each hour with what will last;
Buy up the moments as they go;
The life above, when this is past,
Is the ripe fruit of life below.

Sow truth, if thou the truth wouldst reap:
Who sows the false shall reap the vain;
Erect and sound thy conscience keep;
From hollow words and deeds refrain.

Sow love, and taste its fruitage pure;
Sow peace, and reap its harvests bright;
Sow sunbeams on the rock and moor,
And find a harvest-home of light.

Horatius Bonar [1808–1889]

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

In the still air the music lies unheard;
In the rough marble beauty hides unseen:
To wake the music and the beauty needs
The master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.

Great Master, touch us with thy skilful hand;
Let not the music that is in us die!
Great Sculptor, hew and polish us; nor let,
Hidden and lost, thy form within us lie!

Spare not the stroke! do with us as thou wilt!
Let there be naught unfinished, broken, marred;
Complete thy purpose, that we may become
Thy perfect image, O our God and Lord!

Horatius Bonar [1808–1889]

HOW WE LEARN

Great truths are dearly bought. The common truth,
Such as men give and take from day to day,
Comes in the common walks of easy life,
Blown by the careless wind across our way.

Bought in the market, at the current price,
Bred of the smile, the jest, perchance the bowl,
It tells no tale of daring or of worth,
Nor pierces even the surface of a soul.

Great truths are greatly won. Not found by chance,
Nor wafted on the breath of summer dream,
But grasped in the great struggle of the soul,
Hard buffeting with adverse wind and stream.

Not in the general mart, 'mid corn and wine,
Not in the merchandise of gold and gems,
Not in the world's gay halls of midnight mirth,
Not 'mid the blaze of regal diadems,

But in the day of conflict, fear, and grief,
When the strong hand of God, put forth in might,
Plows up the subsoil of the stagnant heart,
And brings the imprisoned truth-seed to the light.

Wrung from the troubled spirit in hard hours
Of weakness, solitude, perchance of pain,
Truth springs, like harvest, from the well-plowed field,
And the soul feels it has not wept in vain.

Horatius Bonar [1808–1889]

LOVE

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
If I lack anything.

"A guest," I answered, "worthy to be here:"
Love said, "You shall be he."
"I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on Thee."
Love took my hand and, smiling, did reply,
"Who made the eyes but I?"

"Truth, Lord; but I have marred them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."
"And know you not," says Love, "Who bore the blame?"
"My dear, then I will serve."
"You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat."
So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert [1593–1633]

THE COLLAR

I STRUCK the board, and cried, "No more;
I will abroad.
What, shall I ever sigh and pine?
My lines and life are free; free as the road,
Loose as the wind, as large as store.
Shall I be still in suit?
Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me blood and not restore
What I have lost with cordial fruit?
Sure there was wine,
Before my sighs did dry it; there was corn
Before my tears did drown it;
Is the year only lost to me?
Have I no bays to crown it,
No flowers, no garlands gay? all blasted,
All wasted?
Not so, my heart; but there is fruit,
And thou hast hands.
Recover all thy sigh-blown age
On double pleasures; leave thy cold dispute
Of what is fit and not; forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands
Which petty thoughts have made; and made to thee
Good cable, to enforce and draw,
And be thy law,
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
Away! take heed;
I will abroad.
Call in thy death's-head there, tie up thy fears;
He that forbears
To suit and serve his need
Deserves his load."
But as I raved and grew more fierce and wild
At every word,
Methought I heard one calling, "Child!"
And I replied, "My Lord!"

George Herbert [1593–1633]

VIRTUE

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright!
The bridal of the earth and sky—
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal
Then chiefly lives.

George Herbert [1593–1633]

DISCIPLINE

Throw away Thy rod,
Throw away Thy wrath;
O my God,
Take the gentle path!

For my heart's desire
Unto Thine is bent:
I aspire
To a full consent.

Not a word or look
I affect to own,
But by book,
And Thy Book alone.

Though I fail, I weep;
Though I halt in pace,
Yet I creep
To the throne of grace.

Then let wrath remove;
Love will do the deed;
For with love
Stony hearts will bleed.

Love is swift of foot;
Love's a man of war,
And can shoot,
And can hit from far.

Who can 'scape his bow?
That which wrought on Thee,
Brought Thee low,
Needs must work on me.

Throw away Thy rod;
Though man frailties hath,
Thou art God:
Throw away Thy wrath.

George Herbert [1593–1633]

HOLY BAPTISM

Since, Lord, to Thee
A narrow way and little gate
Is all the passage, on my infancy
Thou didst lay hold, and antedate
My faith in me.

O, let me still
Write Thee "great God," and me "a child";
Let me be soft and supple to Thy will,
Small to myself, to others mild,
Behither ill.

Although by stealth
My flesh get on; yet let her sister,
My soul, bid nothing, but preserve her wealth:
The growth of flesh is but a blister;
Childhood is health.

George Herbert [1593–1633]

UNKINDNESS

Lord, make me coy and tender to offend:
In friendship first, I think, if that agree
Which I intend
Unto my friend's intent and end;
I would not use a friend as I use Thee.

If any touch my friend or his good name,
It is my honor and my love to free
His blasted fame
From the least spot or thought of blame;
I could not use a friend as I use Thee.

My friend may spit upon my curious floor.
Would he have gold? I lend it instantly;
But let the poor,
And Thee within them, starve at door;
I cannot use a friend as I use Thee.

When that my friend pretendeth to a place,
I quit my interest, and leave it free;
But when Thy grace
Sues for my heart, I Thee displace;
Nor would I use a friend as I use Thee.

Yet can a friend what Thou hast done fulfil?
O, write in brass, "My God upon a tree
His blood did spill,
Only to purchase my good-will";
Yet use I not my foes as I use Thee.

George Herbert [1593–1633]

PRAYER

AN ODE WHICH WAS PREFIXED TO A LITTLE PRAYER-BOOK GIVEN TO A YOUNG GENTLEWOMAN

Lo, here a little volume, but great book!
(Fear it not, sweet,
It is no hypocrite),
Much larger in itself than in its look.
A nest of new-born sweets,
Whose native fires, disdaining
To lie thus folded, and complaining
Of these ignoble sheets,
Affect more comely bands,
Fair one, from thy kind hands,
And confidently look
To find the rest
Of a rich binding in your breast!
It is, in one choice handful, heaven; and all
Heaven's royal host, encamped thus small
To prove that true, schools use to tell,
Ten thousand angels in one point can dwell.
It is love's great artillery,
Which here contracts itself, and comes to lie
Close-couched in your white bosom; and from thence,
As from a snowy fortress of defense,
Against the ghostly foe to take your part,
And fortify the hold of your chaste heart.
It is the armory of light;
Let constant use but keep it bright,
You'll find it yields
To holy hands and humble hearts
More swords and shields
Than sin hath snares, or hell hath darts.
Only be sure
The hands be pure
That hold these weapons; and the eyes
Those of turtles, chaste and true,
Wakeful and wise,
Here is a friend shall fight for you;

Hold but this book before your heart,—
Let prayer alone to play his part.
But, O! the heart
That studies this high art
Must be a sure house-keeper,
And yet no sleeper.
Dear soul, be strong;
Mercy will come ere long,
And bring her bosom fraught with blessings,—
Flowers of never-fading graces,
To make immortal dressings
For worthy souls, whose wise embraces
Store up themselves for Him Who is alone
The Spouse of virgins, and the Virgin's Son.
But if the noble Bridegroom, when He come,
Shall find the wandering heart from home,
Leaving her chaste abode
To gad abroad,
Amongst the gay mates of the god of flies
To take her pleasure, and to play
And keep the Devil's holiday;
To dance in the sunshine of some smiling,
But beguiling
Spheres of sweet and sugared lies,
Some slippery pair
Of false, perhaps, as fair,
Flattering, but forswearing, eyes;
Doubtless some other heart
Will get the start
Meanwhile, and, stepping in before,
Will take possession of that sacred store
Of hidden sweets, and holy joys—
Words which are not heard with ears
(These tumultuous shops of noise),
Effectual whispers, whose still voice
The soul itself more feels than hears;
Amorous languishments, luminous trances,
Sights which are not seen with eyes,
Spiritual and soul-piercing glances,
Whose pure and subtle lightning flies

Home to the heart, and sets the house on fire,
And melts it down in sweet desire;
Yet doth not stay
To ask the window's leave to pass that way;
Delicious deaths, soft exhalations
Of soul, dear and divine annihilations;
A thousand unknown rites
Of joys, and rarefied delights;
An hundred thousand loves and graces,
And many a mystic thing,
Which the divine embraces
Of the dear Spouse of spirits, with them will bring,
For which it is no shame
That dull mortality must not know a name.
Of all this store
Of blessings, and ten thousand more,
If, when He come,
He find the heart from home,
Doubtless He will unload
Himself some otherwhere,
And pour abroad
His precious sweets
On the fair soul whom first He meets.
O fair! O fortunate! O rich! O dear!
O happy and thrice-happy she,
Selected dove,
Whoe'er she be,
Whose early love
With wingèd vows
Makes haste to meet her morning Spouse,
And close with His immortal kisses!
Happy, indeed, who never misses
To improve that precious hour,
And every day
Seize her sweet prey,
All fresh and fragrant as He rises,
Dropping, with a balmy shower,
A delicious dew of spices.
O, let the blissful heart hold fast
Her heavenly armful; she shall taste

At once ten thousand paradises!
She shall have power
To rifle and deflower
The rich and roseal spring of those rare sweets
Which, with a swelling bosom, there she meets;
Boundless and infinite, bottomless treasures
Of pure inebriating pleasures;
Happy proof! she shall discover
What joy, what bliss,
How many heavens at once it is
To have her God become her lover.

Richard Crashaw [1613?–1649]

PROVIDENCE

Lo, the lilies of the field,
How their leaves instruction yield!
Hark to Nature's lesson given
By the blessed birds of heaven!
Every bush and tufted tree
Warbles sweet philosophy:
Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow,
God provideth for the morrow.

Say, with richer crimson glows
The kingly mantle than the rose?
Say, have kings more wholesome fare
Than we citizens of air?
Barns nor hoarded grain have we,
Yet we carol merrily.
Mortal, fly from doubt and sorrow,
God provideth for the morrow.

One there lives, whose guardian eye
Guides our humble destiny;
One there lives, who, Lord of all,
Keeps our feathers lest they fall.
Pass we blithely then the time,
Fearless of the snare and lime,
Free from doubt and faithless sorrow:
God provideth for the morrow.

Reginald Heber [1783–1826]

THE BELOVED

Blow gently over my garden,
Wind of the Southern sea,
In the hour that my Love cometh
And calleth me!
My Love shall entreat me sweetly,
With voice like the wood-pigeon;
"I am here at the gate of thy garden,
Here in the dawn."

Then I shall rise up swiftly
All in the rose and gray,
And open the gate to my Lover
At dawning of day.
He hath crowns of pain on His forehead,
And wounds in His hands and feet;
But here mid the dews of my garden
His rest shall be sweet.

Then blow not out of your forests,
Wind of the icy North;
But Wind of the South that is healing,
Rise and come forth!
And shed your musk and your honey,
And spill your odors of spice,
For one who forsook for my garden
His Paradise!

Katherine Tynan Hinkson [1861–

MY LEGACY

They told me I was heir: I turned in haste,
And ran to seek my treasure,
And wondered, as I ran, how it was placed,—
If I should find a measure
Of gold, or if the titles of fair lands
And houses would be laid within my hands.

I journeyed many roads; I knocked at gates;
I spoke to each wayfarer
I met, and said, "A heritage awaits
Me. Art not thou the bearer

Of news? Some message sent to me whereby
I learn which way my new possessions lie?"

Some asked me in; naught lay beyond their door;
Some smiled, and would not tarry,
But said that men were just behind who bore
More gold than I could carry;
And so the morn, the noon, the day, were spent,
While empty-handed up and down I went.

At last one cried, whose face I could not see,
As through the mists he hasted:
"Poor child, what evil ones have hindered thee
Till this whole day is wasted?
Hath no man told thee that thou art joint heir
With one named Christ, who waits the goods to share?"

The one named Christ I sought for many days,
In many places vainly;
I heard men name his name in many ways;
I saw his temples plainly;
But they who named him most gave me no sign
To find him by, or prove the heirship mine.

And when at last I stood before his face,
I knew him by no token
Save subtle air of joy which filled the place;
Our greeting was not spoken;
In solemn silence I received my share,
Kneeling before my brother and "joint heir."

My share! No deed of house or spreading lands,
As I had dreamed; no measure
Heaped up with gold; my elder brother's hands
Had never held such treasure.
Foxes have holes, and birds in nests are fed:
My brother had not where to lay his head.

My share! The right like him to know all pain
Which hearts are made for knowing;
The right to find in loss the surest gain;
To reap my joy from sowing

In bitter tears; the right with him to keep
A watch by day and night with all who weep.

My share! To-day men call it grief and death;
I see the joy and life to-morrow;
I thank my Father with my every breath,
For this sweet legacy of sorrow;
And through my tears I call to each, "Joint heir
With Christ make haste to ask him for thy share."

Helen Hunt Jackson [1831–1885]

THE STARRY HOST

From "God and the Soul"

The countless stars, which to our human eye
Are fixed and steadfast, each in proper place,
Forever bound to changeless points in space,
Rush with our sun and planets through the sky,
And like a flock of birds still onward fly;
Returning never whence began their race,
They speed their ceaseless way with gleaming face
As though God bade them win Infinity.
Ah whither, whither is their forward flight
Through endless time and limitless expanse?
What power with unimaginable might
First hurled them forth to spin in tireless dance?
What beauty lures them on through primal night,
So that for them to be is to advance?

John Lancaster Spalding [1840–

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain,—

Lord, Thy most pointed pleasure take,
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose Thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850–1894]

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

O THOU great Friend to all the sons of men,
Who once appeared in humblest guise below,
Sin to rebuke, to break the captive's chain,
And call thy brethren forth from want and woe,—

We look to thee! thy truth is still the Light
Which guides the nations, groping on their way,
Stumbling and falling in disastrous night,
Yet hoping ever for the perfect day.

Yes; thou art still the Life, thou art the Way
The holiest know; Light, Life, the Way of heaven!
And they who dearest hope and deepest pray,
Toil by the Light, Life, Way, which thou hast given.

Theodore Parker [1810–1860]

THE INNER LIGHT

Lo, if some pen should write upon your rafter
MENE and MENE in the folds of flame,
Think you could any memories thereafter
Wholly retrace the couplet as it came?

Lo, if some strange, intelligible thunder
Sang to the earth the secret of a star,
Scarce could ye catch, for terror and for wonder,
Shreds of the story that was pealed so far.

Scarcely I catch the words of His revealing,
Hardly I hear Him, dimly understand,
Only the Power that is within me pealing
Lives on my lips and beckons to my hand.

Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest
  Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest,
  Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

Rather the earth shall doubt when her retrieving
  Pours in the rain and rushes from the sod,
Rather than he for whom the great conceiving
  Stirs in his soul to quicken into God.

Ay, though thou then shouldst strike from him his glory,
  Blind and tormented, maddened and alone,
Even on the cross would he maintain his story,
  Yes, and in hell would whisper, I have known.

Frederic William Henry Myers [1843–1901]

HEREDITY

Why bowest thou, O soul of mine,
  Crushed by ancestral sin?
Thou hast a noble heritage,
  That bids thee victory win.

The tainted past may bring forth flowers,
  As blossomed Aaron's rod;
No legacy of sin annuls
  Heredity from God.

Lydia Avery Coonley Ward [1845–

BRINGING OUR SHEAVES

The time for toil is past, and night has come,
  The last and saddest of the harvest eves;
Worn out with labor long and wearisome,
Drooping and faint, the reapers hasten home,
  Each laden with his sheaves.

Last of the laborers, Thy feet I gain,
  Lord of the harvest! and my spirit grieves
That I am burdened not so much with grain
As with a heaviness of heart and brain;
  Master, behold my sheaves!

Full well I know I have more tares than wheat,
Brambles and flowers, dry stalks and withered leaves;
Wherefore I blush and weep, as at thy feet
I kneel down reverently and repeat:
"Master, behold my sheaves!"

Few, light and worthless; yet their trifling weight
Through all my frame a weary aching leaves;
For long I struggled with my hapless fate,
And stayed and toiled till it was dark and late,
But these are all my sheaves.

And yet I gather strength and hope anew,
For well I know thy patient love perceives
Not what I did, but what I strove to do;
And though the full, ripe ears be sadly few,
Thou wilt accept my sheaves.

Elizabeth Akers [1832–1911]

TAKE HEART

All day the stormy wind has blown
From off the dark and rainy sea;
No bird has past the window flown,
The only song has been the moan
The wind made in the willow-tree.

This is the summer's burial-time:
She died when dropped the earliest leaves;
And, cold upon her rosy prime,
Fell direful autumn's frosty rime;
Yet I am not as one that grieves,—

For well I know o'er sunny seas
The bluebird waits for April skies;
And at the roots of forest trees
The May-flowers sleep in fragrant ease,
And violets hide their azure eyes.

O thou, by winds of grief o'erblown
Beside some golden summer's bier,—

Take heart! Thy birds are only flown,
Thy blossoms sleeping, tearful sown,
To greet thee in the immortal year!

Edna Dean Proctor [1838–

FORWARD

Dreamer, waiting for darkness with sorrowful, drooping eyes,
Linger not in the valley, bemoaning the day that is done!
Climb the hills of morning and welcome the rosy skies—
Never yet was the setting so fair as the rising sun!

Dear is the past; its treasures we hold in our hearts for aye;
Woe to the hand that would scatter one wreath of its garnered flowers;
But larger blessing and honor will come with the waking day—
Hail, then, To-morrow, nor tarry with Yesterday's ghostly hours!

Mark how the summers hasten through blossoming fields of June
To the purple lanes of the vintage and levels of golden corn;
"Splendors of life I lavish," runs nature's exultant rune,
"For myriads press to follow, and the rarest are yet unborn."

Think how eager the earth is, and every star that shines,
To circle the grander spaces about God's throne that be;
Never the least moon loiters nor the largest sun declines—
Forward they roll forever those glorious depths to see.

Dreamer, waiting for darkness with sorrowful, drooping eyes,
Summers and suns go gladly, and wherefore dost thou repine?

Climb the hills of morning and welcome the rosy skies—
The joy of the boundless future—nay, God himself is thine!

Edna Dean Proctor [1838–

"THE HARVEST WAITS"

God hath been patient long. In eons past
He plowed the waste of Chaos. He hath sown
The furrows with His worlds, and from His throne
Showered, like grain, planets upon the Vast.
What meed of glory hath He from the past?
Shall He not reap, who hears but prayer and groan?
The harvest waits. . . . He cometh to His own,—
He who shall scythe the starry host at last.
When the accumulated swarms of Death
Glut the rank worlds as rills are choked by leaves,
Then shall God flail the million orbs, as sheaves
Unfruitful gleaned; and, in His age sublime,
Winnow the gathered stars, and with a breath
Whirl the spurned chaff adown the void of Time!

Lloyd Mifflin [1846–

ONE GIFT I ASK

Through weary days and sleepless nights
I fast and pray;
And of my listening Lord I ask
The same alway—
That He will to His child impart
Pureness of heart.

The pure in heart God's face shall see.
And does not this
Include the whole ecstatic scale
Of promised bliss?
Can souls which His dear presence gain
More joy attain?

I need not plead with Him to give
Me every grace
That makes the spirit beautiful;
For, if God's face
I am to see, He will bestow
All else, I know.

And so, through days of prayer and fast,
I only try
To win that purity of heart
Which, by and by,
The wondrous boon will gain for me,
God's face to see.

Virginia Bioren Harrison [18 –

MAGDALEN

Magdalen at Michael's gate
Tirlèd at the pin;
On Joseph's thorn sang the blackbird,
"Let her in! Let her in!"

"Hast thou seen the wounds?" said Michael,
"Know'st thou thy sin?"
"It is evening, evening," sang the blackbird,
"Let her in! Let her in!"

"Yes, I have seen the wounds,
And I know my sin."
"She knows it well, well, well," sang the blackbird,
"Let her in! Let her in!"

"Thou bringest no offerings," said Michael,
"Naught save sin."
And the blackbird sang, "She is sorry, sorry, sorry,
Let her in! Let her in!"

When he had sung himself to sleep,
And night did begin,
One came and opened Michael's gate,
And Magdalen went in.

Henry Kingsley [1830–1876]

GOD'S WILL

God meant me to be hungry,
So I should seek to find
Wisdom, and truth, and beauty,
To satisfy my mind.

God meant me to be lonely,
Lest I should wish to stay
In some green earthly Eden
Too long from heaven away.

God meant me to be weary,
That I should yearn to rest
This feeble, aching body
Deep in the earth's dark breast.

Mildred Howells [18

AFTER THE MARTYRDOM

They threw a stone, you threw a stone,
I threw a stone that day.
Although their sharpness bruised his flesh
He had no word to say.

But for the moan he did not make
To-day I make my moan;
And for the stone I threw at him
My heart must bear a stone.

Scharmel Iris [18

THE BURIAL OF MOSES

"And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day."—Deut. xxxiv, 6.

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave;
But no man built that sepulcher,
And no man saw it e'er;
For the angels of God upturned the sod
And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
That ever passed on earth;
Yet no man heard the trampling,
Or saw the train go forth:
Noiselessly as the daylight
Comes when the night is done,
And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek
Grows into the great sun;

Noiselessly as the spring-time
Her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills
Unfold their thousand leaves:
So without sound of music
Or voice of them that wept,
Silently down from the mountain's crown
The great procession swept.

Perchance the bald old eagle
On gray Beth-peor's height
Out of his rocky eyrie
Looked on the wondrous sight;
Perchance the lion stalking
Still shuns that hallowed spot;
For beast and bird have seen and heard
That which man knoweth not.

But, when the warrior dieth,
His comrades of the war,
With arms reversed and muffled drums,
Follow the funeral car:
They show the banners taken;
They tell his battles won;
And after him lead his masterless steed,
While peals the minute-gun.

Amid the noblest of the land
Men lay the sage to rest,
And give the bard an honored place
With costly marble dressed,

In the great minster transept
Where lights like glories fall,
And the sweet choir sings, and the organ rings
Along the emblazoned wall.

This was the bravest warrior
That ever buckled sword;
This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word;
And never earth's philosopher
Traced with his golden pen
On the deathless page truths half so sage
As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor?—
The hillside for a pall!
To lie in state, while angels wait,
With stars for tapers tall!
And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave,
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave!—

In that strange grave without a name,
Whence his uncoffined clay
Shall break again—O wondrous thought!—
Before the judgment-day,
And stand, with glory wrapped around,
On the hills he never trod
And speak of the strife that won our life
With the incarnate Son of God.

O lonely tomb in Moab's land!
O dark Beth-peor's hill!
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still:
God hath His mysteries of grace,
Ways that we cannot tell;
He hides them deep, like the secret sleep
Of him He loved so well.

Cecil Frances Alexander [1818–1895]

THE CROOKED FOOTPATH

From "The Professor at the Breakfast Table"

Ah, here it is! the sliding rail
That marks the old remembered spot,—
The gap that struck our schoolboy trail,—
The crooked path across the lot.

It left the road by school and church,
A penciled shadow, nothing more,
That parted from the silver birch
And ended at the farm-house door.

No line or compass traced its plan;
With frequent bends to left or right,
In aimless, wayward curves it ran
But always kept the door in sight.

The gabled porch, with woodbine green,—
The broken millstone at the sill,—
Though many a rood might stretch between
The truant child could see them still.

No rocks across the pathway lie,—
No fallen trunk is o'er it thrown,—
And yet it winds, we know not why,
And turns as if for tree or stone.

Perhaps some lover trod the way
With shaking knees and leaping heart,—
And so it often runs astray
With sinuous sweep or sudden start.

Or one, perchance, with clouded brain
From some unholy banquet reeled,—
And since, our devious steps maintain
His track across the trodden field.

Nay, deem not thus,—no earthborn will
Could ever trace a faultless line;
Our truest steps are human still,—
To walk unswerving were divine!

Truants from love, we dream of wrath;—
Oh, rather, let us trust the more!
Through all the wanderings of the path,
We still can see our Father's door!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809–1894]

ALLAH'S TENT

With fore-cloth smoothed by careful hands
The night's serene pavilion stands,
And many cressets hang on high
Against its arching canopy.

Peace to His children God hath sent,
We are at peace within His tent.
Who knows without these guarded doors
What wind across the desert roars?

Arthur Colton [1868–

ST. JOHN BAPTIST

I think he had not heard of the far towns;
Nor of the deeds of men, nor of kings' crowns;
Before the thought of God took hold of him,
As he was sitting dreaming in the calm
Of one first noon, upon the desert's rim,
Beneath the tall fair shadows of the palm,
All overcome with some strange inward balm.

He numbered not the changes of the year,
The days, the nights, and he forgot all fear
Of death: each day he thought there should have been
A shining ladder set for him to climb
Athwart some opening in the heavens, e'en
To God's eternity, and see, sublime—
His face whose shadow passing fills all time.

But he walked through the ancient wilderness.
O, there the prints of feet were numberless
And holy all about him! And quite plain
He saw each spot an angel silvershod
Had lit upon; where Jacob too had lain
The place seemed fresh,—and, bright and lately trod,
A long track showed where Enoch walked with God.

And often, while the sacred darkness trailed
Along the mountains smitten and unveiled
By rending lightnings,—over all the noise
Of thunders and the earth that quaked and bowed
From its foundations—he could hear the voice
Of great Elias prophesying loud
To Him whose face was covered by a cloud.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844–1881]

FOR THE BAPTIST

The last and greatest Herald of Heaven's King,
Girt with rough skins, hies to the deserts wild,
Among that savage brood the woods forth bring,
Which he than man more harmless found and mild.
His food was locusts, and what there doth spring,
With honey that from virgin hives distilled;
Parched body, hollow eyes, some uncouth thing
Made him appear, long since from earth exiled.
There burst he forth: "All ye whose hopes rely
On God, with me amidst these deserts mourn,
Repent, repent, and from old errors turn!"
—Who listened to his voice, obeyed his cry?
Only the echoes, which he made relent,
Rung from their flinty caves, "Repent! Repent!"

William Drummond [1585–1649]

"THE SPRING IS LATE"

She stood alone amidst the April fields,—
Brown, sodden fields, all desolate and bare,—
"The spring is late," she said,—"the faithless spring,
That should have come to make the meadows fair.

"Their sweet South left too soon, among the trees
The birds, bewildered, flutter to and fro;
For them no green boughs wait,—their memories
Of last year's April had deceived them so.

"From 'neath a sheltering pine some tender buds
Looked out, and saw the hollows filled with snow;
On such a frozen world they closed their eyes;
When spring is cold, how can the blossoms blow?"

She watched the homeless birds, the slow, sad spring,
The barren fields, and shivering, naked trees:
"Thus God has dealt with me, his child," she said,—
"I wait my spring-time, and am cold like these.

"To them will come the fulness of their time;
Their spring, though late, will make the meadows fair;
Shall I, who wait like them, like them be blest?
I am His own,—doth not my Father care?"

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835–1908]

THE QUESTION

I saw the Son of God go by
Crowned with the crown of Thorn.
"Was It not finished, Lord?" I said,
"And all the anguish borne?"

He turned on me His awful eyes:
"Hast thou not understood?
Lo! Every soul is Calvary,
And every sin a Rood."

Rachel Annand Taylor [18

A DIVINE RAPTURE

E'en like two little bank-dividing brooks,
That wash the pebbles with their wanton streams,
And having ranged and searched a thousand nooks,
Meet both at length in silver-breasted Thames,
Where in a greater current they conjoin:
So I my Best-belovèd's am; so He is mine.

E'en so we met; and after long pursuit,
  E'en so we joined; we both became entire;
No need for either to renew a suit,
  For I was flax, and He was flames of fire:
    Our firm-united souls did more than twine;
So I my Best-belovèd's am; so He is mine.

If all those glittering Monarchs, that command
  The servile quarters of this earthly ball,
Should tender in exchange their shares of land,
  I would not change my fortunes for them all:
    Their wealth is but a counter to my coin:
The world's but theirs; but my Belovèd's mine.

Francis Quarles [1592–1644]

"IF I COULD SHUT THE GATE AGAINST MY THOUGHTS"

If I could shut the gate against my thoughts,
  And keep out sorrow from this room within,
Or memory could cancel all the notes
  Of my misdeeds, and I unthink my sin:
How free, how clear, how clean my soul should lie,
Discharged of such a loathsome company.

Or were there other rooms within my heart
  That did not to my conscience join so near,
Where I might lodge the thoughts of sin apart,
  That I might not their clamorous crying hear;
What peace, what joy, what ease should I possess,
Freed from their horrors that my soul oppress.

But, O my Saviour, who my refuge art,
  Let Thy dear mercies stand 'twixt them and me,
And be the wall to separate my heart
  So that I may at length repose me free;
That peace, and joy, and rest may be within,
And I remain divided from my sin.

John Daniel [fl. 1625]

HIS LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When I lie within my bed,
Sick at heart and sick in head,
And with doubts discomforted,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drowned in sleep,
Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the artless doctor sees
No one hope, but of his fees,
And his skill runs on the lees,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When his potion and his pill,
His, or none, or little skill,
Meet for nothing, but to kill,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the passing-bell doth toll,
And the furies in a shoal
Come to fright a parting soul,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few,
And that number more than true,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the priest his last hath prayed,
And I nod to what is said
'Cause my speech is now decayed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When, God knows, I'm tossed about
Either with despair or doubt,
Yet, before the glass be out,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the tempter me pursu'th
With the sins of all my youth,
And half damns me with untruth,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the flames and hellish cries
Fright mine ears and fright mine eyes,
And all terrors me surprise,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the Judgment is revealed,
And that opened which was sealed,
When to Thee I have appealed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

TO KEEP A TRUE LENT

Is this a fast, to keep
The larder lean,
And clean
From fat of veals and sheep?

Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish?

Is it to fast an hour,
Or ragged to go,
Or show
A downcast look, and sour?

No; 'tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat
And meat
Unto the hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife,
From old debate
And hate;
To circumcise thy life.

To show a heart grief-rent;
To starve thy sin,
Not bin;
And that's to keep thy Lent.

Robert Herrick [1591–1674]

THE FALLEN STAR

A STAR is gone! a star is gone!
There is a blank in Heaven;
One of the cherub choir has done
His airy course this even.

He sat upon the orb of fire
That hung for ages there,
And lent his music to the choir
That haunts the nightly air.

But when his thousand years are passed,
With a cherubic sigh
He vanished with his car at last,
For even cherubs die!

Hear how his angel-brothers mourn—
The minstrels of the spheres—
Each chiming sadly in his turn
And dropping splendid tears.

The planetary Sisters all
Join in the fatal song.
And weep this hapless brother's fall,
Who sang with them so long.

But deepest of the choral band
The Lunar Spirit sings,
And with a bass-according hand
Sweeps all her sullen strings.

From the deep chambers of the dome
Where sleepless Uriel lies,
His rude harmonic thunders come
Mingled with mighty sighs.

The thousand car-borne cherubim,
The wandering Eleven,
All join to chant the dirge of him
Who fell just now from Heaven.

George Darley [1795–1846]

"WE NEED NOT BID, FOR CLOISTERED CELL"

We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
Our neighbor and our work farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky:

The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To bring us, daily, nearer God.

Seek we no more; content with these
Let present Rapture, Comfort, Ease,
As Heaven shall bid them, come and go:—
The secret this of Rest below

John Keble [1792–1866]

"A CHILD MY CHOICE"

Let folly praise that fancy loves, I praise and love that Child
Whose heart no thought, whose tongue no word, whose hand no deed defiled.
I praise Him most, I love Him best, all praise and love is His,
While Him I love, in Him I live, and cannot live amiss.

Love's sweetest mark, laud's highest theme, man's most desired light,
To love Him life, to leave Him death, to live in Him delight.
He mine by gift, I His by debt, thus each to other due,
First friend He was, best friend He is, all times will try Him true.
Though young, yet wise, though small, yet strong; though man, yet God He is;
As wise He knows, as strong He can, as God He loves to bliss.
His knowledge rules, His strength defends, His love doth cherish all;
His birth our joy, His life our light, His death our end of thrall.
Alas! He weeps, He sighs, He pants, yet do His angels sing;
Out of His tears, His sighs and throbs, doth bud a joyful spring.
Almighty Babe, whose tender arms can force all foes to fly,
Correct my faults, protect my life, direct me when I die!

Robert Southwell [1561?–1595]

AN UPPER CHAMBER

I CAME into the City and none knew me;
None came forth, none shouted "He is here!"
Not a hand with laurel would bestrew me,
All the way by which I drew anear—
Night my banner, and my herald Fear.

But I knew where one so long had waited
In the low room at the stairway's height,
Trembling lest my foot should be belated,
Singing, sighing for the long hours' flight
Towards the moment of our dear delight.

I came into the City when you hailed me
Saviour, and again your chosen Lord:—
Not one guessing what it was that failed me,
While along the way as they adored
Thousands, thousands, shouted in accord.

But through all the joy I knew—I only—
How the hostel of my heart lay bare and cold,
Silent of its music, and how lonely!
Never, though you crown me with your gold,
Shall I find that little chamber as of old!

Frances Bannerman [18 –

THE SECOND CRUCIFIXION

Loud mockers in the roaring street
Say Christ is crucified again:
Twice pierced His gospel-bearing feet,
Twice broken His great heart in vain.

I hear, and to myself I smile,
For Christ talks with me all the while.

No angel now to roll the stone
From off His unawaking sleep,
In vain shall Mary watch alone,
In vain the soldiers vigil keep.

Yet while they deem my Lord is dead
My eyes are on His shining head.

Ah! never more shall Mary hear
That voice exceeding sweet and low
Within the garden calling clear:
Her Lord is gone, and she must go.

Yet all the while my Lord I meet
In every London lane and street.

Poor Lazarus shall wait in vain,
And Bartimæus still go blind;
The healing hem shall ne'er again
Be touched by suffering humankind.

Yet all the while I see them rest,
The poor and outcast, on His breast.

No more unto the stubborn heart
With gentle knocking shall He plead,
No more the mystic pity start,
For Christ twice dead is dead indeed.

So in the street I hear men say,
Yet Christ is with me all the day.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866–

THE VOICE OF CHRISTMAS

I CANNOT put the Presence by, of Him, the Crucified,
Who moves men's spirits with His Love as doth the moon the tide;
Again I see the Life He lived, the godlike Death He died.

Again I see upon the cross that great Soul-battle fought,
Into the texture of the world the tale of which is wrought
Until it hath become the woof of human deed and thought,—

And, joining with the cadenced bells that all the morning fill,
His cry of agony doth yet my inmost being thrill,
Like some fresh grief from yesterday that tears the heart-strings still.

I cannot put His Presence by, I meet Him everywhere;
I meet Him in the country town, the busy market-square;
The Mansion and the Tenement attest His Presence there.

Upon the funneled ships at sea He sets His shining feet;
The Distant Ends of Empire not in vain His Name repeat,—
And, like the presence of a rose, He makes the whole world sweet.

He comes to break the barriers down raised up by barren creeds;
About the globe from zone to zone like sunlight He proceeds;
He comes to give the World's starved heart the perfect love it needs,

The Christ Whose friends have played Him false, Whom
Dogmas have belied,
Still speaking to the hearts of men—though shamed and
crucified,
The Master of the Centuries Who will not be denied!

Harry Kemp [1883–

TE MARTYRUM CANDIDATUS

Ah, see the fair chivalry come, the companions of Christ!
White Horsemen, who ride on white horses, the Knights of
God!
They, for their Lord and their Lover who sacrificed
All, save the sweetness of treading where He first trod!

These through the darkness of death, the dominion of night,
Swept, and they woke in white places at morning tide:
They saw with their eyes, and sang for joy of the sight,
They saw with their eyes the Eyes of the Crucified.

Now, whithersoever He goeth, with Him they go:
White Horsemen, who ride on white horses, oh fair to see!
They ride, where the Rivers of Paradise flash and flow,
White Horsemen, with Christ their Captain: for ever He!

Lionel Johnson [1867–1902]

ON A SCULPTURED HEAD OF THE CHRIST

I saw it once where myriad works adorn
Encloistered walls as with a Cloth of Gold;
Then did I see, still fair in every fold,
Still jewel-strewn, the robe a king had worn.
I glimpsed a god, of antique glory born;
A boasted picture, and a carven gem,—
Soul-sick, the while, to view, unvexed of them,
That simple Christus with its crown of thorn!
The World is old; she hath seen many wars;
And states and kingdoms crowd her courts like grass;
Princes in pride she watches where they pass
Unnumbered and innumerable as the stars;

Then turns, a child with tired feet homeward set,
Back to the Cross, and lo! her lids are wet.

Mahlon Leonard Fisher [1874-

GOOD KING WENCESLAS

Good King Wenceslas looked out,
On the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about,
Deep, and crisp, and even:
Brightly shone the moon that night,
Though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight,
Gathering winter fuel.

"Hither, page, and stand by me,
If thou know'st it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"
"Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Underneath the mountain;
Right against the forest fence,
By Saint Agnes' fountain."

"Bring me flesh, and bring me wine,
Bring me pine logs hither;
Thou and I will see him dine,
When we bear them thither."
Page and monarch forth they went,
Forth they went together;
Through the rude wind's wild lament,
And the bitter weather.

"Sire, the night is darker now,
And the wind blows stronger;
Fails my heart, I know not how,
I can go no longer."
"Mark my footsteps, good my page!
Tread thou in them boldly;
Thou shalt find the winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly."

In his master's steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor,
Shall yourselves find blessing.

John Neal [1793–1876]

SIMON THE CYRENEAN

"And as they came out they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; him they compelled to bear his cross."

This is the tale from first to last;—
Outside Jerusalem
I saw them lead a prisoner past
With thorns for diadem.
Broken and weak and driven fast
He fell at my garment's hem.

There stood no other stranger by
On me they laid his load.
The Cross whereon he was to die
I bore along the road,
I saw him nailed, I heard him cry
Forsaken of his God.

Now I am dead as well as he,
And, marvel strange to tell,
But him they nailed upon the tree
Is Lord of Heaven and Hell,
And judgeth who doth wickedly,
Rewardeth who doth well.

He has given to me the beacons four,
A Cross in the southern sky,

In token that his Cross I bore
In his extremity;
For one I never knew before
The day he came to die.

Lucy Lyttleton [1884–

THE WINGED WORSHIPPERS

Gay, guiltless pair,
What seek ye from the fields of Heaven?
Ye have no need of prayer,
Ye have no sins to be forgiven.

Why perch ye here,
Where mortals to their Maker bend?
Can your pure spirits fear
The God ye never could offend?

Ye never knew
The crimes for which we come to weep.
Penance is not for you,
Blessed wanderers of the upper deep.

To you 'tis given
To wake sweet Nature's untaught lays,
Beneath the arch of Heaven
To chirp away a life of praise.

Then spread each wing,
Far, far above, o'er lakes and lands,
And join the choirs that sing
In yon blue dome not reared with hands.

Or, if ye stay
To note the consecrated hour,
Teach me the airy way,
And let me try your envied power.

Above the crowd,
On upward wings could I but fly,
I'd bathe in yon bright cloud,
And seek the stars that gem the sky.

'Twere Heaven indeed
Through fields of trackless light to soar,
On nature's charms to feed,
And Nature's own great God adore.

Charles Sprague [1791–1875]

DE SHEEPFOL'

De massa ob de sheepfol',
Dat guards de sheepfol' bin,
Look out in de gloomerin' meadows,
Wha'r de long night rain begin—
So he call to de hirelin' shepa'd,
"Is my sheep, is dey all come in?—
My sheep, is dey all come in?"

Oh den, says de hirelin' shepa'd:
"Dey's some, dey's black and thin,
And some, dey's po' ol' wedda's,
Dat can't come home agin.
Dey's some black sheep an' ol' wedda's,
But de res', dey's all brung in.—
De res', dey's all brung in."

Den de massa ob de sheepfol',
Dat guards de sheepfol' bin,
Goes down in de gloomerin' meadows,
Wha'r de long night rain begin—
So he le' down de ba's ob de sheepfol',
Callin' sof', "Come in. Come in."
Callin' sof', "Come in. Come in."

Den up t'ro' de gloomerin' meadows,
T'ro' de col' night rain and win',
And up t'ro' de gloomerin' rain-paf',
Wha'r de sleet fa' pie'cin' thin,

De po' los' sheep ob de sheepfol',
Dey all comes gadderin' in.
De po' los' sheep ob de sheepfol',
Dey all comes gadderin' in.

Sarah Pratt McLean Greene [1856–

THE LOST SHEEP

("THE NINETY AND NINE")

THERE were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold;
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold,—
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

"Lord, thou hast here thy ninety and nine:
Are they not enough for thee?"
But the Shepherd made answer: "'Tis of mine
Has wandered away from me;
And although the road be rough and steep
I go to the desert to find my sheep."

But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed,
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through
Ere he found his sheep that was lost.
Out in the desert he heard its cry—
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

"Lord, whence are those blood-drops all the way,
That mark out the mountain-track?"
"They were shed for one who had gone astray
Ere the Shepherd could bring him back."
"Lord, whence are thy hands so rent and torn?"
"They are pierced to-night by many a thorn."

But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There rose a cry to the gate of heaven,
"Rejoice! I have found my sheep!"

And the angels echoed around the throne,
"Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own!"

Elizabeth Cecilia Clephane [1830–1869]

LOST BUT FOUND

I WAS a wandering sheep,
I did not love the fold;
I did not love my Shepherd's voice,
I would not be controlled.
I was a wayward child,
I did not love my home,
I did not love my Father's voice,
I loved afar to roam.

The Shepherd sought his sheep;
The Father sought his child;
They followed me o'er vale and hill,
O'er deserts waste and wild.
They found me nigh to death,
Famished, and faint, and lone;
They bound me with the bands of love;
They saved the wandering one.

They spoke in tender love,
They raised my drooping head;
They gently closed my bleeding wounds,
My fainting soul they fed.
They washed my filth away,
They made me clean and fair;
They brought me to my home in peace,
The long-sought wanderer.

Jesus my Shepherd is,
'Twas he that loved my soul;
'Twas he that washed me in his blood,
'Twas he that made me whole;
'Twas he that sought the lost,
That found the wandering sheep;
'Twas he that brought me to the fold,
'Tis he that still doth keep.

I was a wandering sheep,
I would not be controlled;
But now I love my Shepherd's voice,
I love, I love the fold.
I was a wayward child,
I once preferred to roam;
But now I love my Father's voice,
I love, I love his home.

Horatius Bonar [1808–1889]

STAINS

The three ghosts on the lonesome road
Spake each to one another,
"Whence came that stain about your mouth
No lifted hand may cover?"
"From eating of forbidden fruit,
Brother, my brother."

The three ghosts on the sunless road
Spake each to one another,
"Whence came that red burn on your foot
No dust nor ash may cover?"
"I stamped a neighbor's hearth-flame out,
Brother, my brother."

The three ghosts on the windless road
Spake each to one another,
"Whence came that blood upon your hand
No other hand may cover?"
"From breaking of a woman's heart,
Brother, my brother."

"Yet on the earth clean men we walked,
Glutton and Thief and Lover;
White flesh and fair it hid our stains
That no man might discover."
"Naked the soul goes up to God,
Brother, my brother."

Theodosia Garrison [1874–

A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER

WILT Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;
For I have more.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done;
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine as He shines now and heretofore:
And having done that, Thou hast done;
I fear no more.

John Donne [1573–1631]

SHEEP AND LAMBS

ALL in the April evening,
April airs were abroad;
The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road.

The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road;
All in the April evening
I thought on the Lamb of God.

The lambs were weary, and crying
With a weak human cry,
I thought on the Lamb of God
Going meekly to die.

Up in the blue, blue mountains
  Dewy pastures are sweet:
Rest for the little bodies,
  Rest for the little feet.

But for the Lamb of God
  Up on the hill-top green,
Only a Cross of shame
  Two stark crosses between.

All in the April evening,
  April airs were abroad;
I saw the sheep with their lambs,
  And thought on the Lamb of God.

Katharine Tynan [1861–

"ALL'S WELL!"

Eight bells! Eight bells! their clear tone tells
  The midnight hour is here,
And as they cease, these words of peace
  Fall gently on my ear:
    "All's well! All's well!"

Fond thoughts fly far, where loved ones are,
  Though distant, ever near,
From those dear homes the echo comes,
  Our longing hearts to cheer:
    "All's well! All's well!"

Swift through the deep our course we keep,
  To shores unseen we steer,
No thought of ill our souls shall chill,
  Nor wind nor wave we fear:
    "All's well! All's well!"

Thus o'er life's sea our voyage may be
  A pathway lone and drear,
Through tempest loud and sorrow's cloud,
  Faith still shall whisper near:
    "All's well! All's well!"

And when for me, earth, sky, and sea
  Shall fade and disappear,

May this sweet note still downward float,
From some undying sphere:
"All's well! All's well!"

William Allen Butler [1825–1902]

LIVING WATERS

THERE are some hearts like wells, green-mossed and deep
As ever Summer saw;
And cool their water is,—yea, cool and sweet;—
But you must come to draw.
They hoard not, yet they rest in calm content,
And not unsought will give;
They can be quiet with their wealth unspent,
So self-contained they live.

And there are some like springs, that bubbling burst
To follow dusty ways,
And run with offered cup to quench his thirst
Where the tired traveller strays;
That never ask the meadows if they want
What is their joy to give;—
Unasked, their lives to other life they grant,
So self-bestowed they live!

And One is like the ocean, deep and wide,
Wherein all waters fall;
That girdles the broad earth, and draws the tide,
Feeding and bearing all;
That broods the mists, that sends the clouds abroad,
That takes, again to give;—
Even the great and loving heart of God,
Whereby all love doth live.

Caroline Spencer [18

ONE BY ONE

ONE by one the sands are flowing,
One by one the moments fall;
Some are coming, some are going;
Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee—
Let thy whole strength go to each,
Let no future dreams elate thee,
Learn thou first what these can teach.

One by one (bright gifts from heaven)
Joys are sent thee here below;
Take them readily when given—
Ready, too, to let them go.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee;
Do not fear an armèd band;
One will fade as others greet thee—
Shadows passing through the land.

Do not look at life's long sorrow;
See how small each moment's pain;
God will help thee for to-morrow,
So each day begin again.

Every hour that fleets so slowly
Has its task to do or bear;
Luminous the crown, and holy,
When each gem is set with care.

Do not linger with regretting,
Or for passing hours despond;
Nor, thy daily toil forgetting,
Look too eagerly beyond.

Hours are golden links, God's token,
Reaching heaven; but, one by one,
Take them, lest the chain be broken
Ere the pilgrimage be done.

Adelaide Anne Procter [1825–1864]

UNBELIEF

THERE is no unbelief;
Whoever plants a seed beneath the sod
And waits to see it push away the clod,
He trusts in God.

Whoever says when clouds are in the sky,
"Be patient, heart; light breaketh by and by,"
Trusts the Most High.

Whoever sees 'neath Winter's field of snow
The silent harvest of the future grow,
God's power must know.

Whoever lies down on his couch to sleep,
Content to lock each sense in slumber deep,
Knows God will keep.

Whoever says, "To-morrow," "The unknown,"
"The future," trusts the Power alone
He dares disown.

The heart that looks on when eyelids close,
And dares to live when life has woes,
God's comfort knows.

There is no unbelief;
And day by day, unconsciously,
The heart lives by that faith the lips deny,
God knoweth why!

Elizabeth York Case [18 –]

"THERE IS NO DEATH"

There is no death! The stars go down
To rise upon some other shore,
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
They shine for evermore.

There is no death! The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

The granite rocks disorganize
To feed the hungry moss they bear;
The forest leaves drink daily life
From out the viewless air.

There is no death! The leaves may fall,
The flowers may fade and pass away—
They only wait, through wintry hours,
The coming of the May.

There is no death! An angel form
Walks o'er the earth with silent tread;
He bears our best loved things away,
And then we call them "dead."

He leaves our hearts all desolate—
He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers;
Transplanted into bliss, they now
Adorn immortal bowers.

The bird-like voice, whose joyous tones
Made glad this scene of sin and strife,
Sings now an everlasting song,
Amid the tree of life.

Where'er He sees a smile too bright,
Or soul too pure for taint of vice,
He bears it to that world of light,
To dwell in Paradise.

Born into that undying life,
They leave us but to come again;
With joy we welcome them—the same
Except in sin and pain.

And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless universe
Is life—there are no dead!

John Luckey McCreery [1835–1906]

THE FOOL'S PRAYER

The royal feast was done; the King
Sought some new sport to banish care,
And to his jester cried: "Sir Fool,
Kneel now, and make for us a prayer!"

The jester doffed his cap and bells,
And stood the mocking court before;
They could not see the bitter smile
Behind the painted grin he wore.

He bowed his head, and bent his knee
Upon the monarch's silken stool;
His pleading voice arose: "O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!

"No pity, Lord, could change the heart
From red with wrong to white as wool;
The rod must heal the sin: but Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!

"'Tis not by guilt the onward sweep
Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
'Tis by our follies that so long
We hold the earth from heaven away.

"These clumsy feet, still in the mire,
Go crushing blossoms without end;
These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
Among the heart-strings of a friend.

"The ill-timed truth we might have kept—
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?
The word we had not sense to say—
Who knows how grandly it had rung!

"Our faults no tenderness should ask,
The chastening stripes must cleanse them all;
But for our blunders—oh, in shame
Before the eyes of heaven we fall.

"Earth bears no balsam for mistakes;
Men crown the knave, and scourge the tool
That did his will; but Thou, O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!"

The room was hushed; in silence rose
The King, and sought his gardens cool,
And walked apart, and murmured low,
"Be merciful to me, a fool!"

Edward Rowland Sill [1841–1887]

THE ECLIPSE

Whither, O whither didst Thou fly?
When did I grieve Thine holy eye?
When Thou didst mourn to see me lost,
And all Thy care and counsels crossed.
O do not grieve, where'er Thou art!
Thy grief is an undoing smart,
Which doth not only pain, but break
My heart, and makes me blush to speak.
Thy anger I could kiss, and will;
But O Thy grief, Thy grief, doth kill!

Henry Vaughan [1622–1695]

COMFORT

Speak low to me, my Saviour, low and sweet
From out the hallelujahs, sweet and low,
Lest I should fear and fall, and miss Thee so,
Who art not missed by any that entreat.
Speak to me as to Mary at Thy feet!
And if no precious gums my hands bestow,
Let my tears drop like amber, while I go
In reach of Thy divinest voice complete
In humanest affection—thus, in sooth,
To lose the sense of losing. As a child,
Whose song-bird seeks the wood for evermore,
Is sung to in its stead by mother's mouth,
Till, sinking on her breast, love-reconciled,
He sleeps the faster that he wept before.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806–1861]

ST. AGNES' EVE

Deep on the convent-roof the snows
  Are sparkling to the moon:
My breath to heaven like vapor goes:
  May my soul follow soon!
The shadows of the convent-towers
  Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
  That lead me to my Lord:
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
  As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
  That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soiled and dark,
  To yonder shining ground;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
  To yonder argent round;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
  My spirit before Thee;
So in mine earthly house I am,
  To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,
  Through all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
  In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;
  The flashes come and go;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
  And strows her lights below,
And deepens on and up! the gates
  Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
  To make me pure of sin.
The Sabbaths of Eternity,
  One Sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
  The Bridegroom with his bride!

Alfred Tennyson [1809–1892]

HIS BANNER OVER ME

Surrounded by unnumbered foes,
Against my soul the battle goes!
Yet though I weary, sore distressed,
I know that I shall reach my rest:
I lift my tearful eyes above,—
His banner over me is love.

Its sword my spirit will not yield,
Though flesh may faint upon the field;
He waves before my fading sight
The branch of palm,—the crown of light;
I lift my brightening eyes above,—
His banner over me is love.

My cloud of battle-dust may dim,
His veil of splendor curtain him!
And in the midnight of my fear
I may not feel him standing near;
But, as I lift mine eyes above,
His banner over me is love.

Gerald Massey [1828–1907]

JESUS THE CARPENTER

"Isn't this Joseph's son?"—ay, it is He;
Joseph the carpenter—same trade as me—
I thought as I'd find it—I knew it was here—
But my sight's getting queer.

I don't know right where as His shed must ha' stood—
But often, as I've been a-planing my wood,
I've took off my hat, just with thinking of He
At the same work as me,

He warn't that set up that He couldn't stoop down
And work in the country for folks in the town;
And I'll warrant He felt a bit pride, like I've done,
At a good job begun.

The parson he knows that I'll not make too free,
But on Sunday I feels as pleased as can be,
When I wears my clean smock, and sits in a pew,
And has thoughts a few.

I think of as how not the parson hissen,
As is teacher and father and shepherd o' men,
Not he knows as much of the Lord in that shed,
Where He earned His own bread.

And when I goes home to my missus, says she,
"Are ye wanting your key?"
For she knows my queer ways, and my love for the shed,
(We've been forty years wed.)

So I comes right away by mysen, with the Book,
And I turns the old pages and has a good look
For the text as I've found, as tells me as He
Were the same trade as me.

Why don't I mark it? Ah, many says so,
But I think I'd as lief, with your leaves, let it go:
It do seem that nice when I fall on it sudden—
Unexpected, you know!

Catharine C. Liddell [1848-

"I SAW THEE"

"When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee"

I saw thee when, as twilight fell,
And evening lit her fairest star,
Thy footsteps sought yon quiet dell,
The world's confusion left afar.

I saw thee when thou stood'st alone,
Where drooping branches thick o'erhung,
Thy still retreat to all unknown,
Hid in deep shadows darkly flung.

I saw thee when, as died each sound
Of bleating flock or woodland bird,
Kneeling, as if on holy ground,
Thy voice the listening silence heard.

I saw thy calm, uplifted eyes,
And marked the heaving of thy breast,
When rose to heaven thy heartfelt sighs
For purer life, for perfect rest.

I saw the light that o'er thy face
Stole with a soft, suffusing glow,
As if, within, celestial grace
Breathed the same bliss that angels know.

I saw—what thou didst not—above
Thy lowly head an open heaven;
And tokens of thy Father's love
With smiles to thy rapt spirit given.

I saw thee from that sacred spot
With firm and peaceful soul depart,
I, Jesus, saw thee,—doubt it not,—
And read the secrets of thy heart!

Ray Palmer [1808–1887]

THE VETERAN OF HEAVEN

O CAPTAIN of the wars, whence won Ye so great scars?
In what fight did Ye smite, and what manner was the foe?
Was it on a day of rout they compassed Thee about,
Or gat Ye these adornings when Ye wrought their overthrow?

"'Twas on a day of rout they girded Me about,
They wounded all My brow, and they smote Me through the side:
My hand held no sword when I met their armèd horde,
And the conqueror fell down, and the conquered bruised his pride."

What is this, unheard before, that the unarmed make war,
And the slain hath the gain, and the victor hath the rout?
What wars, then, are these, and what the enemies,
Strange Chief, with the scars of Thy conquest trenched about?

"The Prince I drave forth held the Mount of the North,
Girt with the guards of flame that roll around the pole.
I drave him with My wars from all his fortress-stars,
And the sea of death divided that My march might strike its goal.

"In the keep of Northern Guard, many a great demonian sword
Burns as it turns round the Mount occult, apart:
There is given power and place still for some certain days,
And his Name would turn the Sun's blood back upon its heart."

What is *Thy* Name? O show!—"My Name ye may not know;
'Tis a going forth with banners, and a baring of much swords:
But my titles that are high, are they not upon my thigh?
'King of Kings!' are the words, 'Lord of Lords';
It is written 'King of Kings, Lord of Lords.'"

Francis Thompson [1859?–1907]

LUCIFER IN STARLIGHT

On a starred night Prince Lucifer uprose.
Tired of his dark dominion swung the fiend
Above the rolling ball in cloud part screened,
Where sinners hugged their specter of repose.
Poor prey to his hot fit of pride were those.
And now upon his western wing he leaned,
Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands careened,
Now the black planet shadowed Arctic snows.
Soaring through wider zones that pricked his scars

With memory of the old revolt from Awe,
He reached a middle height, and at the stars,
Which are the brain of Heaven, he looked, and sank.
Around the ancient track marched, rank on rank,
The army of unalterable law.

George Meredith [1828–1909]

HORA CHRISTI

SWEET is the time for joyous folk
Of gifts and minstrelsy;
Yet I, O lowly-hearted One,
Crave but Thy company.
On lonesome road, beset with dread,
My questing lies afar.
I have no light, save in the east
The gleaming of Thy star.

In cloistered aisles they keep to-day
Thy feast, O living Lord!
With pomp of banner, pride of song,
And stately-sounding word.
Mute stand the kings of power and place,
While priests of holy mind
Dispense Thy blessed heritage
Of peace to all mankind.

I know a spot where budless twigs
Are bare above the snow,
And where sweet winter-loving birds
Flit softly to and fro;
There with the sun for altar-fire,
The earth for kneeling-place,
The gentle air for Chorister,
Will I adore Thy face.

Loud, underneath the great blue sky,
My heart shall pæan sing,
The gold and myrrh of meekest love
Mine only offering.

Bliss of Thy birth shall quicken me,
And for Thy pain and dole
Tears are but vain, so I will keep
The silence of the soul.

Alice Brown [1857–

CHRISTUS CONSOLATOR

Beside the dead I knelt for prayer,
And felt a presence as I prayed.
Lo! it was Jesus standing there.
He smiled: "Be not afraid!"

"Lord, thou hast conquered death we know;
Restore again to life," I said,
"This one who died an hour ago."
He smiled: "She is not dead!"

"Asleep then, as thyself did say;
Yet thou canst lift the lids that keep
Her prisoned eyes from ours away!"
He smiled: "She doth not sleep!"

"Nay then, though haply she do wake,
And look upon some fairer dawn,
Restore her to our hearts that ache!"
He smiled: "She is not gone!"

"Alas! too well we know our loss,
Nor hope again our joy to touch,
Until the stream of death we cross."
He smiled: "There is no such!"

"Yet our belovèd seem so far,
The while we yearn to feel them near,
Albeit with Thee we trust they are."
He smiled: "And I am here!"

"Dear Lord, how shall we know that they
Still walk unseen with us and Thee,
Nor sleep, nor wander far away?"
He smiled: "Abide with me."

Rossiter Worthington Raymond [1846–

THAT HOLY THING

From "Paul Faber"

THEY all were looking for a king
To slay their foes and lift them high:
Thou cam'st, a little baby thing
That made a woman cry.

O Son of Man, to right my lot
Naught but Thy presence can avail;
Yet on the road Thy wheels are not,
Nor on the sea Thy sail!

My how or when Thou wilt not heed,
But come down Thine own secret stair,
That Thou mayst answer all my need—
Yea, every bygone prayer.

George Macdonald [1824–1905]

WHAT CHRIST SAID

I SAID, "Let me walk in the fields;"
He said, "Nay, walk in the town;"
I said, "There are no flowers there;"
He said, "No flowers, but a crown."

I said, "But the sky is black,
There is nothing but noise and din;"
But He wept as He sent me back—
"There is more," He said, "there is sin."

I said, "But the air is thick,
And fogs are veiling the sun;"
He answered, "Yet hearts are sick,
And souls in the dark undone."

I said, "I shall miss the light,
And friends will miss me, they say;"
He answered me, "Choose to-night
If I am to miss you or they."

I pleaded for time to be given;
He said, "Is it hard to decide?
It will not seem hard in heaven
To have followed the steps of your Guide."

I cast one look at the field,
Then set my face to the town;
He said, "My child, do you yield?
Will you leave the flowers for the crown?"

Then into His hand went mine.
And into my heart came He.
And I walk in a light divine
The path I had feared to see.

George Macdonald [1824–1905]

SAN LORENZO GIUSTINIANI'S MOTHER

"And we the shadows of the dream"—SHELLEY

I HAD not seen my son's dear face
(He chose the cloister by God's grace)
Since it had come to full flower-time.
I hardly guessed at its perfect prime,
That folded flower of his dear face.

Mine eyes were veiled by mists of tears
When on a day in many years
One of his Order came. I thrilled,
Facing, I thought, that face fulfilled.
I doubted, for my mists of tears.

His blessing be with me forever!
My hope and doubt were hard to sever.
—That altered face, those holy weeds.
I filled his wallet and kissed his beads,
And lost his echoing feet for ever.

If to my son my alms were given
I know not, and I wait for Heaven.
He did not plead for child of mine,
But for another Child divine,
And unto Him it was surely given.

There is One alone who cannot change;
Dreams are we, shadows, visions strange;
And all I give is given to One.
I might mistake my dearest son,
But never the Son who cannot change.

Alice Meynell [1853–

A BALLAD OF TREES AND THE MASTER

Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to Him;
The little gray leaves were kind to Him;
The thorn-tree had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When Death and Shame would woo Him last,
From under the trees they drew Him last:
'Twas on a tree they slew Him—last
When out of the woods He came.

Sidney Lanier [1842–1881]

THE MYSTERY

He came and took me by the hand
Up to a red rose tree,
He kept His meaning to Himself
But gave a rose to me.

I did not pray Him to lay bare
The mystery to me;
Enough the rose was Heaven to smell,
And His own face to see.

Ralph Hodgson [18

SONGS OF PRAISE

DIES IRÆ *

Day of wrath, that day of burning,
Seer and Sibyl speak concerning,
All the world to ashes turning.

Oh, what fear shall it engender,
When the Judge shall come in splendor,
Strict to mark and just to render!

Trumpet, scattering sounds of wonder,
Rending sepulchers asunder,
Shall resistless summons thunder.

All aghast then Death shall shiver,
And great Nature's frame shall quiver,
When the graves their dead deliver.

Volume, from which nothing's blotted,
Evil done nor evil plotted,
Shall be brought and dooms allotted.

When shall sit the Judge unerring,
He'll unfold all here occurring,
Vengeance then no more deferring.

What shall *I* say, that time pending?
Ask what advocate's befriending,
When the just man needs defending?

Dreadful King, all power possessing,
Saving freely those confessing,
Save thou me, O Fount of Blessing!

* For the original of this poem see page 3819.

Think, O Jesus, for what reason,
Thou didst bear earth's spite and treason,
Nor me lose in that dread season!

Seeking me Thy worn feet hasted,
On the cross Thy soul death tasted:
Let such travail not be wasted!

Righteous Judge of retribution!
Make me gift of absolution
Ere that day of execution!

Culprit-like, I plead, heart-broken,
On my cheek shame's crimson token:
Let the pardoning word be spoken!

Thou, who Mary gav'st remission,
Heard'st the dying Thief's petition,
Cheer'st with hope my lost condition.

Though my prayers be void of merit,
What is needful, Thou confer it,
Lest I endless fire inherit.

Be there, Lord, my place decided
With Thy sheep, from goats divided,
Kindly to Thy right hand guided!

When the accursed away are driven,
To eternal burnings given,
Call me with the blessed to heaven!

I beseech Thee, prostrate lying,
Heart as ashes, contrite, sighing,
Care for me when I am dying!

Day of tears and late repentance,
Man shall rise to hear his sentence:
Him, the child of guilt and error,
Spare, Lord, in that hour of terror!

Translated from the Latin of Tommáso di Celano by Abraham Coles [1813–1891]

STABAT MATER DOLOROSA*

Stood the afflicted mother weeping,
Near the cross her station keeping
Whereon hung her Son and Lord;
Through whose spirit sympathizing,
Sorrowing and agonizing,
Also passed the cruel sword.

Oh! how mournful and distressèd
Was that favored and most blessèd
Mother of the only Son,
Trembling, grieving, bosom heaving,
While perceiving, scarce believing,
Pains of that Illustrious One!

Who the man, who, called a brother,
Would not weep, saw he Christ's mother
In such deep distress and wild?
Who could not sad tribute render
Witnessing that mother tender
Agonizing with her child?

For His people's sins atoning,
Him she saw in torments groaning,
Given to the scourger's rod;
Saw her darling offspring dying,
Desolate, forsaken, crying,
Yield His spirit up to God.

Make me feel thy sorrow's power,
That with thee I tears may shower,
Tender mother, fount of love!
Make my heart with love unceasing
Burn toward Christ the Lord, that pleasing
I may be to Him above.

Holy mother, this be granted,
That the slain one's wounds be planted
Firmly in my heart to bide.

* For the original of this poem see page 3821.

Of Him wounded, all astounded—
Depths unbounded for me sounded—
All the pangs with me divide.

Make me weep with thee in union;
With the Crucified, communion
In His grief and suffering give;
Near the cross, with tears unfailing,
I would join thee in thy wailing
Here as long as I shall live.

Maid of maidens, all excelling!
Be not bitter, me repelling;
Make thou me a mourner too;
Make me bear about Christ's dying,
Share His passion, shame defying;
All His wounds in me renew.

Wound for wound be there created;
With the cross intoxicated
For thy Son's dear sake, I pray—
May I, fired with pure affection,
Virgin, have through thee protection
In the solemn Judgment Day.

Let me by the cross be warded,
By the death of Christ be guarded,
Nourished by divine supplies.
When the body death hath riven,
Grant that to the soul be given
Glories bright of Paradise.

Translated from the Latin of Jacopone da Todi by Abraham Coles [1813–1891]

VENI, SANCTE SPIRITUS*

Come, Holy Ghost! thou fire divine!
From highest heaven on us shine!
Comforter, be Thy comfort mine!

* For the original of this poem see page 3822.

Come, Father of the poor, to earth;
Come, with Thy gifts of precious worth;
Come, Light of all of mortal birth!

Thou rich in comfort! Ever blest
The heart where Thou art constant guest,
Who giv'st the heavy-laden rest.

Come, Thou in whom our toil is sweet,
Our shadow in the noonday heat,
Before whom mourning flieth fleet.

Bright Sun of Grace! Thy sunshine dart
On all who cry to Thee apart,
And fill with gladness every heart.

Whate'er without Thy aid is wrought,
Or skilful deed, or wisest thought,
God counts it vain and merely naught.

O cleanse us that we sin no more,
O'er parchèd souls Thy waters pour;
Heal the sad heart that acheth sore.

Thy will be ours in all our ways;
O melt the frozen with Thy rays;
Call home the lost in error's maze.

And grant us, Lord, who cry to Thee,
And hold the Faith in unity,
Thy precious gifts of charity;

That we may live in holiness,
And find in death our happiness,
And dwell with Thee in lasting bliss!

Translated from the Latin of Robert II. of France by Catharine Winkworth [1827–1878]

VENI, CREATOR SPIRITUS *

CREATOR Spirit, by whose aid
The world's foundations first were laid,
Come visit every pious mind,
Come pour thy joys on human-kind;
From sin and sorrow set us free,
And make thy temples worthy thee.

O source of uncreated light,
The Father's promised Paraclete!
Thrice holy fount, thrice holy fire,
Our hearts with heavenly love inspire;
Come, and thy sacred unction bring,
To sanctify us while we sing.

Plenteous of grace, descend from high,
Rich in thy seven-fold energy!
Thou strength of His Almighty hand,
Whose power does heaven and earth command!
Proceeding Spirit, our defense,
Who dost the gifts of tongues dispense,
And crown'st thy gift with eloquence!

Refine and purge our earthly parts;
But, O, inflame and fire our hearts!
Our frailties help, our vice control,
Submit the senses to the soul;
And when rebellious they are grown,
Then lay thy hand and hold them down.

Chase from our minds the infernal foe,
And peace, the fruit of love, bestow;
And, lest our feet should step astray,
Protect and guide us in the way.

Make us eternal truths receive,
And practise all that we believe;
Give us thyself, that we may see
The Father, and the Son, by thee.

* For the original of this poem see page 3823.

Immortal honor, endless fame,
Attend the Almighty Father's name;
The Saviour Son be glorified,
Who for lost man's redemption died;
And equal adoration be,
Eternal Paraclete, to thee.

Translated from the Latin of St. Gregory the Great(?) by John Dryden [1631–1700]

STANZAS FROM "SONG TO DAVID"

Sublime—invention ever young,
Of vast conception, towering tongue
To God the eternal theme;
Notes from yon exaltations caught,
Unrivaled royalty of thought
O'er meaner strains supreme.

His muse, bright angel of his verse,
Gives balm for all the thorns that pierce,
For all the pangs that rage;
Blest light still gaining on the gloom,
The more than Michal of his bloom,
The Abishag of his age.

He sang of God—the mighty source
Of all things—the stupendous force
On which all strength depends;
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes,
All period, power, and enterprise
Commences, reigns, and ends.

Tell them, I am, Jehovah said
To Moses; while earth heard in dread,
And, smitten to the heart,
At once above, beneath, around,
All Nature, without voice or sound,
Replied, O Lord, Thou art.

The world, the clustering spheres, He made;
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
  Dale, champaign, grove, and hill;
The multitudinous abyss,
Where Secrecy remains in bliss,
  And Wisdom hides her skill.

The pillars of the Lord are seven,
Which stand from earth to topmost heaven;
  His Wisdom drew the plan;
His Word accomplished the design,
From brightest gem to deepest mine;
  From Christ enthroned, to Man.

For Adoration all the ranks
Of Angels yield eternal thanks,
  And David in the midst;
With God's good poor, which, last and least
In man's esteem, Thou to Thy feast,
  O blessèd Bridegroom, bidd'st!

For Adoration, David's Psalms
Lift up the heart to deeds of alms;
  And he, who kneels and chants,
Prevails his passions to control,
Finds meat and medicine to the soul,
  Which for translation pants.

For Adoration, in the dome
Of Christ, the sparrows find a home,
  And on His olives perch:
The swallow also dwells with thee,
O man of God's humility,
  Within his Saviour's church.

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes;
  Sweet, Hermon's fragrant air:
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers' smell
  That watch for early prayer.

Sweet the young nurse, with love intense,
Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence;
  Sweet, when the lost arrive:
Sweet the musician's ardor beats,
While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
  The choicest flowers to hive.

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
  Which makes at once his game:
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong through the turbulent profound
  Shoots Xiphias to his aim.

Strong is the lion—like a coal
His eyeball,—like a bastion's mole
  His chest against the foes:
Strong the gier-eagle on his sail;
Strong against tide the enormous whale
  Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still, in earth and air,
And in the sea, the man of prayer,
  And far beneath the tide:
And in the seat to fate assigned,
Where ask is have, where seek is find,
  Where knock is open wide.

Precious the penitential tear;
And precious is the sigh sincere,
  Acceptable to God:
And precious are the winning flowers
In gladsome Israel's feast of bowers
  Bound on the hallowed sod.

Glorious the sun in mid career;
Glorious the assembled fires appear;
  Glorious the comet's train:
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious the Almighty's stretched-out arm;
  Glorious the enraptured main;

Glorious the northern lights astream;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
  Glorious the thunder's roar:
Glorious Hosanna from the den;
Glorious the catholic Amen;
  Glorious the martyr's gore:

Glorious—more glorious—is the crown
Of Him that brought salvation down,
  By meekness called thy Son:
Thou that stupendous truth believed;—
And now the matchless deed's achieved,
  Determined, dared, and done!

Christopher Smart [1722–1771]

NOX NOCTI INDICAT SCIENTIAM

When I survey the bright
    Celestial sphere;
So rich with jewels hung, that night
  Doth like an Ethiop bride appear:

My soul her wings doth spread
    And heavenward flies,
The Almighty's mysteries to read
  In the large volumes of the skies.

For the bright firmament
    Shoots forth no flame
So silent, but is eloquent
  In speaking the Creator's name.

No unregarded star
    Contracts its light
Into so small a character,
  Removed far from our human sight,

But if we steadfast look
    We shall discern
In it, as in some holy book,
  How man may heavenly knowledge learn.

It tells the conqueror
That far-stretched power,
Which his proud dangers traffic for,
Is but the triumph of an hour;

That from the farthest North,
Some nation may,
Yet undiscovered, issue forth,
And o'er his new-got conquest sway:

Some nation yet shut in
With hills of ice
May be let out to scourge his sin,
Till they shall equal him in vice.

And then they likewise shall
Their ruin have;
For as yourselves your empires fall,
And every kingdom hath a grave.

Thus those celestial fires,
Though seeming mute,
The fallacy of our desires
And all the pride of life confute:—

For they have watched since first
The world had birth;
And found sin in itself accurst,
And nothing permanent on earth.

William Habington [1605–1654]

"THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT ON HIGH"

From "The Spectator," No. 465

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
The unwearied Sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display;

And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly to the listening Earth
Repeats the story of her birth:
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found?
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever singing as they shine,
"The Hand that made us is divine."

Joseph Addison [1672–1719]

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

DEO. OPT. MAX.

FATHER of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou Great First Cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And, binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heaven pursue.

What blessings Thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives,
To enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round:

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge Thy foe.

If I am right, Thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, O, teach my heart
To find that better way!

Save me alike from foolish pride
And impious discontent
At aught Thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught Thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by Thy breath;
O, lead me, whereso'er I go,
Through this day's life or death!

This day be bread and peace my lot;
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let Thy will be done.

To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar earth, sea, skies,
One chorus let all Being raise,
All Nature's incense rise!

Alexander Pope [1688–1744]

"O GOD! OUR HELP IN AGES PAST"

O God! our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home!

Under the shadow of Thy Throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her fame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

O God! our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guide when troubles last,
And our eternal home!

Isaac Watts [1674–1748]

"JESUS, LOVER OF MY SOUL"

JESUS lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high!
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
Oh receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me!
All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

Wilt Thou not regard my call?
Wilt Thou not accept my prayer??
Lo! I sink, I faint, I fall,—
Lo! on Thee I cast my care;
Reach me out Thy gracious hand,
While I of Thy strength receive!
Hoping against hope I stand,—
Dying, and behold I live!

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find:
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind!
Just and holy is Thy Name;
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,—
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within:—

Thou of life the Fountain art,
Freely me let take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity!

Charles Wesley [1707–1788]

"A CHARGE TO KEEP I HAVE"

A CHARGE to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

From youth to hoary age,
My calling to fulfil,
Oh, may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's will!

Arm me with jealous care
As in Thy sight to live;
And oh, Thy servant, Lord, prepare
A strict account to give!

Help me to watch and pray,
And on Thyself rely,
Assured, if I my trust betray,
I shall forever die.

Charles Wesley [1707–1788]

CORONATION

ALL hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
To crown Him Lord of all!

Let high-born seraphs tune the lyre,
And, as they tune it, fall
Before His face who tunes their choir,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Crown Him, ye morning stars of light,
Who fixed this floating ball;
Now hail the Strength of Israel's might,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Crown Him, ye martyrs of your God,
Who from His altar call;
Extol the stem of Jesse's rod,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,
Ye ransomed of the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Hail Him, ye heirs of David's line,
Whom David Lord did call,
The God incarnate, Man divine,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall,
Go spread your trophies at His feet,
And crown Him Lord of all!

Let every tribe and every tongue
That bound creation's call,
Now shout, in universal song,
The Crownèd Lord of all!

Edward Perronet [1721–1792]

"HOLY, HOLY, HOLY"

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our songs shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea,
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be!

Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,
Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love, and purity!

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity!

Reginald Heber [1783–1826]

"THE SON OF GOD GOES FORTH TO WAR"

The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar!
Who follows in His train?
Who best can drink his cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below,
He follows in His train!

Thy martyr first, whose eagle eye
Could pierce beyond the grave;
Who saw his Master in the sky,
And called on Him to save:
Like Him, with pardon on his tongue,
In midst of mortal pain,
He prayed for them that did the wrong!
Who follows in His train?

A glorious band, the chosen few,
On whom the Spirit came;
Twelve valiant saints, their hope they knew,
And mocked the cross and flame!
They met the tyrant's brandished steel,
The lion's gory mane:
They bowed their necks, the death to feel!
Who follows in their train?

A noble army—men and boys,
The matron and the maid,—
Around the Saviour's throne rejoice
In robes of light arrayed.
They climbed the steep ascent of Heaven,
Through peril, toil, and pain!
O God! to us may grace be given
To follow in their train!

Reginald Heber [1783–1826]

"FROM GREENLAND'S ICY MOUNTAINS"

From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand;
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand:
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain.

What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle;
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile:
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strown;
The heathen, in his blindness,
Bows down to wood and stone.

Can we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high—
Can we, to men benighted,
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation! oh, salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim;
Till each remotest nation
Has learnt Messiah's Name.

Waft, waft, ye winds, His story,
And you, ye waters, roll,
Till, like a sea of glory,
It spreads from pole to pole;
Till o'er our ransomed nature,
The Lamb for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign.

Reginald Heber [1783–1826]

LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS

God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

William Cowper [1731–1800]

ROCK OF AGES

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure—
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone—
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring—
Simply to Thy Cross I cling;
Naked come to Thee for dress—
Helpless look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly—
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eye-strings break in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment-throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!

Augustus Montague Toplady [1740–1778]

LOVE TO THE CHURCH

I love Thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of Thine abode,
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood.

I love Thy church, O God!
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on Thy hand.

If e'er to bless Thy sons
My voice or hands deny,
These hands let useful skill forsake,
This voice in silence die.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given
Till toils and cares shall end.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, Thou Friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand from every snare and foe
Shall great deliverance bring.

Sure as thy Truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

From the Latin of St. Ambrose by Timothy Dwight [1752–1817]

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY TO ALL PEOPLE

Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story
Now proclaim Messiah's birth;
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant-light;
Come and worship;
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of Nations;
Ye have seen His natal-star;
Come and worship;
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Saints, before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear
Suddenly, the Lord descending,
In His temple shall appear;
Come and worship;
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Sinners, wrung with true repentance,
Doomed, for guilt, to endless pains,
Justice now revokes the sentence,
Mercy calls you—break your chains;
Come and worship;
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

James Montgomery [1771–1854]

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE IN SUFFERING

Go to dark Gethsemane,
Ye that feel the tempter's power;
Your Redeemer's conflict see,
Watch with Him one bitter hour;
Turn not from His griefs away,
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray!

Follow to the judgment hall,
View the Lord of Life arraigned;
O the wormwood and the gall!
O the pangs His soul sustained!

Shun not suffering, shame, or loss,—
Learn of Him to bear the cross!

Calvary's mournful mountain climb;
There, adoring at His feet,
Mark that miracle of time,
God's own sacrifice complete!
"It is finished!" hear the cry;
Learn of Jesus Christ to die!

Early hasten to the tomb
Where they laid His breathless clay;
All is solitude and gloom;
Who hath taken Him away?
Christ is risen! He meets our eyes!
Saviour, teach us so to rise!

James Montgomery [1771–1854]

"JUST AS I AM"

Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about,
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, of that free love,
The breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,
Here for a season, then above,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Charlotte Elliott [1789–1871]

"BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS"

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Jesus' love;
The fellowship of Christian minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour united prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims, are one,
Our comforts, and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we at death must part,
Not like the world's our pain;
But one in Christ, and one in heart,
We part to meet again.

From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin, we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Throughout eternity.

John Fawcett [1740–1817]

"IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST I GLORY"

In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
Never shall the Cross forsake me—
Lo! it grows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon my way,
From the Cross the radiance streaming
Adds more luster to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the Cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys, that through all time abide.

In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

John Bowring [1792–1872]

"ABIDE WITH ME"

Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens: Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away:
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me!

Not a brief glance, I beg, a passing word,
But, as Thou dwell'st with Thy disciples, Lord,
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,—
Come, not to sojourn, but abide, with me!

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings;
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings:
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea;
Come, Friend of sinners, and abide with me!

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile,
And, though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left Thee:
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me!

I need Thy presence every passing hour.
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me!

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless:
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting, where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Hold then Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee:
In life and death, O Lord, abide with me!

Henry Francis Lyte [1793–1847]

THE HOUR OF PEACEFUL REST

There is an hour of peaceful rest
To mourning wanderers given;
There is a joy for souls distressed,
A balm for every wounded breast,
'Tis found alone in heaven.

There is a soft, a downy bed,
Far from these shades of even—
A couch for weary mortals spread,
Where they may rest the aching head,
And find repose, in heaven.

There is a home for weary souls
By sin and sorrow driven;
When tossed on life's tempestuous shoals,
Where storms arise, and ocean rolls,
And all is drear but heaven.

There faith lifts up her cheerful eye,
To brighter prospects given;
And views the tempest passing by,
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene in heaven.

There fragrant flowers immortal bloom,
And joys supreme are given;
There rays divine disperse the gloom:
Beyond the confines of the tomb
Appears the dawn of heaven.

William Bingham Tappan [1794–1849]

THE PILLAR OF THE CLOUD

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home—
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene,—one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on.
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

John Henry Newman [1801–1890]

"NEARER TO THEE"

NEARER, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Though like the wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that Thou send'st to me
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Then, with my waking thoughts
Bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Or if on joyful wing
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upward I fly,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!

Sarah Flower Adams [1805–1848]

"A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD"*

A MIGHTY fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,—
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He,
Lord Sabaoth His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim,—
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure:
One little word shall fell him.

* For the original of this poem, see page 3831.

That word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them, abideth;
The spirit and the gifts are ours
Through Him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill,
God's truth abideth still,
His Kingdom is forever.

From the German of Martin Luther, by Frederick Henry Hedge [1805–1890]

PRAYER TO THE TRINITY

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but Thee;
Yet possessing
Every blessing,
If our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us;
All our weakness Thou dost know;
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
Thou didst feel its keenest woe;
Lone and dreary,
Faint and weary,
Through the desert Thou didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
Love with every passion blending,
Pleasure that can never cloy:
Thus provided,
Pardoned, guided,
Nothing can our peace destroy.

James Edmeston [1791–1867]

IN SORROW

GENTLY, Lord, oh, gently lead us,
Pilgrims in this vale of tears,
Through the trials yet decreed us,
Till our last great change appears.
When temptation's darts assail us,
When in devious paths we stray,
Let Thy goodness never fail us,
Lead us in Thy perfect way.

In the hour of pain and anguish,
In the hour when death draws near,
Suffer not our hearts to languish,
Suffer not our souls to fear;
And, when mortal life is ended,
Bid us in Thine arms to rest,
Till, by angel bands attended,
We awake among the blest.

Thomas Hastings [1784–1872]

"JUST FOR TO-DAY"

LORD, for to-morrow and its needs,
I do not pray:
Keep me, my God, from stain of sin,
Just for to-day;
Let me no wrong or idle word
Unthinking say:
Set Thou a seal upon my lips,
Just for to-day.

Let me both diligently work,
And duly pray;
Let me be kind in word and deed,
Just for to-day;
Let me in season, Lord, be grave,
In season, gay;
Let me be faithful to Thy grace,
Just for to-day.

In pain and sorrow's cleansing fires,
Brief be my stay;
Oh, bid me if to-day I die,
Come home to-day;
So, for to-morrow and its needs,
I do not pray;
But keep me, guide me, love me, Lord,
Just for to-day.

Sybil F. Partridge [18 -]

LOVEST THOU ME?

HARK, my soul! it is the Lord;
'Tis thy Saviour, hear his word;
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee;
"Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou me?

"I delivered thee when bound,
And, when wounded, healed thy wound;
Sought thee wandering, set thee right,
Turned thy darkness into light.

"Can a woman's tender care
Cease, towards the child she bare?
Yes, she may forgetful be,
Yet will I remember thee.

"Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above;
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

"Thou shalt see my glory soon,
When the work of grace is done;
Partner of my throne shalt be;
Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou me?"

Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee and adore,
Oh for grace to love thee more!

William Cowper [1731–1800]

THE VOICE FROM GALILEE

I HEARD the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto Me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad,
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
The living water,—thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live."
I came to Jesus and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's Light;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him, my Star, my Sun;
And in that Light of life I'll walk
Till traveling days be done.

Horatius Bonar [1808–1889]

FAITH

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my guilt away,
O let me from this day
Be wholly Thine!

May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As Thou hast died for me,
O may my love for Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be.—
A living fire!

While life's dark maze I tread,
And griefs around me spread,
Be Thou my guide;
Bid darkness turn to day,
Wipe sorrow's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray
From Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream
Shall o'er me roll;
Blest Saviour, then, in love,
Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above,
A ransomed soul!

Ray Palmer [1808–1887]

HE STANDETH AT THE DOOR

In the silent midnight watches,
List—thy bosom door!
How it knocketh—knocketh—knocketh
Knocketh evermore!
Say not 'tis thy pulse's beating:
'Tis thy heart of sin;
'Tis thy Saviour knocks, and crieth,
"Rise, and let Me in!"

Death comes on with reckless footsteps,
To the hall and hut:
Think you Death will tarry, knocking,
Where the door is shut?

Jesus waiteth—waiteth—waiteth,
But the door is fast;
Grieved, away my Saviour goeth;
Death breaks in at last.

Then 'tis time to stand entreating
Christ to let thee in:
At the gate of Heaven beating,
Wailing for thy sin.
Nay!—alas, thou guilty creature!
Hast thou, then, forgot?
Jesus waited long to know thee;
Now He knows thee not.

Arthur Cleveland Coxe [1818–1896]

"THERE IS A GREEN HILL"

There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell
What pains He had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.

He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by His precious blood.

There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock the gate
Of heaven, and let us in.

O dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do.

Cecil Frances Alexander [1818–1895]

NEARER HOME

One sweetly solemn thought
  Comes to me o'er and o'er;
I am nearer home to-day
  Than I ever have been before;

Nearer my Father's house,
  Where the many mansions be;
Nearer the great white throne,
  Nearer the crystal sea;

Nearer the bound of life,
  Where we lay our burdens down;
Nearer leaving the cross!
  Nearer gaining the crown!

But lying darkly between,
  Winding down through the night,
Is the silent, unknown stream,
  That leads at last to the light.

Closer and closer my steps
  Come to the dread abysm:
Closer Death to my lips
  Presses the awful chrism.

Oh, if my mortal feet
  Have almost gained the brink;
If it be I am nearer home
  Even to-day than I think;

Father, perfect my trust;
  Let my spirit feel in death,
That her feet are firmly set
  On the rock of a living faith!

Phoebe Cary [1824–1871]

"ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS!"

ONWARD, Christian soldiers!
Marching as to war,
With the Cross of Jesus
Going on before.
Christ the Royal Master
Leads against the foe;
Forward into battle,
See, His banners go!
Onward, Christian soldiers!
Marching as to war,
With the Cross of Jesus
Going on before.

At the sign of triumph
Satan's host doth flee;
On, then, Christian soldiers,
On to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver
At the shout of praise;
Brothers, lift your voices,
Loud your anthems raise!

Like a mighty army
Moves the Church of God;
Brothers, we are treading
Where the Saints have trod;
We are not divided
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity.

Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the Church of Jesus
Constant will remain;
Gates of hell can never
'Gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail.

Onward, then, ye people!
Join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices
In the triumph song;
Glory, laud, and honor
Unto Christ the King,
This through countless ages
Men and angels sing.
Onward, Christian soldiers!
Marching as to war,
With the Cross of Jesus
Going on before.

Sabine Baring-Gould [1834–

EVENING

Softly now the light of day
Fades upon my sight away;
Free from care, from labor free,
Lord, I would commune with Thee:

Thou, whose all-pervading eye
Naught escapes, without, within,
Pardon each infirmity,
Open fault, and secret sin.

Soon, for me, the light of day
Shall for ever pass away;
Then, from sin and sorrow free,
Take me, Lord, to dwell with Thee:

Thou, who, sinless, yet hast known
All of man's infirmity;
Then, from Thine eternal throne,
Jesus, look with pitying eye.

George Washington Doane [1799–1859]

A DEDICATION

My new-cut ashlar takes the light
  Where crimson-blank the windows flare;
By my own work, before the night,
  Great Overseer, I make my prayer.

If there be good in that I wrought,
  Thy hand compelled it, Master, Thine;
Where I have failed to meet Thy thought
  I know, through Thee, the blame is mine.

One instant's toil to Thee denied
  Stands all Eternity's offence;
Of that I did with Thee to guide
  To Thee, through Thee, be excellence.

Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,
  Bringest Eden to the craftman's brain,
Godlike to muse o'er his own trade
  And manlike stand with God again.

The depth and dream of my desire,
  The bitter paths wherein I stray,
Thou knowest Who hast made the Fire,
  Thou knowest Who hast made the Clay.

One stone the more swings to her place
  In that dread Temple of Thy worth—
It is enough that through Thy grace
  I saw naught common on Thy earth.

Take not that vision from my ken;
  O, whatso'er may spoil or speed,
Help me to need no aid from men,
  That I may help such men as need!

Rudyard Kipling [1865–

APPENDIX

CONTAINING A FEW OF THE MORE FAMOUS POEMS IN OTHER LANGUAGES, OF WHICH TRANSLATIONS OR PARAPHRASES OCCUR IN THE FOREGOING PAGES

APPENDIX

DIES IRÆ *

DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA, *dies tribulationis et angustiæ, dies calamitatis et miseriæ, dies tenebrarum et caliginis, dies nebulæ et turbinis, dies tubæ et clangoris super civitates munitas et super angulos excelsos!*—Sophonias i. 15, 16.

DIES iræ, dies illa!
Solvet sæclum in favillâ,
Teste David cum Sybillâ.

Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando Judex est venturus,
Cuncta stricte discussurus!

Tuba mirum spargens sonum
Per sepulcra regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum.

Mors stupebit, et natura,
Quum resurget creatura,
Judicanti responsura.

Liber scriptus proferetur,
In quo totum continetur,
Unde mundus judicetur.

Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet, apparebit:
Nil inultum remanebit.

Quid sum, miser! tunc dicturus,
Quem patronum rogaturus,
Quum vix justus sit securus?

Rex tremendæ majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva me, fons pietatis!

* For a translation of this poem see page 3777.

Recordare, Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa tuæ viæ;
Ne me perdas illâ die!

Quærens me, sedisti lassus,
Redemisti, crucem passus:
Tantus labor non sit cassus!

Juste Judex ultionis,
Donum fac remissionis
Ante diem rationis!

Ingemisco tanquam reus,
Culpâ rubet vultus meus;
Supplicanti parce, Deus!

Qui Mariam absolvisti,
Et latronem exaudisti,
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.

Preces meæ non sunt dignæ,
Sed tu bonus fac benigne
Ne perenni cremer igne!

Inter oves locum præsta,
Et ab hædis me sequestra,
Statuens in parte dextrâ

Confutatis maledictis,
Flammis acribus addictis,
Voca me cum benedictis!

Oro supplex et acclinis,
Cor contritum quasi cinis,
Gere curam mei finis!

Lacrymosa dies illa,
Qua resurget ex favillâ
Judicandus homo reus;
Huic ergo parce, Deus!

Tommáso di Celano [1185?–1255?]

STABAT MATER DOLOROSA *

STABAT Mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lacrymosa,
Dum pendebat filius;
Cujus animam gementem,
Contristatam et dolentem,
Pertransivit gladius.

O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater unigeniti,
Quæ mœrebat et dolebat,
Pia mater, dum videbat
Nati pœnas inclyti!

Quis est homo qui non fleret,
Christi matrem si videret
In tanto supplicio?
Quis non posset contristari
Piam matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum filio?

Pro peccatis suæ gentis,
Vidit Jesum in tormentis,
Et flagellis subditum.
Vidit suum dulcem natum,
Morientem, desolatum,
Dum emisit spiritum.

Eia mater, fons amoris,
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.
Fac ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum,
Ut illi complaceam.

Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide.

* For a translation of this poem see page 3779.

Tui nati vulnerati,
Tam dignati pro me pati,
Pœnas mecum divide.

Fac me vere tecum flere,
Crucifixo condolere,
Donec ego vixero;
Juxta crucem tecum stare,
Et tibi me sociare
In planctu desidero.

Virgo virginum præclara,
Mihi jam non sis amara;
Fac me tecum plangere;
Fac ut portem Christi mortem,
Passionis fac consortem,
Et plagas recolere.

Fac me plagis vulnerari,
Cruce hac inebriari,
Et cruore filii;
Inflammatus et accensus,
Per te, Virgo, sum defensus
In die judicii.

Fac me cruce custodiri,
Morte Christi præmuniri,
Confoveri gratia.
Quando corpus morietur,
Fac ut animæ donetur
Paradisi gloria.

Jacopone da Todi [? –1306]

VENI, SANCTE SPIRITUS *

Veni, Sancte Spiritus,
Et emitte cœlitus
Lucis tuæ radium.

* For a translation of this poem see page 3780.

Veni, pater pauperum,
Veni, dator munerum,
Veni, lumen cordium.

Consolator optime,
Dulcis hospes animæ,
Dulce refrigerium.

In labore requies,
In æstu temperies,
In fletu solatium.

O lux beatissima!
Reple cordis intima,
Tuorum fidelium.

Sine tuo numine,
Nihil est in homine,
Nihil est innoxium.

Lava quod est sordidum,
Riga quod est aridum,
Sana quod est saucium,

Flecte quod est rigidum,
Fove quod est frigidum,
Rege quod est devium.

Da tuis fidelibus,
In te confidentibus,
Sacrum septenarium;

Da virtutis meritum,
Da salutis exitum,
Da perenne gaudium!

Robert II. of France [971–1031]

VENI, CREATOR SPIRITUS*

Veni, Creator Spiritus,
Mentes tuorum visita,
Imple superna gratia,
Quæ tu creasti pectora.

* For a translation of this poem see page 3782.

Qui diceris Paraclitus,
Altissimi donum Dei,
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas,
Et spiritalis unctio.

Tu septiformis munere,
Dextræ Dei tu digitus,
Tu rite promissum Patris,
Sermone ditans guttura.

Accende lumen sensibus,
Infunde amorem cordibus,
Infirma nostri corporis
Virtute firmans perpeti.

Hostem repellas longius,
Pacemque dones protinus:
Ductore sic te prævio
Vitemus omne noxium.

Per te sciamus da Patrem,
Noscamus atque Filium;
Te utriusque Spiritum
Credamus omni tempore.

Deo Patri sit gloria
Et Filio qui a mortuis
Surrexit, ac Paraclito,
In sæculorum sæcula.

St. Gregory the Great (?) [540?–604]

URBS SYON AUREA *

From "Hora Novissima"

Urbs Syon aurea, patria lactea, cive decora,
Omne cor obruis, omnibus obstruis et cor et ora.
Nescio, nescio, quæ jubilatio, lux tibi qualis,
Quam socialia gaudia, gloria quam specialis:
Laude studens ea tollere, mens mea victa fatiscit:
O bona gloria, vincor; in omnia laus tua vicit.

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 3689.

Sunt Syon atria conjubilantia, martyre plena,
Cive micantia, Principe stantia, luce serena:
Est ibi pascua, mitibus afflua, præstita sanctis,
Regis ibi thronus, agminis et sonus est epulantis.
Gens duce splendida, concio candida vestibus albis
Sunt sine fletibus in Syon ædibus, ædibus almis;
Sunt sine crimine, sunt sine turbine, sunt sine lite
In Syon ædibus editioribus Israëlitae.
Urbs Syon inclyta, gloria debita glorificandis,
Tu bona visibus interioribus intima pandis:
Intima lumina, mentis acumina te speculantur,
Pectora flammea spe modo, postea forte lucrantur.
Urbs Syon unica, mansio mystica, condita cælo,
Nunc tibi gaudeo, nunc mihi lugeo, tristor, anhelo:
Te qui corpore non queo, pectore sæpe penetro,
Sed caro terrea, terraque carnea, mox cado retro.
Nemo retexere nemoque promere sustinet ore,
Quo tua mœnia, quo capitalia plena decore;
Opprimit omne cor ille tuus decor, o Syon, o pax,
Urbs sine tempore, nulla potest fore laus tibi mendax;
O sine luxibus, o sine luctibus, o sine lite
Splendida curia, florida patria, patria vitæ!

Urbs Syon inclyta, turris et edita littore tuto,
Te peto, te colo, te flagro, te volo, canto, saluto;
Nec meritis peto, nam meritis meto morte perire,
Nec reticens tego, quod meritis ego fillius iræ:
Vita quidem mea, vita nimis rea, mortua vita,
Quippe reatibus exitialibus obruta, trita.
Spe tamen ambulo, præmia postulo speque fideque,
Illa perennia postulo præmia nocte dieque.
Me Pater optimus atque piissimus ille creavit;
In lue pertulit, ex lue sustulit, a lue lavit.
Gratia cælica sustinet unica totius orbis
Parcere sordibus, interioribus unctio morbis;
Diluit omnia cælica gratia, fons David undans
Omnia diluit, omnibus affluit, omnia mundans:
O pia gratia, celsa palatia cernere præsta,
Ut videam bona, festaque consona, cælica festa.
O mea, spes mea, tu Syon aurea, clarior auro,

Agmine splendida, stans duce, florida perpete lauro,
O bona patria, num tua guadia teque videbo?
O bona patria, num tua præmia plena tenebo?
Dic mihi, flagito, verbaque reddito, dicque, Videbis:
Spem solidam gero; remne tenens ero? dic, Retinebis.
O sacer, o pius, o ter et amplius ille beatus,
Cui sua pars Deus: o miser, o reus, hâc viduatus.

Bernard of Cluny [1122?–1156?]

URBS BEATA HIERUSALEM *

Urbs beata Hierusalem,
Dicta Pacis Visio,
Quæ construitur in cœlis
Vivis ex lapidibus,
Et ab angelis ornata,
Ut sponsata comite.

Nova veniens e cœlo,
Nuptiali thalamo
Præparata, ut sponsata
Copuletur Domino;
Plateæ et muri ejus
Ex auro purissimo.

Portæ nitent margaritis,
Adytis patentibus;
Et virtute meritorum
Illuc introducitur
Omnis qui ob Christi Nomen
Hoc in mundo premitur.

Tunsionibus, pressuris
Expoliti lapides
Suis coaptantur locis
Per Manum Artificis;
Disponuntur permansuri
Sacris ædificiis.

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 3693.

Gloria et honor Deo
Usquequo Altissimo,
Una Patri, Filioque,
Inclyto Paraclito,
Cui laus est et potestas
Per æterna sæcula.

Unknown

VIVAMUS, MEA LESBIA *

Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
Rumoresque senum severiorum
Omnes unius æstimemus assis.
Soles occidere et redire possunt:
Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.
Da mi basia mille, deinde centum,
Dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,
Deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.
Dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,
Conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,
Aut ne quis malus invidere possit,
Cum tantum sciet esse basiorum.

Gaius Valerius Catullus [87 B. C.?–54 B. C.?]

PERSICOS ODI †

Persicos odi,
Puer, apparatus;
Displicent nexæ
Philyrâ coronæ:
Mitte sectari,
Rosa quo locorum
Sera moretur.

Simplici myrto
Nihil allabores
Sedulus, curo:

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 588.
† For a paraphrase of this poem see page 1987.

Neque te ministrum
Dedecet myrtus,
Neque me sub arctâ
Vite bibentem.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus [65 B. C.–8 B. C.]

INTEGER VITÆ *

Integer vitæ scelerisque purus
Non eget Mauris jaculis neque arcu
Nec venenatis gravida sagittis,
Fusce, pharetra;
Sive per Syrtis iter æstuosas
Sive facturus per inhospitalem
Caucasum, vel quæ loca fabulosus
Lambit Hydaspes.

Namque me silva lupus in Sabina,
Dum meam canto Lalagen et ultra
Terminum curis vagor expeditis,
Fugit inermem,
Quale portentum neque militaris
Daunias latis alit æsculetis
Nec Jubæ tellus generat, leonum
Arida nutrix.

Pone me pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstiva recreatur aura,
Quod latus mundi nebulæ malusque
Juppiter urget;
Pone sub curru nimium propinqui
Solis, in terra domibus negata:
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus [65 B. C.–8 B. C.]

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 2912.

RECTIUS VIVES *

Rectius vives, Licini, neque altum
Semper urgendo neque, dum procellas
Cautus horrescis, nimium premendo
Litus iniquum.

Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
Sordibus tecti, caret invidenda
Sobrius aula.

Sæpius ventis agitatur ingens
Pinus et celsæ graviore casu
Decidunt turres feriuntque summos
Fulgura montis.

Sperat infestis, metuit secundis
Alteram sortem bene præparatum
Pectus. Informis hiemes reducit
Juppiter, idem

Submovet; non, si male nunc, et olim
Sic erit; quondam cithara tacentem
Suscitat musam neque semper arcum
Tendit Apollo.

Rebus angustis animosus atque
Fortis appare; sapienter idem
Contrahes vento nimium secundo
Turgida vela.

Quintus Horatius Flaccus [65 B. C.–8 B. C.]

DE BREVITATE VITÆ †

(CARMEN AMŒBÆUM)

Gaudeamus igitur,
Juvenes dum sumus;

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 2991.
† For a paraphrase of this poem see page 2895.

Post jucundam juventutem,
Post molestam senectutem
Nos habebit humus.

Ubi sunt, qui ante nos
In mundo fuere?
Vadite ad superos,
Transite ad inferos,
Ubi jam fuere.

Vita nostra brevis est,
Brevi finietur,
Venit mors velociter,
Rapit nos atrociter,
Nemini parcetur.

Vivat academia,
Vivant professores,
Vivat membrum quodlibet,
Vivant membra quaelibet,
Semper sint in flore!

Vivant omnes virgines,
Faciles, formosæ,
Vivant et mulieres,
Teneræ, amabiles,
Bonæ, laboriosæ!

Vivat et respublica
Et qui illam regit,
Vivat nostra civitas,
Mæcenatum caritas,
Quæ nos hic protegit!

Pereat tristitia,
Pereant osores,
Pereat diabolus,
Quivis antiburschius,
Atque irrisores.

Unknown

LAURIGER HORATIUS *

Lauriger Horatius,
Quàm dixisti verum;
Fugit Euro citius
Tempus edax rerum!
Ubi sunt, o pocula
Dulciora melle!
Rixæ, pax et oscula
Rubentis puellæ?

Crescit uva molliter
Et puella crescit,
Sed poeta turpiter
Sitiens canescit.
Quid juvat æternitas
Nominis, amare
Nisi terræ filias
Licet, et potare.

Unknown

EIN FESTE BURG †

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,
Ein gute Wehr und Waffen,
Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,
Die uns jetzt hat betroffen.
Der alt böse Feind
Mit Ernst ers jetzt meint,
Gross Macht und viel List
Sein grausam Rüstung ist,
Auf Erd ist nicht seins Gleichen.

Mit unsrer Macht ist nichts getan,
Wir sind gar bald verloren;
Es streit für uns der rechte Mann,
Den Gott hat selbst erkoren.

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 2896.
† For a translation of this poem see page 3806.

Fragst du, wer der ist!
Er heisst Jesus Christ,
Der Herr Zebaoth,
Und ist kein andrer Gott,
Das Feld muss er behalten.

Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär
Und wollt uns gar verschlingen,
So fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr,
Es soll uns doch gelingen.
Der Fürst dieser Welt,
Wie saur er sich stellt,
Tut er uns doch nicht;
Das macht, er ist gericht,
Ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen.

Das Wort sie sollen lassen stan
Und kein Dank dazu haben.
Er ist bei uns wohl auf dem Plan
Mit seinem Geist und Gaben.
Nehmen sie den Leib,
Gut, Ehr, Kind und Weib,
Lass fahren dahin,
Sie habens kein Gewinn:
Das Reich muss uns doch bleiben.

Martin Luther [1483–1546]

LIED *

Ins stille Land!
Wer leitet uns hinüber?
Schon wölkt sich uns der Abendhimmel trüber,
Und immer trümmervoller wird der Strand.
Wer leitet uns mit sanfter Hand
Hinüber, ach! hinüber
Ins stille Land?

Ins stille Land!
Zu euch, ihr freien Räume
Für die Veredlung! Zarte Morgenträume

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 3456.

Der schönen Seelen! künftgen Daseins Pfand.
Wer treu des Lebens Kampf bestand,
Trägt seiner Hoffnung Keime
Ins stille Land.

Ach Land! ach Land!
Für alle Sturmbedrohten
Der mildeste von unsers Schicksals Boten
Winkt uns, die Fackel umgewandt,
Und leitet uns mit sanfter Hand
Ins Land der grossen Toten,
Ins stille Land.

Johann Gaudenz von Salis-Seewis [1762–1834]

DIE WACHT AM RHEIN *

Es braust ein Ruf wie Donnerhall,
Wie Schwertgeklirr und Wogenprall:
"Zum Rhein, zum Rhein, zum deutschen Rhein!
Wer will des Stromes Hüter sein?"

Chorus—Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein,
Fest steht und treu die Wacht am Rhein!

Durch Hunderttausend zuckt es schnell,
Und aller Augen blitzen hell.
Der deutsche Jüngling fromm und stark
Beschirmt die heil'ge Landesmark.

Er blickt hinauf in Himmelsau'n,
Wo Heldengeister niederschaun,
Und schwört mit stolzer Kampfeslust:
"Du, Rhein, bleibst deutsch wie meine Brust!

"Und ob mein Herz im Tode bricht,
Wirst du doch drum ein Welscher nicht.
Reich wie an Wasser deine Flut,
Ist Deutschland ja an Heldenblut.

* For a translation of this poem see page 2269.

"So lang ein Tropfen Blut noch glüht,
Noch eine Faust den Degen zieht,
Und noch ein Arm die Büchse spannt,
Betritt kein Feind hier deinen Strand."

Der Schwur erschallt, die Woge rinnt,
Die Fahnen flattern hoch im Wind:
Zum Rhein, zum Rhein, zum deutschen Rhein!
Wir alle wollen Hüter sein!

Max Schneckenburger [1819–1849]

DES DEUTSCHEN VATERLAND *

Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?
Ist's Preussenland? ist's Schwabenland?
Ist's, wo am Rhein die Rebe blüht?
Ist's, wo am Belt die Möve zieht?
O nein! nein! nein!
Sein Vaterland muss grösser sein.

Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?
Ist's Baierland? ist's Steierland?
Ist's, wo des Marsen Rind sich streckt?
Ist's, wo der Märker Eisen reckt?
O nein! nein! nein!
Sein Vaterland muss grösser sein.

Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?
Ist's Pommerland, Westfalenland?
Ist's, wo der Sand der Dünen weht?
Ist's, wo die Donau brausend geht?
O nein! nein! nein!
Sein Vaterland muss grösser sein.

Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?
So nenne mir das grosse Land!

* For a translation of this poem see page 2270.

Ist's Land der Schweitzer? ist's Tirol?
Das Land und Volk gefiel mir wohl;
Doch nein! nein! nein!
Sein Vaterland muss grösser sein.

Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?
So nenne mir das grosse Land!
Gewiss es ist das Oesterreich,
An Ehren und an Siegen reich?
O nein! nein! nein!
Sein Vaterland muss grösser sein.

Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?
So nenne mir das grosse Land!
So weit die deutsche Zunge klingt
Und Gott im Himmel Lieder singt,
Das soll es sein!
Das, wackrer Deutscher, nenne dein!

Das ist des Deutschen Vaterland,
Wo Eide schwört der Druck der Hand,
Wo Treue hell vom Auge blitzt
Und Liebe warm im Herzen sitzt—
Das soll es sein!
Das, wackrer Deutscher, nenne dein!

Das ist des Deutschen Vaterland,
Wo Zorn vertilgt den wälschen Tand,
Wo jeder Franzmann heisset Feind,
Wo jeder Deutsche heisset Freund—
Das soll es sein!
Das ganze Deutschland soll es sein!

Das ganze Deutschland soll es sein!
O Gott vom Himmel sieh' darein,
Und gieb uns rechten deutschen Muth,
Dass wir es lieben treu und gut.
Das soll es sein!
Das *ganze Deutschland* soll es sein!

Ernst Moritz Arndt [1769–1860]

LA MARSEILLAISE *

Allons, enfants de la Patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé;
Contre nous de la tyrannie
L'étendard sanglant est levé,
Entendez-vous dans ces campagnes
Mugir ces féroces soldats?
Ils viennent jusque dans vos bras
Égorger nos fils, nos compagnes! . . .
Aux armes, citoyens! formez vos bataillons!
Marchons, marchons!
Qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons!

Que veut cette horde d'esclaves,
De traîtres, de rois conjurés?
Pour qui ces ignobles entraves,
Ces fers dès longtemps préparés?
Français, pour nous, ah! quel outrage!
Quels transports il doit exciter!
C'est nous qu'on ose méditer
De rendre à l'antique esclavage.

Quoi! ces cohortes étrangères
Feraient la loi dans nos foyers?
Quoi! ces phalanges mercenaires
Terrasseraient nos fiers guerriers?
Grand Dieu! par des mains enchaînées
Nos fronts sous le joug se ploieraient!
De vils despotes deviendraient
Les maîtres de nos destinées.

Tremblez, tyrans, et vous perfides,
L'opprobre de tous les partis,
Tremblez! vos projets parricides
Vont enfin recevoir leur prix!
Tout est soldat pour vous combattre.
S'ils tombent, nos jeunes héros,
La terre en produit de nouveaux
Contre vous tout prêts à se battre!

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 2271.

Français, en guerriers magnanimes,
Portez ou retenez vos coups;
Épargnez ces tristes victimes
A regret s'armant contre nous.
Mais ces despotes sanguinaires,
Mais les complices de Bouillé,
Tous ces tigres qui sans pitié
Dechirent le sein de leurs mères! . . .

Nous entrerons dans la carrière
Quand nos aînés n'y seront plus;
Nous y trouverons leur poussière
Et la trace de leurs vertus!
Bien moins jaloux de leur survivre
Que de partager leur cercueil,
Nous aurons le sublime orgueil
De les venger ou de les suivre! . . .

Amour sacré de la Patrie,
Conduis, soutiens nos braves vengeurs:
Liberté, Liberté chérie,
Combats avex tes défenseurs!
Sous nos drapeaux que la Victoire
Accoure à tes mâles accents;
Que tes ennemis expirants
Voient ton triomphe et notre gloire! . . .
Aux armes, citoyens! formez vos bataillons!
Marchons, marchons!
Qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons!

Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle [1760–1836]

BALLADE DES DAMES DU TEMPS JADIS *

Dictes-moy où, n'en quel pays,
Est Flora, la belle Romaine;
Archipiada, ne Thaïs,
Qui fut sa cousine germaine;

* For translations of this poem see pages 1783, 1784, 1785.

Echo, parlant quand bruyt on maine
Dessus riviere ou sus estan,
Qui beauté eut trop plus qu'humaine?
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

Où est la tres sage Heloïs,
Pour qui fut blessé et puis moyne
Pierre Esbaillart à Sainct-Denys
(Pour son amour eut cest essoyne)?
Semblablement, où est la royne
Qui commanda que Buridan
Fust jetté en ung sac en Seine? . . .
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?

La royne Blanche comme ung lys,
Qui chantoit à voix de sereine;
Berthe au grand pied, Bietris, Allys;
Harembourges, qui tint le Mayne,
Et Jehanne, la bonne Lorraine,
Qu'Angloys bruslerent à Rouen;
Où sont-ils, Vierge souveraine? . . .
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

ENVOI

Prince, n'enquerez de sepmaine
Où elles sont, ne de cest an,
Que ce refrain ne vous remaine:
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan?

François Villon [1431–14?]

BALLADE DE FRÈRE LUBIN*

Pour courir en poste à la ville
Vingt fois, cent fois, ne sçai combien,
Pour faire quelque chose vile,
Frère Lubin le fera bien;
Mais d'avoir honneste entretien,
Ou mener vie salutaire,
C'est à faire à un bon chrestien,
Frère Lubin ne le peut faire.

* For a translation of this poem see page 1874.

Pour mettre (comme un homme habile)
Le bien d'autruy avec le sien,
Et vous laisser sans croix ne pile,
Frère Lubin le fera bien.
On a beau dire, je le tien,
Et le presser de satisfaire,
Jamais ne vous en rendra rien;
Frère Lubin ne le peut faire.

Pour desbaucher par un doux stile
Quelque fille de bon maintien,
Point ne faut de vieille subtile,
Frère Lubin le fera bien.
Il presche en theologien;
Mais pour boire de belle eau claire,
Faites la boire à vostre chien,
Frère Lubin ne le peut faire.

ENVOI

Pour faire plus tost mal que bien,
Frère Lubin le fera bien,
Et si c'est quelque bon affaire,
Frère Lubin ne le peut faire.

Clément Marot [1495–1544]

LE GRENIER *

Je viens revoir l'asile où ma jeunesse
De la misère a subi les leçons.
J'avais vingt ans, une folle maîtresse,
De francs amis et l'amour des chansons.
Bravant le monde et les sots et les sages,
Sans avenir, riche de mon printemps,
Leste et joyeux, je montais six étages.
Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans!

C'est un grenier, point ne veux qu'on l'ignore.
Là fut mon lit, bien chétif et bien dur;
Là fut ma table; et je retrouve encore
Trois pieds d'un vers charbonnés sur le mur.

* For a translation of this poem see page 463.

Apparaissez, plaisirs de mon bel âge,
Que d'un coup d'aile a fustigés le temps,
Vingt fois pour vous j'ai mis ma montre en gage.
Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans!

Lisette ici doit surtout apparaître,
Vive, jolie, avec un frais chapeau;
Déjà sa main à l'étroite fenêtre
Suspend son schal, en guise de rideau.
Sa robe aussi va parer ma couchette;
Respecte, Amour, ses plis longs et flottans.
J'ai su depuis qui payait sa toilette.
Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans!

À table un jour, jour de grande richesse,
De mes amis les voix brillaient en chœur,
Quand jusqu'ici monte un cri d'allégresse:
À Marengo Bonaparte est vainqueur.
Le canon gronde; un autre chant commence·
Nous célébrons tant de faits éclatans.
Les rois jamais n'envahiront la France.
Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans!

Quittons ce toit où ma raison s'enivre.
Oh! qu'ils sont loin ces jours si regrettés!
J'échangerais ce qu'il me reste à vivre
Contre un des mois qu'ici Dieu m'a comptés,
Pour rêver gloire, amour, plaisir, folie,
Pour dépenser sa vie en peu d'instans,
D'un long espoir pour la voir embellie.
Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans!

Pierre-Jean de Béranger [1780–1857]

LE ROI D'YVETOT *

Il était un roi d'Yvetot
Peu connu dans l'histoire,
Se levant tard, se couchant tôt,
Dormant fort bien sans gloire,

* For a paraphrase of this poem see page 1848.

Et couronné par Jeanneton
D'un simple bonnet de coton,
Dit-on.
Oh! oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah!
Quel bon petit roi c'était là!
La, la.

Il faisait ses quatre repas
Dans son palais de chaume,
Et sur un âne, pas à pas,
Parcourait son royaume.
Joyeux, simple et croyant le bien,
Pour toute garde il n'avait rien
Qu'un chien.

Il n'avait de goût onéreux
Qu'une soif un peu vive;
Mais, en rendant son peuple heureux,
Il faut bien qu'un roi vive.
Lui-même, à table et sans suppôt,
Sur chaque muid levait un pot
D'impôt.

Aux filles de bonnes maisons
Comme il avait su plaire,
Ses sujets avaient cent raisons
De le nommer leur père.
D'ailleurs il ne levait de ban
Que pour tirer, quatre fois l'an,
Au blanc.

Il n'agrandit point ses états,
Fut un voisin commode,
Et, modèle des potentats,
Prit le plaisir pour code.
Ce n'est que lorsqu'il expira
Que le peuple, qui l'enterra,
Pleura.

On conserve encor le portrait
De ce digne et bon prince:

C'est l'enseigne d'un cabaret
Fameux dans la province.
Les jours de fête, bien souvent,
La foule s'écrie en buvant
Devant:
Oh! oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah!
Quel bon petit roi c'était là!
Là, la.

Pierre-Jean de Béranger [1780–1857]

FANTAISIE *

Il est un air pour qui je donnerais
Tout Rossini, tout Mozart, tout Weber,
Un air très vieux, languissant et funèbre,
Qui pour moi seul a des charmes secrets.

Or, chaque fois que je viens à l'entendre,
De deux cents ans mon âme rajeunit;
C'est sous Louis treize . . . et je crois voir s'étendre
Un coteau vert que le couchant jaunit.

Puis un château de brigue à coins de pierres,
Aux vitraux teints de rougeâtres couleurs,
Ceint de grands parcs, avec une rivière
Baignant ses pieds, qui coule entre les fleurs.

Puis une dame à sa haute fenêtre,
Blonde, aux yeux noirs, en ses habits anciens . . .
Que dans une autre existence, peut-être,
J'ai déjà vue! . . . et dont je me souviens.

Gérard de Nerval [1808–1855]

L'ART †

Oui, l'œuvre sort plus belle
D'une forme au travail
Rebelle,
Vers, marbre, onyx, email.

* For a translation of this poem see page 920.
† For a paraphrase of this poem see page 3140.

Point de contraintes fausses!
Mais que, pour marcher droit,
Tu chausses,
Muse, un cothurne étroit.

Fi du rhythme commode,
Comme un soulier trop grand,
Du mode
Que tout pied quitte et prend!

Statuaire, repousse
L'argile que pétrit
Le pouce
Quand flotte ailleurs l'esprit.

Lutte avec le carrare,
Avec le paros dur
Et rare,
Gardiens du contour pur;

Emprunte à Syracuse
Son bronze où fermement
S'accuse
Le trait fier et charmant;

D'une main délicate
Poursuis dans un filon
D'agate
Le profil d'Apollon.

Peintre, fuis l'aquarelle,
Et fixe la couleur
Trop frêle
Au four de l'émailleur.

Fais les sirènes bleues,
Tordant de cent façons
Leurs queues,
Les monstres des blasons;

Dans son nimbe trilobe
La Vierge et son Jésus,
Le globe
Avec la croix dessus.

Tout passe.—L'art robuste
Seul a l'éternité.
Le buste.
Survit à la cité.

Et la médaille austère
Que trouve un laboureur
Sous terre
Révèle un empereur.

Les dieux eux-mêmes meurent.
Mais les vers souverains
Demeurent
Plus fort que les airains.

Sculpte, lime, cisèle;
Que ton rêve flottant
Se scelle
Dans le bloc résistant!

Théophile Gautier [1811–1872]

CARCASSONNE *

Je me fais vieux, j'ai soixante ans;
J'ai travaillé toute ma vie
Sans avoir, durant ce temps,
Pu satisfaire mon envie.
Je vois bien qu'il n'est ici-bas
De bonheur complet pour personne.
Mon voeu ne s'accomplira pas:
Je n'ai jamais vu Carcassonne!

On voit la ville de là-haut
Derrière les montagnes bleues,
Mais, pour y parvenir, il faut,
Il faut faire cinq grandes lieues,
En faire autant pour revenir;
Ah, si la vendange était bonne!
Le raisin ne veut pas jaunir:
Je ne verrai pas Carcassonne!

* For a translation of this poem see page 438.

On dit qu'on y voit tous les jours,
Ni plus ni moins que les dimanches,
Des gens s'en aller sur les cours,
En habits neufs, en robes blanches.
On dit qu'on y voit des châteaux
Grands commes ceux de Babylone,
Un évêque et deux généraux!
Je ne connais pas Carcassonne!

Le vicaire a cent fois raison:
C'est des imprudents que nous sommes.
Il disait dans son oraison
Que l'ambition perd les hommes.
Si je pouvois trouver pourtant
Deux jours sur la fin de l'automne—
Mon Dieu, que je mourrais content
Après avoir vu Carcassonne!

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, pardonnez-moi
Si ma prière vous offense;
On voit toujours plus haut que soi,
En vieillesse comme en enfance.
Ma femme, avec mon fils Aignan,
A voyagé jusqu'à Narbonne;
Mon filleul a vu Perpignan,
Et je n'ai pas vu Carcassonne!

Ainsi chantait près de Limoux
Un paysan courbé par l'âge.
Je lui dis: "Ami, levez-vous;
Nous allons faire le voyage."
Nous partîmes le lendemain,
Mais, que le Bon Dieu lui pardonne,
Il mourut à moitié chemin:
Il n'a jamais vu Carcassonne!

Gustave Nadaud [1820–1893]

HASSGESANG GEGEN ENGLAND *

Was schiert uns Russe und Franzos?
Schuss wider Schuss und Stoss um Stoss,
Wir lieben sie nicht,
Wir hassen sie nicht,
Wir schützen Weichsel und Wasgaupass,—
Wir haben nur einen einzigen Hass,
Wir lieben vereint, wir hassen vereint,
Wir haben nur einen einzigen Feind:—

Den ihr alle wisst, den ihr alle wisst,
Er sitzt geduckt hinter der grauen Flut,
Voll Neid, voll Wut, voll Schläue, voll List,
Durch Wasser getrennt, die sind dicker als Blut.
Wir wollen treten in ein Gericht,
Einen Schwur zu schwören, Gesicht in Gesicht.
Einen Schwur von Erz, den verbläst kein Wind,
Einen Schwur für Kind und für Kindeskind.
Vernehmt das Wort, sagt nach das Wort,
Es wälze sich durch ganz Deutschland fort:
Wir wollen nicht lassen von unserem Hass,
Wir haben alle nur einen Hass,
Wir lieben vereint, wir hassen vereint,
Wir haben alle nur einen Feind:
ENGLAND!

In der Bordkajüte, in Feiersaal,
Sassen Schiffsoffiziere beim Liebesmahl,—
Wie ein Säbelhieb, wie ein Segelschwung,
Einer riss grüssend empor den Trunk;
Knap hinknallend wie Ruderschlag
Drei Worte sprach er: "Auf den Tag!"

Wem galt das Glas?
Sie hatten alle nur einen Hass.
Wer war gemeint?
Sie hatten alle nur einen Feind:
ENGLAND!

* For a translation of this poem see page 2549.

Nimm du die Völker der Erde in Sold,
Baue Wälle aus Barren von Gold,
Bedecke die Meerflut mit Bug bei Bug,
Du rechnetest klug, doch nicht klug genug.
Was schiert uns Russe und Franzos?
Schuss wider Schuss, und Stoss um Stoss.
Wir kämpfen den Kampf mit Bronze und Stahl
Und schliessen Frieden irgend einmal,
Dich werden wir hassen mit langem Hass,
Wir werden nicht lassen von unserem Hass.
Hass zu Wasser und Hass zu Land,
Hass des Hauptes und Hass der Hand,
Hass der Hammer und Hass der Kronen,
Drosselnder Hass von siebzig Millionen,
Sie lieben vereint, sie hassen vereint,
Sie haben alle nur einen Feind:
ENGLAND!

Ernst Lissauer [1882–

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Born at King's Sutton, Northamptonshire, England, September 24, 1762; died at Salisbury, England, in 1850.
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Dover Cliffs 3257
Time and Grief 3352

BOWRING, [SIR] JOHN
Born at Exeter, England, October 17, 1792; died there, November 23, 1872.
"In the Cross of Christ I Glory 3802

BOYD, THOMAS
An Irish writer, born in 1867, and still living.
Love on the Mountain 648

BOYLE, SARAH ROBERTS
Born at Portsmouth, N. H., in 1812; died in New York City, in 1869.
The Voice of the Grass..... 1487

BRADLEY, MARY EMILY
Born at Easton, Md., in 1835; died at Washington, D. C., in 1898.
A Chrysalis..... 300

BRADLEY, WILLIAM ASPENWALL
Born at Hartford, Conn., February 8, 1878; now living at New Canaan, Conn.
To Little Rénee..... 6

BRAITHWAITE, WILLIAM STANLEY
Born at Boston, Mass., December 6, 1878; now living at Cambridge, Mass.
Sic Vita..... 1303

BRAINARD, JOHN GARDINER CALKINS
Born at New London, Conn., October 21, 1796; died there, September 26, 1828.
"I Saw Two Clouds at Morning"..... 1196

BRANCH, ANNA HEMPSTEAD
Born at New London, Conn., and still living there.
"Grieve Not, Ladies"..... 857
To a New York Shop-girl, Dressed for Sunday..... 3021
Warrior Maid, The..... 2821

BRANCH, MARY LYDIA BOLLES
Born at New London, Conn., June 13, 1840, and still living there.
The Petrified Fern..... 2859

BRENAN, JOSEPH
Born at Cork, Ireland, November 17, 1828, fled to America in 1849, and died at New Orleans, La., in 1857.
"Come to Me, Dearest"..... 982

BRETON, NICHOLAS
Born in London, England, about 1545; and died there about 1626.
A Cradle Song..... 1036
Phillida and Coridon..... 716

BRIDGES, MADELINE, see DE VERE MARY AINGE.

BRIDGES, ROBERT
An English writer, born October 23, 1844, and now living at Oxford.
"Awake, My Heart"..... 505
"My Delight and Thy Delight"..... 1158
Passer-by, A..... 1600
"So Sweet Love Seemed"..... 920
To the United States of America..... 2563
Triolet..... 1903
"When Death to Either Shall Come"..... 1168

BROME, ALEXANDER
Born in London in 1620, and died there, June 30, 1666.
Why I Love Her..... 606

BRONTË, EMILY JANE
Born in Yorkshire, England, in 1818; died there in 1848.
Last Lines..... 3486
Remembrance..... 1095
Song, "The linnet in the rocky dells"..... 1096
Stanzas, "Often rebuked, yet always back returning"..... 2928

BROOKE, RUPERT
Born at Rugby, England, August 3, 1887; died on the island of Scyros, April 23, 1915, while with the English expedition to the Dardanelles.
Busy Heart, The..... 1270
Dust..... 1137
Hill, The..... 1270
1914..... 2544
"Oh, Death Will Find Me"..... 1269
Song, "Oh! Love!" they said, "is King of Kings"..... 580
"There's Wisdom in Women"..... 1055
The Soldier 4846 !

BROOKE, STOPFORD AUGUSTUS
Born near Letterkenny, Ireland, November 14, 1832; died at Ewhurst, Surrey, England, March 18, 1916.
The Earth and Man..... 2909

BROOKS, CHARLES TIMOTHY
Born at Salem, Mass., June 20, 1813; died at Newport, R. I., June 14, 1883.
The Great Voices..... 2972

BROOKS, CHARLES WILLIAM SHIRLEY
Born in London, England, April 29, 1816; died there February 23, 1874. Mentioned as the author of the Lincoln poem in Spielmann's "History of Punch"—probably a slip of the pen.
Abraham Lincoln..... 3642

BROOKS, PHILLIPS
Born at Boston, Mass., December 13, 1835; died there, January 23, 1893.
"O Little Town of Bethlehem"..... 203

BROUGH, ROBERT BARNABAS
Born in London, England, April 10, 1828; died at Manchester, June 26, 1860.
The Marquis of Carabas... 1843

BROWN, ABBIE FARWELL
Born in Boston, Mass., and still living there.
Fairy Book, The..... 246
Friends..... 112

BROWN, ALICE
Born at Hampton Falls, N. H., December 5, 1857; now living in Boston.

Benedictine Garden, A.... 1451
Edwin Booth..... 3590
Farewell, A..... 929
Hora Christi..... 3772
Sunrise on Mansfield Mountain..... 1311
The West-Country Lover... 669

BROWN, JOSEPH BROWNLEE
Born at Charleston, S. C., in 1824; died at Brooklyn, N. Y., in 1888.
"Thalatta! Thalatta"..... 3499

BROWN, THOMAS EDWARD
Born at Douglas, Isle of Man, in 1830; died at Clifton, October 30, 1897.
Jessie..... 887
My Garden..... 1446
Salve..... 2999

BROWN, WILLIAM GOLDSMITH
Born at Whitingham, Vt., in 1812; died in Wisconsin in 1906.
A Hundred Years to Come. 3470
"Mother, Home, Heaven". 3244

BROWN, WILLIAM LAIRD, see LAIRD, WILLIAM.

BROWNE, FRANCIS FISHER
Born at South Halifax, Vermont, December 1, 1843; died at Chicago, Ill., May 11, 1913.
Vanquished..... 3609

BROWNE, [SIR] THOMAS
Born in London, England, October 19, 1605; died at Norwich, England, October 19, 1682.
"Love Who Will, for I'll Love None"..... 817

BROWNE, WILLIAM
Born at Tavistock, England, in 1591; died there, probably in March, 1643.
Complete Lover, The..... 528
Epitaph on the Countess Dowager of Pembroke... 3518
Memory..... 931
Rose, The..... 1498
Song, "Shall I tell you whom I love"..... 815
Welcome, A..... 527

BROWNELL, HENRY HOWARD
Born at Providence, R. I., February 6, 1820; died at East Hartford, Conn., October 31, 1872.
The Burial of the Dane... 1626

BROWNING, ELIZABETH BARRETT
Born at Durham, England, March 6, 1809; died at Florence, Italy, June 30, 1861.
Comfort..... 3766
Court Lady, A..... 3315
Cowper's Grave..... 3601
Cry of the Children, The... 283
Deserted Garden, The..... 1455
Grief..... 3353
Inclusions..... 872
Lady's "Yes," The..... 632
Lessons from the Gorse.... 1486
Mother and Poet..... 3555
Musical Instrument, A..... 1324
My Heart and I..... 1083
Pet Name, The..... 455
Portrait, A..... 338
Rosalind's Scroll..... 1085
Sea-mew, The..... 1563
Sleep, The..... 3412
Sonnets from "Sonnets from the Portuguese"..... 1276
Valediction, A..... 960
Weakest Thing, The..... 3385
Woman's Shortcomings, A.. 495

BROWNING, ROBERT
Born in London, England, May 7, 1812; died at Venice, Italy, December 12, 1889.
Abt Vogler..... 3135
Adam, Lilith, and Eve..... 848
Andrea del Sarto..... 839
Bishop Orders His Tomb at St. Praxed's Church, The 1862
Cavalier Tunes..... 2283
"De Gustibus—"..... 2611
Earl Mertoun's Song..... 1156
Epilogue from "Asolando". 3503
Evelyn Hope..... 1094
Flower's Name, The..... 964
Grammarian's Funeral, A.. 2871
Guardian-Angel, The..... 2620
Hervé Riel..... 2804
Home Thoughts, from Abroad..... 1353
How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix..... 2732
Incident of the French Camp..... 2449
Last Ride Together, The... 877
Life in a Love..... 638
Light Woman, A..... 1029
Lost Leader, The..... 1836
Lost Mistress, The..... 848
Love Among the Ruins.... 1154
Love in a Life..... 637
Meeting at Night..... 1157
Memorabilia..... 3657
Muckle-mouth Meg..... 781
My Last Duchess..... 846
My Star..... 1321
"Never the Time and the Place"..... 885
One Way of Love..... 884
One Word More..... 1284
Parting at Morning..... 1157
Pied Piper of Hamelin, The, 192
Porphyria's Lover..... 1003
Prospice..... 3484
Rabbi Ben Ezra..... 411
Song, "Nay but you, who do not love her"..... 553
Song, "The moth's kiss first" 688
Song, "The year's at the spring"..... 1333
Song, "There's a woman like a dew-drop"..... 1156
Song, "You'll love me yet". 637
Song from Paracelsus..... 3102
Summum Bonum..... 689
Toccata of Galuppi's, A.... 3133
Two in the Campagna..... 882

Up at a Villa, Down in the City ... 1865
Woman's Last Word, A ... 876
Youth and Art ... 880

BRYANT, WILLIAM CULLEN
Born at Cummington, Mass., November 3, 1794; died in New York City, June 12, 1878.
Death of the Flowers, The ... 1505
Gladness of Nature, The ... 139
June ... 3457
"Oh Mother of a Mighty Race" ... 2203
Planting of the Apple-Tree, The ... 1411
Robert of Lincoln ... 1528
Seventy-six ... 2431
Snow-shower, The ... 1391
Song of Marion's Men ... 2432
Thanatopsis ... 3444
To a Waterfowl ... 1582
To a Fringed Gentian ... 1484

BUCHANAN, ROBERT WILLIAM
Born in Staffordshire, England, in 1841; died in London in 1901.
Ballad of Judas Iscariot, The ... 2791
Churchyard, The ... 3435
Langley Lane ... 3383
Spring Song in the City ... 1672
Tom Dunstan, or, The Politician ... 3018

BUCK, RICHARD HENRY
An American writer, born in 1869, at Philadelphia, Pa.
Kentucky Babe ... 91

BUCKINGHAM, DUKE OF, see SHEFFIELD, JOHN

BULWER-LYTTON, see LYTTON.

BUNNER, HENRY CUYLER
Born at Oswego, N. Y., August 3, 1855; died at Nutley, N. J., May 11, 1896.
Behold the Deeds ... 2189
Candor ... 787
Chaperon, The ... 1795
Da Capo ... 828
Pitcher of Mignonette, A ... 1796
"She Was a Beauty" ... 1765
Strong as Death ... 1080
Yes? ... 804

BUNYAN, JOHN
Born at Elstow, Bedfordshire, England, in November, 1628; died in London, August 31, 1688.
The Pilgrim ... 3715
The Shepherd Boy Sings in the Valley of Humiliation 3714

BURGESS, FRANK GELETT
Born at Boston, Mass., January 30, 1866, and still living there.
Nonsense Verses ... 2086
The Purple Cow ... 2085

BURNAND, [SIR] FRANCIS COWLEY
An English writer, born November 29, 1836; died in London in 1917.
His Heart Was True to Poll 2076

BURNETT, DANA
Born at Cincinnati, Ohio, July 3, 1888; now living in New York City.
Song, "Love's on the high-road" ... 627

BURNS, ROBERT
Born at Alloway, Scotland, January 25, 1759; died at Dumfries, Scotland, July 21, 1796.
Address to the Unco Guid, An ... 1869
Ae Fond Kiss ... 945
Auld Lang Syne ... 464
Bonnie Doon ... 1044
"Bonnie Wee Thing" ... 622
Bruce to His Men at Bannockburn ... 2350
Chloe ... 540
"Comin' through the Rye" 727
Cotter's Saturday Night, The ... 3246
"Day Returns, The" ... 945
Farewell, The ... 2275
"Flow Gently, Sweet Afton" ... 1425
"For a' That and a' That" .. 3034
"Green Grow the Rashes, O" ... 727
"Here's a Health to Them That's Awa'" ... 2275
Highland Mary ... 1071
I Love My Jean ... 947
John Anderson ... 1224
John Barleycorn ... 2000
Lament for Culloden ... 2420
Mary Morison ... 697
My Bonnie Mary ... 946
"My Heart's in the Highlands" ... 1669
My Nannie's Awa' ... 944
"My Wife's a Winsome Wee Thing" ... 1208
"O Mally's Meek, Mally's Sweet" ... 541
"O Saw Ye Bonnie Lesley" 331
"O Were My Love Yon Lilac Fair" ... 621
On a Henpecked Squire ... 1919
Prayer in the Prospect of Death, A ... 3455
Red, Red Rose, A ... 946
Song, "Again rejoicing Nature sees" ... 1341
Tam o'Shanter ... 2106
To a Mountain Daisy ... 1474
To a Mouse ... 1507
To Mary in Heaven ... 1072
Winter: a Dirge ... 1386

BURR, AMELIA JOSEPHINE
Born in New York City in 1878, now living at Englewood, N. J.
New Life ... 1349
Nocturne ... 1166
Perugia ... 2621
Poet Enlists, A ... 2564
Song of Living, A ... 3479

Surrender..... 1166
To Her—Unspoken..... 1029
Where Love Is..... 659

BURROUGHS, JOHN
Born at Roxbury, N. Y., April 3, 1837; now living at West Park, N. Y.
Waiting..... 3495

BURTON, RICHARD EUGENE
Born at Hartford, Conn., March 14, 1859; now living at Minneapolis, Minn.
Across the Fields to Anne.. 801
Black Sheep..... 3058
City of the Dead, The..... 3440
Love is Strong..... 507
Of Those Who Walk Alone. 382
Sealed Orders..... 3478

BURTON, [SIR] RICHARD FRANCIS
Born in Hertfordshire, England, March 19, 1821; died at Trieste, Austria, October 20, 1890.
The Kasidah (II and IX). . 2887

BUTLER, WILLIAM ALLEN
Born at Albany, N. Y., February 20 1825, died in New York City, in 1902.
"All's Well"..... 3760
"Nothing to Wear"..... 2154

BUTTS, MRS. MARY FRANCES
Born in Rhode Island in 1836, and still living.
Trot, Trot..... 84

BYERS, SAMUEL HAWKINS MARSHALL
Born at Pulaski, Pa., July 23, 1838; now living at Des Moines, Iowa.
Song of Sherman's March to the Sea..... 2512

BYNNER, WITTER
Born in Brooklyn, N. Y., August 10, 1881; now living at Windsor, Vt.
Mystic, The..... 680
Sentence..... 3553
Songs Ascending..... 579

BYRD, WILLIAM
Born in London, England, about 1538; died, probably at Stondon, England, July 4, 1623.
The Quiet Life..... 1654

BYROM, JOHN
Born at Broughton, England, February 29, 1692; died at Manchester, England, September 26, 1763.
Careless Content..... 2989
Epigrams..... 1918

BYRON, GEORGE GORDON [SIXTH LORD]
Born in London, England, January 22, 1788; died at Missolonghi, Greece, April 19, 1824.
Destruction of Sennacherib, The..... 2327
Epigram..... 1917
Eve of Waterloo, The..... 2450
Fare Thee Well..... 950
"Farewell! If Ever Fondest Prayer"..... 1002
First Kiss of Love, The.... 686
From the Turkish..... 1031
Isles of Greece, The..... 2625
"Maid of Athens, Ere We Part"..... 951
"Oh! Snatched Away in Beauty's Bloom"..... 1082
On This Day I Complete my Thirty-sixth Year..... 360
Prisoner of Chillon, The.... 3273
Sea, The..... 1586
"She Walks in Beauty"..... 383
Stanzas, "Could Love for Ever"..... 491
Stanzas for Music..... 355
Stanzas for Music..... 546
Stanzas Written on the Road between Florence and Pisa..... 354
To Woman..... 834
Venice..... 2618
Vision of Belshazzar, The.. 2328
"We'll Go no More a Roving"..... 866
"When We Two Parted"... 952

BYRON, MAY [MRS. GEORGE F.]
Born in Cheshire, England, in 1861, and now living in London.
The Adventurers..... 3012
The Fairy Thrall..... 243
The Pageant of Seamen.... 2827
The Storm-Child..... 20

C

CABLE, GEORGE WASHINGTON
Born at New Orleans, La., October 12, 1844; present address, Northampton, Mass.
The New Arrival..... 1928

CALVERLEY, CHARLES STUART
Born at Martley, Worcestershire, England, December 22, 1831; died in London, February 17, 1884.
Alphabet, The..... 2049
Ballad..... 1939
Companions..... 1736
Disaster..... 1929
Ode to Tobacco..... 1983

CAMPBELL, THOMAS
Born at Glasgow, Scotland, July 22, 1777; died at Boulogne, France, June 15, 1844.
Battle of the Baltic..... 2441
Beech Tree's Petition, The. 1410
Exile of Erin..... 2252
Glenara..... 2722
Hallowed Ground..... 3432
Hohenlinden..... 2440
Lord Ullin's Daughter..... 2723
Margaret and Dora..... 544
River of Life, The..... 407
Soldier's Dream, The..... 2281
Song, "Earl March looked on his dying child"..... 1077

Song, "How delicious is the winning" ... 490
Song to the Evening Star ... 1319
To the Rainbow ... 1444
"Ye Mariners of England" ... 2233

CAMPION, THOMAS
Born in Essex, England, date unknown; died in London, in February, 1619.
Advice to a Girl ... 810
Amarillis ... 524
Cherry-ripe ... 524
Her Sacred Bower ... 587
Integer Vitæ ... 2912
Jack and Joan ... 767
"Kind Are Her Answers" ... 591
"Love Me or Not" ... 589
Of Corinna's Singing ... 590
"Sleep, Angry Beauty" ... 694
Song, "O sweet delight" ... 1141
"There is None, O, None but You" ... 589
To Lesbia ... 588
Vobiscum Est Iope ... 850
"Were My Heart as Some Men's Are" ... 590

CANNING, GEORGE
Born in London, England, April 11, 1770; died at Chiswick, England, August 8, 1827.
The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder ... 1856

CANTON, WILLIAM
Born on the Island of Chusan, in the China Sea, October 27, 1845; present address, Berkhamsted, England.
Crow, The ... 1536
Laus Infantium ... 253
New Poet, A ... 269

CARBERY, ETHNA [MRS. SEUMAS MACMANUS]
An Irish writer, who died in 1902.
Hills o' My Heart ... 2267

CAREW, THOMAS
Born in London, England, about 1598; died there about 1639.
Disdain Returned ... 817
Ingrateful Beauty Threatened ... 816
Mediocrity in Love Rejected ... 598
Persuasions to Enjoy ... 597
Song, "Ask me no more where Jove bestows" ... 530
To My Inconstant Mistress ... 597

CAREY, HENRY
An English writer, born about 1700; died in London, October 4, 1743.
"God Save the King" ... 2231
Harry Carey's General Reply to the Libelling Gentry ... 1995
Maiden's Ideal of a Husband, A ... 722
Sally in Our Alley ... 769

CARLYLE, JANE BAILLIE WELSH
Born at Haddington, England, July 14, 1801; died London, April 21, 1866.
To a Swallow, Building Under Our Eaves ... 1573

CARLYLE, THOMAS
Born at Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, December 4, 1795; died in London, England, February 4, 1881.
Adieu ... 954
Cui Bono ... 3377
To-day ... 2920

CARMAN, WILLIAM BLISS
Born at Fredericton, N. B., April 15, 1861; present address, New Canaan, Ct.
Autumn Garden, An ... 1452
Daisies ... 1478
Deserted Pasture, The ... 1438
Envoy from "Songs from Vagabondia" ... 2858
Hack and Hew ... 3139
Hem and Haw ... 1887
Joys of the Road, The ... 1694
"Lord of My Heart's Elation" ... 2852
Marian Drury ... 908
Mendicants, The ... 1692
"Over the Wintry Threshold" 1349
Sea Child, A ... 1041
Song, "Love, by that loosened hair" ... 577
Spring Song ... 1689
Vagabond Song, A ... 1689

CARNEGIE [SIR] JAMES [SIXTH EARL OF SOUTHESK]
Born at Kinnaird, Scotland, in 1827; died in 1905.
The Flitch of Dunmow ... 2176

CARNEY, JULIA FLETCHER
Born at Lancaster, Mass., April 6, 1823; died at Galesburg, Ill., in 1908.
Little Things ... 103

CARROLL, LEWIS [CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON]
Born at Daresbury, England, January 27, 1832; died at Guildford, England, January 14, 1898.
Father William ... 1927
Gardener's Song, The ... 2060
Jabberwocky ... 2059
Walrus and the Carpenter ... 2062
Whiting and the Snail, The 1934

CARRUTH, WILLIAM HERBERT
Born at Osawatomie, Kansas, April 3, 1859; present address, Stanford University, Cal.
Each in His Own Tongue ... 2867

CARRYL, CHARLES EDWARD
Born in New York City, December 30, 1841, and still living there.
My Recollectest Thoughts ... 2071
Nautical Ballad, A ... 2079
Plaint of the Camel, The ... 2080
Robinson Crusoe ... 2184

CARRYL, GUY WETMORE
Born in New York City, March 4, 1873; died April 1, 1904.
Red Ridinghood 2077
The Sycophantic Fox and the Gullible Raven 1854
When the Great Gray Ships Come In 2543

CARTWRIGHT, WILLIAM
Born at Northway, Gloucestershire, England, in September, 1611; died at Oxford, England, November 29, 1643.
To Chloe 603

CARY, ALICE
Born near Cincinnati, O., April 20, 1820; died in N. Y. City, Feb. 12, 1871.
Dying Hymn 3492
Make Believe 690

CARY, PHŒBE
Born near Cincinnati, O., Sep. 4, 1824; died at Newport, R. I., July 31, 1871.
Legend of the Northland, A. 143
Lovers, The 2067
Nearer Home 3813
"When Lovely Woman" . . . 1923

CASE, ELIZABETH YORK
An American writer; no biographical data available.
Unbelief 3762

CATHER, WILLA SIBERT
Born at Winchester, Va., December 7, 1875; present address, New York City.
"Grandmither, Think not I Forget" 1033
L'Envoi 3429
Likeness, A 1794

CATULLUS, GAIUS VALERIUS
Born at Verona, Italy, about 87 B. C.; died about 54 B. C.
Vivamus, Mea Lesbia 3827

CAWEIN, MADISON JULIUS
Born at Louisville, Ky., March 23, 1865; died there December 7, 1914.
Ballad of Low-lie-Down 1699
Enchantment 1406
"Here is the Place Where Loveliness Keeps House" . 1302
Miracle of the Dawn, The . . 1308
Morning Serenade 700
Old Home, The 3233
To a Wind-Flower 1503

CAYLEY, GEORGE JOHN
Born in 1826; died in 1878.
An Epitaph 1919

CELANO, TOMMÁSO DI
A Franciscan monk, born at Celano, Italy, about 1185, and died about 1255.
Dies Iræ 3819

CHALKHILL, JOHN
An English writer, two of whose songs were included by Isaac Walton in "The Compleat Angler," published about 1648.
Angler, The 1665
Coridon's Song 1636

CHALMERS, PATRICK R.
An Irish-born writer, now living in London.
"Hold" 1832
The Road 760
The Visitor 247

CHAMBERS, ROBERT WILLIAM
Born in Brooklyn, N. Y., May 26, 1865, and still living in New York City.
The "Grey Horse Troop" . . 2291
The Recruit 1977

CHANNING, WILLIAM ELLERY
Born in Boston, Mass., November 29, 1818; died in 1901.
Edith 3217

CHAPMAN, ARTHUR
Born at Rockford, Ill., June 25, 1873, and now living at Denver, Colo.
Out Where the West Begins 2574

CHATTERTON, THOMAS
Born at Bristol, England, November 20, 1752; suicided in London, August 25, 1770.
The Minstrel's Song 1070

CHENEY, JOHN VANCE
Born at Groveland, N. Y., December 29, 1848; present address, San Diego, Cal.
The Happiest Heart 2994
The Man with the Hoe, a Reply 3043
The Way of It 1049

CHERRY, ANDREW
Born at Limerick, Ireland, January 11, 1762; died at Monmouth, England, February 12, 1812.
The Green Little Shamrock of Ireland 2264

CHESSON, MRS. W. H., see HOPPER, NORA.

CHESTERTON, GILBERT KEITH
Born in London, England, in 1874, and still living there.
Ballade of Suicide, A 1787
Christmas Carol, A 212
Feast of the Snow, The 214
House of Christmas, The . . . 213
Songs of Guthrum and Alfred, The 2823
To M. E. W. 3482

CHEW, BEVERLY
Born at Geneva, New York, March 5, 1850; now living in New York City.
"Old Books are Best" 1579

CHILD, LYDIA MARIA
Born at Medford, Mass., February 11, 1802; died at Wayland, Mass., October 20, 1880.
The World I am Passing Through..... 408

CHORLEY, HENRY FOTHERGILL
Born at Backley Hurst, Lancashire, England, December 15, 1808; died in London, February 16, 1872.
The Brave Old Oak..... 1403

CIBBER, COLLEY
Born in London, England, November 6, 1671; died there, December 12, 1757.
The Blind Boy..... 157

CLARE, JOHN
Born at Helpstone, England, July 13, 1793; died in the asylum at Northampton, May 20, 1864, having been insane since 1837.
My Early Home..... 3233

CLARKE, JAMES FREEMAN
Born at Hanover, N. H., April 4, 1810; died at Jamaica Plain, Mass., June 8, 1888.
Rabia..... 2953

CLARKE, JOSEPH IGNATIUS CONSTANTINE
Born at Kingstown, Ireland, July 31, 1846; came to the United States in 1868; present address, New York City.
The Fighting Race..... 2298

CLEAVELAND, C. L.
No biographical data available.
November..... 1384

CLEGHORN, SARAH NORCLIFFE
Born at Norfolk, Va., February 4, 1876; now living at Manchester, Vt.
Emilia..... 346
Hemlock Mountain..... 1436

CLEPHANE, ELIZABETH CECILIA
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1830; died at Melrose, in 1869.
The Lost Sheep..... 3756

CLERK, [SIR] JOHN
Born at Penicuik, Scotland, in 1684, died there, October 4, 1755.
"O Merry may the Maid Be" 772

CLIFFORD, ETHEL [MRS. FISHER WENTWORTH DILKE]
An English writer, now living in London.
The Dark Road..... 3559
The Harp of Sorrow..... 3360
The Last Hour..... 1295

CLOUD, VIRGINIA WOODWARD
Born at Baltimore, Md., and still living there.
Care..... 3373

CLOUGH, ARTHUR HUGH
Born at Liverpool, England, January 1, 1819; died at Florence, Italy, November 13, 1861.
Peschiera..... 2471
Qua Cursum Ventus..... 3033
"Say not the Struggle Naught Availeth"..... 2839
Sic Itur..... 3037
"Where Lies the Land"..... 3414

COATES, FLORENCE EARLE
Born in Philadelphia, Pa., in 1850, and still living there.
Angelus, The..... 3646
Death..... 3430
House of Pain, The..... 3386
Morning-glory, The..... 1494
Song, "I love and the world is mine"..... 1148

COCHRANE, ALFRED
An English writer, born in 1865, and now living at Newcastle-on-Tyne.
Eight-day Clock, The..... 1756
Omnia Vincit..... 744
To Anthea, Who May Command Him Anything..... 1755
Upon Lesbia—Arguing..... 1754

COCHRANE, FRANCES
No biographical data available.
Face to Face..... 915

COCKE, ZITELLA
Born in Perry County, Ala., in 1847; and now living at Boston, Mass.
Miss Nancy's Gown..... 1802
My Cross..... 3463

COE, ALICE ROLLITT
An American writer; no biographical data available.
The Turn of the Road..... 1124

COLE, TIMOTHY
Born in London, England, in 1852; came to America, 1857; now living at Poughkeepsie, N. Y.
The Year's End..... 425

COLERIDGE, HARTLEY
Born at Clevedon, Somersetshire, England, September 19, 1796; died at Rydal, Westmoreland, England, January 6, 1849.
Early Death..... 3550
"Long Time a Child"..... 408
Multum Dilexit..... 3387
Solitary-Hearted, The..... 381
Song, "She is not fair to outward view"..... 548
Song, "Tis sweet to hear the merry lark"..... 1554
To a Friend..... 3015
To Shakespeare..... 3652
"Whither is Gone the Wisdom and the Power"..... 3096

COLERIDGE, MARY E.
An English writer, born in 1861, died August 25, 1907.
Gone..... 3005

COLERIDGE, SAMUEL TAYLOR
Born at Ottery Saint Mary, Devonshire, England, October 21, 1772; died in London, July 25, 1834.
Answer to a Child's Question . . . 141
Cologne . . . 1911
Dejection: An Ode . . . 3369
Epigram . . . 1915
Epigram . . . 1917
Epigram . . . 1918
Exchange, The . . . 726
Good Great Man, The . . . 2860
Hymn before Sunrise, in the Vale of Chamouni . . . 1430
"I Asked My Fair, One Happy Day" . . . 726
Kubla Khan . . . 3160
Love . . . 1173
Metrical Feet . . . 3111
Rime of the Ancient Mariner, The . . . 2747
Work Without Hope . . . 3373
Youth and Age . . . 403

COLERIDGE, SARA
Born at Greta Hall, near Keswick, England, December 22, 1802; died in London, May 3, 1852.
The Garden Year . . . 61

COLES, ABRAHAM
Born at Scotch Plains, N. J., in 1813, died at Monterey, Cal., in 1891.
Dies Iræ . . . 3777
Stabat Mater Dolorosa . . . 3779

COLLINS, JOHN
Born at Bath, England, about 1742; died at Birmingham, England, May 2, 1808.
Tomorrow . . . 402

COLLINS, MORTIMER
Born at Plymouth, England, June 29, 1827; died at Knowl Hill, Berkshire, England, July 28, 1876.
Ad Chloen, M. A. . . . 1899
If . . . 1944
Kate Temple's Song . . . 649
My Thrush . . . 1580
To F. C. . . . 1171

COLLINS, WILLIAM
Born at Chichester, England, December 25, 1721; died there, June 12, 1759.
Dirge in Cymbeline . . . 3431
"How Sleep the Brave" . . . 2194
Ode to Evening . . . 1273
The Passions . . . 3119

COLLYER, ROBERT
Born at Keighly, Yorkshire, England, December 8, 1823; came to America in 1850; died in New York City, November 30, 1912.
Saxon Grit . . . 2227

COLMAN, GEORGE, THE YOUNGER
Born in London, England, October 21, 1762; died there, October 26, 1836.
Gluggity Glug . . . 2112

COLTON, ARTHUR WILLIS
Born at Washington, Conn., May 22, 1868, and now living in New York City.
Allah's Tent . . . 3740
Phyllis and Corydon . . . 693
"Sometime it May Be" . . . 927

CONE, HELEN GRAY
Born in New York City, March 8, 1859, and still living there.
Ballad of Cassandra Brown, The . . . 1906
Chant of Love for England, A 2551
Common Street, The . . . 3021
Dandelions, The . . . 1483

COLUM, PADRAIC
Born in Ireland in 1881; now living in New York City.
Across the Door . . . 1145
Drover, A . . . 1698

CONGREVE, WILLIAM
Born at Bardsley, near Leeds, England, in February, 1670; died in London, January 19, 1729.
"False Though She Be" . . . 613
Pious Selinda . . . 721
Song, "See, see, she wakes!" 697

CONKLING, GRACE WALCOTT HAZARD [MRS. R. P.]
Born in New York City in 1878; now living at Northampton, Mass.
"The Little Rose is Dust, My Dear" . . . 1139
To a New-born Baby Girl . . . 5
The Wind's Way . . . 3374

CONNELL, F. NORREYS
An English writer; no biographical data available.
Requiem . . . 3500

CONSTABLE, HENRY
Born at Newark, England, in 1562; died at Liege, Belgium, October 9, 1613.
Damelus' Song of His Diaphenia . . . 522
Sonnets from "Diana" . . . 1245

CONSTABLE, THOMAS
Born at Craigcrook, near Edinburgh, Scotland, June 29, 1812; died at Edinburgh, May 26, 1881.
Old October . . . 1383

COOKE, PHILIP PENDLETON
Born at Martinsburgh, Va., October 26, 1816; died there, January 20, 1850.
Florence Vane . . . 1117

COOKE, ROSE TERRY
Born at West Hartford, Conn., February 17, 1827; died at Pittsfield, Mass., July 18, 1892.
Then . . . 666
Two Villages, The . . . 3442

COOLBRITH, INA DONNA
Born in Illinois in 1844, and now living at San Francisco.
"When the Grass shall cover Me" 1114

COOLIDGE, SUSAN, see WOOLSEY, SARAH CHAUNCEY.

COOPER, GEORGE
Born in New York City, in 1840.
Baby-land 55
October's Party 152

CORBET, RICHARD
Born at Ewell, Surrey, England, in 1582; died, Bishop of Norwich, at Norwich, July 28, 1635.
Farewell to the Fairies 244

CORNWALL, BARRY, see PROCTER, BRYAN WALLER.

CORNWELL, HENRY SYLVESTER
An American writer, born in 1831; died at New London, Conn., in 1886.
May 1362
The Sunset City 3706

CORTISSOZ, ELLEN MACKAY HUTCHINSON
An American writer, born in New York City, and still living there.
Harvest 1370
Pamela in Town 802
Quest, The 357

CORY, WILLIAM JOHNSON, see JOHNSON-CORY, WILLIAM.

COTTON, CHARLES
Born at Beresford, Staffordshire, England, April 28, 1630; died in London in February, 1687.
Les Amours 825
The Retirement 1641
The Winter Glass 1094
To Celia 609

COUSINS, JAMES H.
Born in Ulster, Ireland, in 1873, and now living in Dublin.
A Starling's Spring Rondel 1337

COWLEY, ABRAHAM
Born in London, England, in 1618; died at Chertsey, Surrey, England, July 28, 1667.
Drinking 1993
Epicure, The 1993
Grasshopper, The 1509
Wish, The 1655

COWPER, WILLIAM
Born at Great Berkhampstead, Hertfordshire, England, November 15, 1731; died at East Dereham, Norfolk, England, April 25, 1800.
Boadicea: An Ode 2348
Cricket, The 1511
Diverting History of John Gilpin, The 2093
Epitaph on a Hare 1823
Golden Mean, The 2091
Human Frailty 2861
Jackdaw, The 1540
Light Shining out of Darkness 3796
Lovest Thou Me 3809
Nightingale and the Glow-worm, The 179
On the Death of Mrs. Throckmorten's Bullfinch 1824
On the Loss of the "Royal George" 2435
On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture, out of Norfolk 3251
Poplar Field, The 1411
Riddle, A 685
Snail, The 1514
To a Young Lady 332
To Mary Unwin 1254
Verses Supposed to be Written by Alexander Selkirk . 3038

COXE, ARTHUR CLEVELAND
Born at Mendham, N. J. May 10, 1818; died in 1896.
He Standeth at the Door 3811

CRABBE, GEORGE
Born at Aldeburgh, Suffolk, England, December 24, 1754; died at Trowbridge, England, February 3, 1832.
Late Wisdom 403
Meeting 621

CRAIK, DINAH MARIA MULOCK
Born at Stoke-on-Trent, England, in 1826; died at Shortlands, Kent, England, October 12, 1887.
Four Years 1099
Green Things Growing 1461
In Our Boat 1597
Lettice 1208
Now and Afterwards 3572
"Philip, My King" 21
Plighted 1161
Too Late 1099

CRANCH, CHRISTOPHER PEARSE
Born at Alexandria, Va., March 8, 1813; died at Cambridge, Mass., January 20, 1892.
Gnosis 2975
I in Thee, and Thou in Me 2974
The Pines and the Sea 1590

CRANE, STEPHEN
Born at Newark, N. J., in 1870; died in England in 1900.
The Peaks 1433

CRAPSEY, ADELAIDE
Born at Rochester, N. Y., September 9, 1878; died at Saranac Lake, N. Y., October 8, 1914.
Dirge 1139
Rose Marie of the Angels 326
Song, "I make my shroud but no one knows" 3478
Vendor's Song 3109

CRASHAW, RICHARD
Born in London, England, about 1613; died in Italy in 1649.
Love's Horoscope 484
Prayer 3723
Wishes to His Supposed Mistress 820

CRAWFORD, LOUISA MACARTNEY
An English writer, whose one memorable poem was written about 1849.
Kathleen Mavourneen 979

CREWE, MARQUESS OF, see ASHBURTON, ROBERT OFFLEY.

CROLY, GEORGE
Born at Dublin, Ireland, in August, 1780; died in London, November 24, 1860.
Genius of Death, The 3408
Leonidas 2345

CROSBY, ERNEST HOWARD
Born in New York City, November 4, 1856; died January 3, 1907.
In the Garden 138

CROSS, MARION EVANS LEWES, see ELIOT, GEORGE.

CUNNINGHAM, ALLAN
Born at Blackwood, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, December 7, 1784; died in London, October 30, 1842.
Hame, Hame, Hame 3226
John Grumlie 2118
Spring of the Year, The 3561
"Sun Rises Bright in France, The" 3259
"Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea, A" 1592

CUNNINGHAM, JOHN
Born at Dublin, Ireland, in 1729; died at Newcastle, England, September 18, 1773.
Kate of Aberdeen 538

CUNNINGHAME-GRAHAM, ROBERT
An English writer; date of birth unknown; died about 1707.
Cavalier's Song 619

CURRAN, JOHN PHILPOT
Born at Cork, Ireland, July 24, 1750; died in London, England, October 14, 1817.
Cushla Ma Chree 2263

CURRIE, LADY, see FANE, VIOLET.

CURTIS, GEORGE WILLIAM
Born at Providence, R. I., February 24, 1824; died on Staten Island, N. Y., August 31, 1892.
Ebb and Flow 2849
Egyptian Serenade 868

CUSTANCE, OLIVE, ELEANOR [LADY ALFRED DOUGLAS]
An English writer, born in 1874, and now living in Sussex.
Parting Hour, The 985
Twilight 1317

CUTTS, JOHN [BARON CUTTS OF GOWRAN, IRELAND]
Born in Sussex, England, in 1661; died at Dublin, Ireland, January 26, 1707.
Song, "Only tell her that I love" 613

D

DALLAS, MARY KYLE
Born at Philadelphia, Pa., in 1830; died in New York City in 1897.
"He'd Nothing but his Violin" 1202

DALY, THOMAS AUGUSTIN
Born at Philadelphia, Pa., May 28, 1871, and still living there.
Da Leetla Boy 306
The Peaceable Race 1976

DANA, RICHARD HENRY
Born at Cambridge, Mass., November 15, 1787; died in Boston, February 2, 1879.
The Little Beach Bird 1522

DANIEL, JOHN
An English writer, born about 1600.
"If I Could Shut the Gate against my Thoughts" . . . 3743

DANIEL, SAMUEL
Born near Taunton, Somerset, England, in 1562; died at Beckingham, Somerset, October 14, 1619.
Song, "Love is a sickness full of woes" 478
Sonnets from "To Delia" . . . 1239

DARLEY, GEORGE
Born at Dublin, Ireland, in 1795; died in London, November 23, 1846.
Fallen Star, The 3746
Flower of Beauty, The 628
"It is not Beauty I Demand" 547
Last Night 954
Serenade 703

DARMESTETER, MRS., see ROBINSON, A. M. F.

DAUBENY, CHARLES
Born at Bristol, England, in August, 1745; died at Salisbury, England, July 10, 1827.
Verses on a Cat 1822

D'AVENANT, [SIR] WILLIAM
Born at Oxford, England, in February, 1606; died in London, April 7, 1668.
Morning 695

DAVIDSON, JOHN
An English writer, born in 1857; committed suicide by drowning in 1909.
Butterflies 1032
Runnable Stag, A 1659
St. Michael's Mount 2596
Song, "Closes and courts and lanes" 2598

DAVIES, MARY CAROLINE
Born in a gold mining town in the Canadian Rockies; at present living in New York City.
The Dream-bearer 3058

DAVIES, WILLIAM H.
Born at Newport, Montana, April 20, 1870; now living in London, England.
Leisure 2998
Poor Kings 2998
Thunderstorms 3110
Truly Great 1644

DAVIS, FANNIE STEARNS [MRS. AUGUSTUS MCK. GIFFORD]
Born at Cleveland, Ohio, March 6, 1884; now living at Pittsfield, Mass.
The Forbidden Lure 1686
The Moods 3102

DAVIS, FRANCIS
An Irish writer, born in 1810, died in 1885.
Nanny 653

DAVIS, MARY EVELYN MOORE
Born at Talladega, Ala., in 1852; died at New Orleans, La., in 1909.
Counsel 3014

DAVIS, THOMAS OSBORNE
Born at Mallow, Ireland, October 14, 1814; died at Dublin, September 16, 1845.
Fontenoy 2417
My Land 2265
The Welcome 638

DAVISON, FRANCIS
Born in London, England, about 1575; date of death unknown.
"Are Women Fair" 1902
Dispraise of Love and Lovers' Follies 818
"How Can the Heart Forget Her" 599

DEKKER, THOMAS
Born in London, England, about 1570; died there about 1641.
"Golden Slumbers Kiss Your Eyes" 75
Happy Heart, The 2981

DE LA MARE, WALTER
Born at Charlton, Kent, England, April 25, 1873; now living in London.
Listeners, The 3219
Miss Lou 1790

DELAND, MARGARET WADE
Born at Allegheny, Pa., February 23, 1857; now living at Boston, Mass.
Affaire D'Amour 1048
Love and Death 3574

DEMAREST, MARY LEE
An American writer, born in 1857, died in 1888.
My Ain Countree 3710

DENISON, J. P.
An American writer, no biographical data available.
Wing Tee Wee 1803

DE TABLEY, LORD, see WARREN, JOHN BYRNE LEICESTER.

DE VERE, see also VERE.

DE VERE, [SIR] AUBREY
Born at Curragh Chase, County Limerick, Ireland, August 28, 1788; died there, July 5, 1846.
The Opening of the Tomb of Charlemagne 3597
Waterloo 2452

DE VERE, AUBREY THOMAS
Born at Curragh Chase, County Limerick, Ireland, January 10, 1814; died in 1902.
Ballad of Sarsfield, A 2410
Evening Melody 1315
"Flowers I Would Bring" 546
Human Life 416
Love's Spite 834
Serenade 701
Song, "Sing the old song" 866
Sorrow 3352

DE VERE, MARY AINGE [MADELINE S. BRIDGES]
Born in Brooklyn, N. Y., in 1844 (?)
Friend and Lover 849
Poet and Lark 3089
"When the Most is Said" 3423

DIBDIN, CHARLES
Born at Southampton, England, March 15, 1745; died in London, July 25, 1814.
"Blow High! Blow Low" 943
Leadsman's Song, The 1632
Nongtongpaw 1850
Poor Jack 1597
Sailor's Consolation, The 2105
Tom Bowling 1628

DICKENS, CHARLES
Born at Landport, near Portsmouth, England, February 7, 1812; died at Gadshill, near Rochester, England, June 9, 1870.
The Ivy Green 1489

DICKINSON, CHARLES MONROE
Born at Lowville, N. Y., November 15, 1842; present address, Binghamton, N. Y.
The Children 250

DICKINSON, EMILY
Born at Amherst, Mass., December 10, 1830; died there, May 15, 1886.
Autumn 1381
Chartless 3711
Indian Summer 1373
The Waking Year 1332

DICKINSON, MARTHA GILBERT [MRS. ALEXANDER BIANCHI]
Born at Amherst, Mass., and still living there.
Heaven 1112

DILKE, MRS. FISHER WENTWORTH, see CLIFFORD, ETHEL.

DIMOND, WILLIAM
An English writer, born at Bath, about 1780; died in Paris in 1837.
The Mariner's Dream 1615

DOANE, GEORGE WASHINGTON
Born at Trenton, N. J., May 27, 1799; died at Burlington, N. J., April 27, 1859.
Evening 3815
Robin Redbreast 1561

DOBELL, SYDNEY THOMPSON
Born at Cranbrook, Kent, England, April 5, 1824; died at Nailsworth, Gloucester, England, August 22, 1874.
America 2225
Ballad of Keith of Ravelston, The 2736
Chanted Calendar, A 1462
How's My Boy 1612
Tommy's Dead 3542

DOBSON, AUSTIN
Born at Plymouth, England, January 18, 1840; now living in London.
Ars Victrix 3140
Ballad of Heroes, A 2304
Ballad of Imitation, The . . . 1883
Ballade of Prose and Rhyme, The 1770
Curé's Progress, The 1776
Dance of Death, The 3446
Dead Letter, A 1814
Dialogue from Plato, A 1773
Don Quixote 2950
"Fame is a Food that Dead Men Eat" 3013
Fancy from Fontanelle, A . . 3378
For a Copy of Theocritus . . . 3664
Garden Song, A 1449
Gentleman of the Old School, A 1777
"Good-night, Babette" 1771
Growing Gray 361
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 3645
"In After Days" 3502
Kiss, A 1800
Ladies of St. James's, The . . 1775
Maltworm's Madrigal, The . 2015
Milkmaid, The 573
On a Fan 1781
Paradox of Time, The 423
Rondeau, The 3111
Song of Angiola in Heaven, A 3202
Song of the Four Seasons, A 797
To a Greek Girl 347
Urceus Exit 1782
Wanderer, The 868
"When I Saw You Last, Rose" 1782

DODGE, MARY MAPES
Born in New York City in 1838; died in 1905.
One and One 164
Two Mysteries, The 3570

DODGSON, CHARLES LUTWIDGE, see CARROLL, LEWIS.

DOLBEN, DIGBY MACKWORTH
An English poet, born in 1848, died in 1867.
The Shrine 395

DOLLIVER, CLARA
No biographical data available.
No Baby in the House 25

DOMETT, ALFRED
Born at Camberwell Grove, Surrey, England, May 20, 1811; died, November 12, 1887.
A Christmas Hymn 204
A Glee for Winter 1394

DONNE, JOHN
Born in London, England, in 1573; died there, March 31, 1631.
"Death, be not Proud" 3348
Good-morrow, The 1142
Hymn to God the Father, A 3759
Message, The 593
Song, "Go and catch a falling star" 592

DORR, JULIA CAROLINA RIPLEY
Born at Charleston, S. C., February 13, 1825; died at Rutland, Vt., January 18, 1913.
Outgrown 1017

DORSET, EARL OF, see SACKVILLE, CHARLES.

DOTY, WALTER G.
Born at Hornell, N. Y., September 13, 1876, and still living there.
The Best Firm 114

DOUDNEY, SARAH
Born at Portsmouth, England, January 15, 1843, and still living there.
The Lesson of the Water-Mill 2930

DOUGLAS, LADY ALFRED, see CUSTANCE, OLIVE.

DOUGLAS, WILLIAM OF FLEUGLAND
A Scotch writer; born about 1672; died in 1748.
Annie Laurie 550

DOWDEN, EDWARD
Born at Cork, Ireland, May 3, 1843; died April 4, 1913.
Love's Lord 2977
Windle-Straws 887

DOWLING, BARTHOLOMEW
Born at Listowel, County Kerry, Ireland, in 1823; came to America in 1857; died at San Francisco, Cal., in 1863.
The Revel 3566

DOWNING, ELLEN MARY PATRICK
Born at Cork, Ireland, March 19, 1828; died in a convent in 1869.
My Owen 1200

DOWSON, ERNEST
Born in Kent, England, August 2, 1867; died in London, February 23, 1900.
Ad Domnulam Suam 997
Amantium Iræ 660
Dregs 422
Garden of Shadow, The 508
Impenitentia Ultima 917
Lyric, "You would have understood me, had you waited" 1120
Non Sum Qualis Eram Bonæ, sub Regno Cynaræ 918
Quid non Speremus, Amantes 919
Sapientia Lunæ 2995
Villanelle of His Lady's Treasures 576
Vitæ Summa Brevis Spem Nos Vetat Incohare Longam 3404

DOYLE, [SIR] ARTHUR CONAN
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, May 22, 1859; now living in Sussex, England.
Cremona 2436
The Song of the Bow 2241

DOYLE, [SIR] FRANCIS HASTINGS CHARLES [SECOND BARONET]
Born at Nunappleton, Yorkshire, England, August 21, 1810; died in London, June 8, 1888.
The Loss of the "Birkenhead" 2472
The Private of the Buffs 2478

DRAKE, JOSEPH RODMAN
Born in New York City, August 7, 1795; died there, September 21, 1820.
The American Flag 2197

DRAYTON, MICHAEL
Born at Hartshill, Warwickshire, England, in 1563; died in London in 1631.
Agincourt 2361
Sonnets from "Idea" 1242
To His Coy Love 586
To the Virginian Voyage 2384

DRINKWATER, JOHN
An English writer, born June 1, 1882, and now living in Birmingham.
Birthright 3401
Prayer, A 2951
Sunrise on Rydal Water 1436

DRISCOLL, LOUISE
Born at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., January 15, 1875; now living at Catskill, N. Y.
The Highway 509

DRUMMOND, WILLIAM, OF HAWTHORNDEN
Born at Hawthornden, near Edinburgh, Scotland, December 13, 1585; died there, December 4, 1649.
"Alexis, Here She Stayed" 1252
Angels, The 207
Book of the World, The 1293
For the Baptist 3741
Of Phyllis 527
"Sleep, Silence' Child" 3220
Song, "Phœbus, arise" 1305
"Thrice Happy He" 1635
To the Nightingale 1548

DRUMMOND, WILLIAM HENRY
A Canadian writer, born in 1854, died in 1907.
Two Hundred Years Ago 2031
Wreck of the "Julie Plante" 2033

DRYDEN, JOHN
Born at the vicarage of Aldwinkle All Saints, Northamptonshire, England, August 9, 1631; died in London, May 1, 1700.
"Ah, How Sweet it is to Love" 485
Alexander's Feast, or, The Power of Music 3114
Epigram 1919
Song for St. Cecilia's Day, A 3112
Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of the Town in the Spring 934
To the Pious Memory of the Accomplished Young Lady, Mrs. Anne Killigrew 3524
Under the Portrait of Milton 3647
Veni, Creator Spiritus 3782

DUFFERIN, COUNTESS OF, see SHERIDAN, HELEN SELINA.

DU MAURIER, GEORGE LOUIS PALMELLA BUSSON
Born in Paris, March 6, 1834; died in London, October 6, 1896.
"A Little Work" 2910
Vers Nonsensiques 2087

DUNBAR, PAUL LAURENCE
Born at Dayton, Ohio, June 27, 1872; died in Washington, February 9, 1906.
Angelina 2043
Compensation 3479

DUNSANY, LORD, see PLUNKETT, EDWARD, J. M. D.

DUNLOP, JOHN
Born at Carmyle, Lanarkshire, Scotland, in November, 1755; died at Port Glasgow, Scotland, September 4, 1820.
"Dinna Ask Me" 1163
The Year That's Awa' 2000

D'URFEY, THOMAS
Born at Exeter, England, in 1653; died in London, in 1723.
Chloe Divine 533

DWIGHT, TIMOTHY
Born at Northampton, Mass., May 14, 1752; died at New Haven, Conn., January 11, 1817.
Columbia 2202
Love to the Church 3797

DYER, [SIR] EDWARD
Born in Somersetshire, England, about 1550; died in London in 1607.
"My Mind to Me a Kingdom Is" 2987

E

EASTMAN, ELAINE GOODALE
Born at Mt. Washington, Mass., October 9, 1863; present address, Amherst, Mass.
Ashes of Roses 923
Goldenrod 1485

EASTMAN, MAX
Born at Canandaigua, N. Y., January 4, 1883, now living at Croton-on-Hudson, N. Y.
Diogenes 2997

EDEN, HELEN PARRY (MRS. DENIS)
An English writer now living in Oxfordshire.
The Poet and the Wood-louse 1791
To a Little Girl 267

EDMESTON, JAMES
Born at Wapping, England, September 10, 1791; died, January 7, 1867.
Prayer to the Trinity 3807

EDWARDS, RICHARD
Born in Somersetshire, England, about 1523; died, October 31, 1566.
Amantium Iræ 3031

EGAN, MAURICE FRANCIS
Born at Philadelphia, Pa., May 24, 1852; present address, Copenhagen, Denmark.
The Shamrock 1501

ELIOT, GEORGE [MARIAN EVANS LEWES CROSS]
Born at Arbury Farm, Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire, England, November 22, 1819; died in London, December 22, 1880.
I Am Lonely 323
"Oh, May I Join the Choir Invisible" 3485
Two Lovers 1204

ELLERTON, JOHN LODGE
Born at Liverpool, England, in 1801; died in London, January 3, 1873.
"Now the Laborer's Task is O'er" 3573

ELLIOTT, [SIR] GILBERT [THIRD BARONET OF MINTO]
Born at Minto House, Teviotdale, Scotland, in September, 1722; died at Marseilles, France, January 11, 1777.
Amynta 617

ELLIOTT, JANE
Born at Minto House, Teviotdale, Scotland, in 1727; died there, March 29, 1805.
A Lament for Flodden 2368

ELLIOTT, CHARLOTTE
An English hymn-writer, born March 17, 1789; died at Brighton, September 22, 1871.
"Just as I Am" 3800

ELLIOTT, EBENEZER
Born at Masborough, Yorkshire, England, March 17, 1781; died near Barnsley, England, December 1, 1849.
"Land Which No One Knows, The" 3576

ELLSWORTH, ERASTUS WOLCOTT
Born at South Windsor, Conn., November 27, 1822; died at East Windsor Hill, Conn., January 5, 1902.
The Mayflower 2389

EMERSON, RALPH WALDO
Born at Boston, Mass., May 25, 1803; died at Concord, Mass., April 27, 1882.
Bacchus 2964
Brahma 2964
Concord Hymn 2205
Duty 290
Each and All 2962
Eros 474
Fable 1909
Forbearance 3076
Give All to Love 502
Good-bye 2905
Humble-bee, The 1515
Problem, The 2966
Rhodora, The 1497
Song of Nature 1296
Terminus 410
Waldeinsamkeit 1398

EMMETT, DANIEL DECATUR
Born at Mt. Vernon, Ohio, in 1815; died there in 1904.
Dixie 2218

ENGLISH, THOMAS DUNN
Born at Philadelphia, Pa., June 29, 1819; died at Newark, N. J., in 1902.
Ben Bolt 470

ERSKINE, FRANCIS ROBERT ST. CLAIR [EARL OF ROSSLYN]
An English writer, born in 1833; died in 1890.
Bedtime 97

ERSKINE, WILLIAM
Born at Muthill, Perthshire, Scotland, in 1769; died, August 14, 1822.
Epigram 1916

ETHEREGE, [SIR] GEORGE
An English writer, born about 1635; died in 1691.
Song, "Ladies, though to your conquering eyes" .. 594
Song, "Ye happy swains, whose hearts are free" ... 808
To a Lady Asking How Long He Would Love Her ... 594

EVANS, FLORENCE WILKINSON, see WILKINSON, FLORENCE.

F

FABER, FREDERICK WILLIAM
Born at Calverley, Yorkshire, England, June 28, 1814; died, September 26, 1863.
Paradise 3695
Written in a Little Lady's Little Album 124

FAHY, FRANCIS A.
Born at Kinvara, County Galway, Ireland, September 29, 1854; present address, London, England.
Little Mary Cassidy 759
The Ould Plaid Shawl 758

FANE, JULIAN
An English writer, born in 1827, died in 1870.
Ad Matrem 396

FANE, VIOLET [MARY MONTGOMERIE, LADY CURRIE]
An English writer, at present living in Rome.
Afterwards 3469
"In Green Old Gardens" ... 1450

FANSHAWE, CATHERINE MARIA
Born at Shabden, Surrey, England, July 6, 1765; died at Putney Heath, England, April 17, 1834.
Fragment in Imitation of Wordsworth 1923

FANSHAWE, [SIR] RICHARD
Born at Ware Park, Hertfordshire, England, in June, 1608; died at Madrid, Spain, June 26, 1666.
A Rose 1500

FATHER PROUT, see MAHONY, FRANCIS SYLVESTER.

FAULKS, MRS. FREDERIC, see GARRISON, THEODOSIA.

FAWCETT, EDGAR
Born in New York City, May 26, 1847; died in London, England, in 1904.
Fireflies 1519
To an Oriole 1557
Wild Roses 1498

FAWCETT, JOHN
Born at Lidget Green, near Bradford, England, January 6, 1740; died in the parish of Halifax, England, July 25, 1817.
"Blest be the Tie that Binds" 3801

FERGUSON, JAMES
A Scotch writer; no biographical data available.
Auld Daddy Darkness 71

FERGUSON, [SIR] SAMUEL
Born at Belfast, Ireland, March 10, 1810; died at Howth, County of Dublin, Ireland, August 6, 1886.
The Forging of the Anchor. 1606
The Pretty Girl of Loch Dan 779

FERRIER, SUSAN EDMONSTONE
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, September 7, 1782; died there, November 5, 1854.
The Laird o' Cockpen 2113

FICKE, ARTHUR DAVISON
Born at Davenport, Iowa, November 10, 1883, and still living there.
The Oracle 266
The Three Sisters 1090
To the Harpies 3389

FIELD, EUGENE
Born at St. Louis, Mo., in 1850; died in Chicago in 1895.
Duel, The 173
Jes 'Fore Christmas 220
Little Boy Blue 298
Seein' Things 172
Sugar-Plum Tree, The 69
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod 68

FIELD, NATHANIEL
Born in the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate, England, in 1587; died there in 1633.
Matin Song 694

FIELDING, HENRY
Born at Sharpham Park, Somersetshire, England, April 22, 1707; died in London, October 8, 1754.
"A-Hunting we will go" ... 1662

FIELDS, JAMES THOMAS
Born at Portsmouth, N. H., December 31, 1816; died at Boston, Mass., April 24, 1881.
Alarmed Skipper, The 2146
Captain's Daughter, The ... 178
Mabel, in New Hampshire .. 793
Owl-Critic, The 1881
Turtle and Flamingo, The .. 2058

FILSINGER, MRS. ERNEST B., see TEASDALE, SARA.

FINCH, ANNE [COUNTESS OF WINCHELSEA]
An English writer; date of birth unknown; died, August 20, 1720.
To Death 3407
To Sylvia 614

FINCH, FRANCIS MILES
Born at Ithaca, N. Y., June 9, 1827; died there in 1907.
The Blue and the Gray . . . 2308

FINK, WILLIAM W.
An Irish writer; no biographical data available.
Larrie O'Dee 1961

FINLEY, JOHN
An Irish writer, born in 1796, died in 1866.
Bachelor's Hall 1970

FISCHER, JACOB
No biographical data available.
The Lady Poverty 2934

FISHER, A. HUGH
Born in London, England, in 1867, and still living there.
Ceylon 2638

FISHER, MAHLON LEONARD
Born at Williamsport, Pa., in 1874, and still living there.
"As an Old Mercer" 1301
November 1385
On a Sculptured Head of the Christ 3751

FITZGERALD, EDWARD
Born near Woodbridge, Suffolk, England, March 31, 1809; died at Merton, Norfolk, England, June 14, 1883.
Because 788
Chivalry at a Discount 1724
The Meadows in Spring 1346
The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám 2875

FLACCUS, QUINTUS HORATIUS
Born at Venusia, Apulia, December 8, 65 B. C.; died in Rome, November 27, 8 B. C.
Integer Vitæ 3828
Persicos Odi 3827
Rectius Vives 3829

FLAGG, WILSON
Born at Beverly, Mass., November 5, 1805; died at North Cambridge, Mass., May 6, 1884.
The O'Lincon Family 1530

FLECKER, JAMES ELROY
Born in London, England, November 5, 1884; died at Davos-Platz, Switzerland, January 3, 1915.
The Ballad of Camden Town 1058
The Queen's Song 3214
To a Poet a Thousand Years Hence 3101

FLETCHER, GILES
Born at Watford, Hertfordshire, England, about 1549; died in London, March 11, 1611.
Wooing Song 476

FLETCHER, JOHN
Born at Rye, Sussex, England, in December 1579; died in London, in August, 1625.
Aspatia's Song 1064
Drink To-day 1991
Love's Emblems 482
Melancholy 3349
Power of Love, The 482
Sleep 3220
"Take, O Take Those Lips Away" 683
What is Love 481
Women's Longing 1903

FOLLEN, MRS. ELIZA LEE [CABOT]
Born in Massachusetts in 1787; died in 1859.
The Moon 57

FORD, JOHN
Born at Islington, Devonshire, England, in April, 1586; died after 1639.
Fancies 3142

FOSS, SAM WALTER
Born at Candia, N. H., June 19, 1858; died at Somerville, Mass., February 26, 1911.
Calf-Path, The 1896
House by the Side of the Road, The 3040
Then Ag'in 1889

FOSTER, STEPHEN COLLINS
Born at Pittsburgh, Pa., July 4, 1826; died in New York City, January 13, 1864.
My Old Kentucky Home . . . 3227
The Old Folks at Home . . . 3228

FOWLER, [HON.] ELLEN THORNEYCROFT [MRS. A. L. FELKIN]
An English writer, born in 1875; now living at Ellham, Kent.
The Wisdom of Folly 2045

FOX-SMITH, CECILY
Born at Lymm, Cheshire, England, in 1882, and now living in London.
Hastings Mill 1591

FRASER, JOHN
Born at Tomnacloich, Inverness-shire, Scotland, in 1750; died in London, April 26, 1811.
The Maiden and the Lily . . . 1880

FRENEAU, PHILIP
Born in New York City, in 1752;

died near Freehold, N. J., December 18, 1832.
Song of Thyrsis..... 830
The Indian Burying-Ground 3438
The Wild Honeysuckle..... 1488

FRERE, JOHN HOOKHAM
Born in London, England, May 21, 1769; died at Pietá, Valetta, Malta (?), January 7, 1846.
The Boy and the Wolf..... 121

FROST, ROBERT
Born in San Francisco, Cal., March 26, 1875; now living at Franconia, N. H.
Storm Fear..... 1385
Mending Wall..... 3075
The Telephone..... 658
The Tuft of Flowers..... 3074

FULLER, MARGARET WITTER
Born in Brooklyn, N. Y., in 1871, and still living there.
The Passion-Flower..... 1053

FURLONG, ALICE
Born in Ireland, in 1875, and now living in County Dublin.
My Share of the World..... 628

FURNESS, WILLIAM HENRY
Born at Boston, Mass., in 1802; died there in 1896.
Evening Hymn..... 2968

G

GALE, NORMAN
An English writer, born in 1862, and now living near Rugby.
Bartholomew..... 120
Content..... 1170
Country Faith, The..... 1644
Dawn and Dark..... 1328
Fairy Book, The..... 231
Pastoral, A..... 744
Second Coming, The..... 3054
Shaded Pool, The..... 677
Song, "This peach is pink with such a pink"..... 574
Song, "Wait but a little while"..... 1169
Voice, The..... 395

GALSWORTHY, JOHN
An English writer born in 1867; now living at Manaton, Devonshire, England.
Past..... 420

GARLAND, HAMLIN
Born at West Salem, Wis., September 16, 1860; now living at Chicago, Ill.
Do You Fear the Wind..... 1684
The Herald Crane..... 1535
The Toil of the Trail..... 1684

GARNETT, RICHARD
Born at Lichfield, England, in 1835; died in London in 1906.
Ballad of the Boat, The..... 3396
Epigram..... 1915
Epigram..... 1918
Fair Circassian, The..... 1903

GARRICK, DAVID
Born at Hereford, England, February 19, 1717; died in London, January 20, 1779.
Epigram..... 1918
Heart of Oak..... 2280

GARRISON, THEODOSIA PICKERING [MRS. FREDERICK FAULKS]
Born at Newark, N. J., November 26, 1874; now living in New York City.
Ballad of the Angel, The..... 1015
Stains..... 3758
The Wife..... 394

GARVIN, MARGARET ROOT
No biographical data available.
To Each His Own..... 3363

GASCOIGNE, GEORGE
Born in Westmoreland, England, about 1535; died at Stamford, England, October 7, 1577.
A Lover's Lullaby..... 715

GATES, ELLEN M. HUNTINGTON
Born at Torrington, Conn., in 1835; now living in New York City.
"I Shall Not Cry Return"..... 1081

GAUTIER, THÉOPHILE
Born at Tarbes, France, August 31, 1811; died in Paris, October 23, 1872.
L'Art..... 3482

GAY, JOHN
Born at Barnstable, England, in September, 1685; died in London, December 4, 1732.
Ballad, "'Twas when the seas were roaring"..... 1064
Black-eyed Susan..... 937
Elegy on a Lap Dog, An..... 1826
Epigrams..... 1916
Hare With Many Friends, The..... 1853
Lion and the Cub, The..... 1852
Song, "O ruddier than the cherry"..... 535

GIBSON, WILFRID WILSON
Born at Hexam, England, in 1878, and now living in London.
Marriage..... 1195
On Hampstead Heath..... 516
Tenants..... 3218
The Whisperers..... 3379

GILBERT, LADY, see MULHOLLAND ROSA.

GILBERT, [SIR] WILLIAM SCHWENCK
Born in London, England, November 18, 1836; drowned, May 29, 1911.
Captain Reece..... 2180
Ellen M'Jones Aberdeen..... 2073
To the Terrestrial Globe..... 2075
Yarn of the "Nancy Bell," The..... 2177

GILDER, JOSEPH B.
Born at Flushing, N. Y., June 29, 1858; present address, New York City.
The Parting of the Ways... 2217

GILDER, RICHARD WATSON
Born at Bordentown, N. J., February 8, 1844; died in New York City, November 18, 1909.
"Ah, Be not False"..... 349
"Call Me Not Dead"..... 3502
"Great Nature is an Army Gay"..... 1298
Midsummer Song, A..... 1366
"My Love for Thee"..... 1263
"O, Love is not a Summer Mood"..... 504
On the Life-mask of Abraham Lincoln..... 3642
Prelude from "The New Day"..... 1307
Song, "Because the rose must fade"..... 2841
Song of Early Autumn, A.. 1374
Sonnet, The..... 3107
Sonnet, "I know not if I love her overmuch"..... 1264
Sonnet, "I like her gentle hand that sometimes strays"..... 1264
Woman's Thought, A..... 912
"Woods that Bring the Sunset Near, The"..... 1400

GILFILLAN, ROBERT
Born at Dunfermline, Scotland, July 7, 1798; died at Leith, Scotland, December 4, 1850.
The Exile's Song..... 3258

GILLILAN, STRICKLAND W.
Born at Jackson, Ohio, Oct. 9, 1869; present address, Indianapolis, Ind.
Finnigin to Flannigan..... 1979

GILMAN, CHARLOTTE PERKINS STETSON
Born at Hartford, Conn., July 3, 1860; present address, New York City.
A Conservative..... 1890
Similar Cases..... 1891
Wedded Bliss..... 1898

GLASGOW, J. SCOTT
A Scotch-American writer, now living at Portland, Indiana.
The Pipes o' Gordon's Men. 2307

GLOVER, JEAN
Born at Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland, October 31, 1758; died at Letterkenny, County Donegal, Ireland, in 1801.
"Owre the Muir amang the Heather"..... 747

GLOVER, RICHARD
Born in London, England, in 1712; died there, November 25, 1785.
Admiral Hosier's Ghost.... 2415

GOING, CHARLES BUXTON
Born in Westchester county, N. Y., April 5, 1863; present address, New York City.
At the Top of the Road.... 3577
To Arcady..... 664

GOLDSMITH, OLIVER
Born at Pallas, County Longford, Ireland, November 10, 1728; died in London, April 4, 1774.
Deserted Village, The..... 3262
Elegy on Madame Blaize, An..... 2092
Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog, An..... 2091
"When Lovely Woman Stoops to Folly"..... 1050

GOODALE, DORA READ
Born at Mt. Washington, Mass., October 29, 1866; now living at Redding, Conn.
Ripe Grain..... 3575

GOODCHILD, JOHN ARTHUR
Born at Ealing, Middlesex, England, February 26, 1851; now living at Bordighera, Italy.
The Firstborn..... 24

GORDON, ADAM LINDSAY
Born at Fayal, Azores, in 1833; shot himself at New Brighton, Australia, June 24, 1870.
How We Beat the Favorite. 3344

GORDON, ALEXANDER MACGREGOR ROSE, see ROSE, ALEXANDER MACGREGOR.

GORE-BOOTH, EVA
An English writer, now living in London.
The Little Waves of Breffny 2605

GORMAN, HERBERT S.
An American writer, no biographical data available.
The Satyrs and the Moon. 249

GOSSE, EDMUND WILLIAM
Born in London, England, September 21, 1849, and still living there.
Impression..... 1759
Labor and Love..... 2018
Missive, The..... 666

GOULD, GERALD LOUIS
An English poet, born in 1885; died in London, in June, 1916.
Lancelot and Guinevere.... 2813
Wanderlust..... 1679

GOULD, HANNAH FLAGG
Born at Lancaster, Mass., in 1789; died at Newburyport, Mass., September 5, 1865.
The Frost..... 1387

GRAHAM, JAMES [FIRST MARQUIS OF MONTROSE]
Born in Scotland in 1612; died May 21, 1650.
"I'll Never Love Thee More" 604

GRANVILLE, CHARLES
An English writer, no biographical data available.
Traveller's Hope 3478

GRAVES, ALFRED PERCEVAL
Born at Dublin, Ireland, July 22, 1846; now living at Wimbledon, England.
Father O'Flynn 1057
Irish Lullaby, An 88
Little Red Lark, The 713

GRAY, DAVID
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1837; died in New York State in 1888.
The Golden Wedding 1226

GRAY, THOMAS
Born in London, England, December 27, 1716; died at Cambridge, England, July 30, 1771.
Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard 3532
Ode on the Spring, An 1343
On a Distant Prospect of Eton College 2589
On the Death of a Favorite Cat, Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes 1821
Progress of Poesy, The 3091

GREENE, ALBERT GORTON
Born at Providence, R. I., February 10, 1802; died at Cleveland, Ohio, January 4, 1868.
Old Grimes 2131

GREENE, HOMER
Born at Ariel, Pa., January 10, 1853; now living at Honesdale, Pa.
My Daughter Louise 322
What My Lover Said 1149

GREENE, ROBERT
Born at Norwich, England, about 1560; died in London, September 3, 1592.
"Fair is my Love, for April's in Her Face" 520
Fawnia 583
Mæsia's Song 2979
Phyllis and Corydon 768
Samela 521
Sephestia's Lullaby 74
Shepherd's Wife's Song, The 1210

GREENE, SARAH PRATT MCLEAN
Born at Simsbury, Conn., July 3, 1856; now living at Lexington, Mass.
De Sheepfol' 3755

GREENWELL, DORA
Born at Greenwell Ford, Durham, England, December 6, 1821; died, March 29, 1882.
Home 1204

GREGORY, THE GREAT, SAINT
Born at Rome about 540; died there, March 12, 604, having been Pope from 590.
Veni, Creator Spiritus 3823

GRENFELL, JULIAN HENRY FRANCIS
A captain in the English army; died at Boulogne from wounds received in front of Ypres, May 26, 1915.
The Hills 1435

GRIFFIN, GERALD
Born at Limerick, Ireland, December 12, 1803; died at Cork, Ireland, June 12, 1840.
Eileen Aroon 549
Maiden Eyes 631
"Place in Thy Memory, A" 871

GRIFFITH, WILLIAM
Born at Memphis, Mo., February 15, 1876; now living in New York City.
Pierrette in Memory 3388

GUINEY, LOUISE IMOGEN
Born at Boston, Mass., in 1861, and now living at Oxford, England.
Kings, The 2049
Of Joan's Youth 1054
Song, "I try to knead and spin" 3361
Tryste Noël 209
Wild Ride, The 3475

GUITÉRMAN, ARTHUR
An American writer born in Vienna, Austria, November 20, 1871; now living in New York City.
Strictly Germ-proof 2035

GWYNN, STEPHEN LUCIUS
Born at Dublin, Ireland, February 13, 1864, and still living there.
Ireland 2266

GYLES, ALTHEA
No biographical data available.
Sympathy 923

H

HABINGTON, WILLIAM
Born at Hindlip, Worcestershire, England, in November, 1605; died there in 1654.
Castara 531
Nox Nocti Indicat Scientiam 3786
To Roses in the Bosom of Castara 600

HAGEDORN, HERMANN
Born in New York City, July 18, 1882, and still living there.
Early Morning at Bargis ... 1645
Song, "Song is so old" 674
Troop of the Guard, A 3062

HALE, EDWARD EVERETT
Born at Boston, Mass., April 3, 1822, died there in 1909.

Lamentable Ballad of the Bloody Brook, The..... 2406
New England's Chevy Chase 2426

HALL, SHARLOT M.
Born at Prosser Creek, Kan., Oct. 27, 1870, and now living at Dewey, Arizona.
The Last Camp-fire..... 3471
The Song of the Colorado.. 2571

HALLECK, FITZ-GREENE
Born at Guilford, Conn., July 8, 1790; died there, November 19, 1867.
Marco Bozzaris..... 2453
On the Death of Joseph Rodman Drake..... 3608

HALPINE, CHARLES GRAHAM
Born at Oldcastle, County Meath, Ireland, in November, 1829; died in New York City, August 3, 1868.
Irish Astronomy..... 1964
Janet's Hair..... 1112

HALSHAM, JOHN
An English writer; no biographical data available.
My Last Terrier..... 1827

HAMILTON, ELIZABETH
Born at Belfast, Ireland, July 21, 1758; died at Harrowgate, England, July 23, 1816.
My Ain Fireside..... 3238

HAMILTON, JOHN
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1761; died there, September 23, 1814.
I Love My Jean..... 947

HANRAHAN, AGNES I.
No biographical data available.
Rosies..... 925

HARDING, RUTH GUTHRIE
Born at Tunkhannock, Pa., August 20, 1882; now living at Paterson, N. J.
Returning..... 3482
The Call to a Scot..... 3261
Threnody..... 1080

HARDY, LIZZIE CLARK
No biographical data available.
"Some Time at Eve"..... 3468

HARDY, THOMAS
Born in Dorsetshire, England, June 2, 1840; and still living there.
"Let me Enjoy"..... 2841
Rain on a Grave..... 1133

HARINGTON, [SIR] JOHN
Born at Kelston, near Bath, England, in 1561; died there, November 20, 1612.
Epigram..... 1918

HARNEY, WILLIAM WALLACE
Born at Bloomington, Ind., June 20, 1831; now living at Miami, Florida,
Adonais..... 914

HARRIS, JOEL CHANDLER
Born at Eatonton, Ga., December 8, 1848; died at Atlanta, Ga., in 1908.
Revival Hymn..... 2037

HARRISON, VIRGINIA BIOREN
An American writer living at Bloomfield, N. J.
Music of the Dawn..... 1310
One Gift I Ask..... 3734

HARTE, FRANCIS BRET
Born at Albany, N. Y., August 25, 1839; removed to England in 1885; and died there, May 5, 1902.
Dickens in Camp..... 3606
Dow's Flat..... 2171
John Burns of Gettysburg.. 2504
Mrs. Judge Jenkins..... 1948
Mountain Heart's-ease, The 1494
Plain Language from Truthful James..... 2174
Reveille, The..... 2487
Second Review of the Grand Army, A..... 2513
Society upon the Stanislaus, The..... 2170
Songs without Sense..... 2065

HASTINGS, THOMAS
Born at Washington, Conn., October 15, 1784; died in New York City, May 15, 1872.
In Sorrow..... 3808

HAWKER, ROBERT STEPHEN
Born at Stoke Damerel, Devonshire, England, December 3, 1803; died at Plymouth, England, August 15, 1875.
Are they not all Ministering Spirits..... 631
The Song of the Western Men..... 2407

HAWLEY, CHARLES B.
Born at Brookfield, Conn., in 1858; now living in New York City.
My Little Love..... 989

HAWTHORNE, HILDEGARDE
Born in New York City, and still living there.
A Song..... 1164

HAY, JOHN
Born at Salem, Ind., October 8, 1838; died, July 1, 1905.
Jim Bludso of the Prairie Belle..... 3337
Little Breeches..... 3339
Stirrup Cup, The..... 3507
White Flag, The..... 796
Woman's Love, A..... 1038

HAYNE, PAUL HAMILTON
Born at Charleston, S. C., January 1, 1831; died, July 9, 1886.
Aspects of the Pines..... 1400
In Harbor..... 3493
"Little While I Fain Would Linger Yet, A"..... 895
Pre-existence..... 2857
Rose and Thorn, The..... 1028

HEATH, ELLA
No biographical data available.
Poetry 3086

HEBER, REGINALD
Born at Malpas, Cheshire, England, April 21, 1783; died at Trichinopoly, British India, April 2, 1826.
"Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning" . . . 210
"From Greenland's Icy Mountains" 3795
"Holy, Holy, Holy" 3793
"If Thou Wert by my Side, my Love" 1209
Providence 3726
"The Son of God Goes Forth to War" 3794

HEDGE, FREDERIC HENRY
Born at Cambridge, Mass., in 1805; died there in 1890.
"A Mighty Fortress is our God" 3806
Questionings 2970

HELBURN, THERESA
Born in New York City in 1888, and still living there.
Mother 396

HEMANS, FELICIA DOROTHEA
Born at Liverpool, England, September 25, 1793; died near Dublin, Ireland, May 16, 1835.
Casabianca 2439
Dirge 3551
England's Dead 2306
Graves of a Household, The 3561
"He Never Smiled Again" . . 2349
Hour of Death, The 3411
Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers 2387

HENDERSON, BARBARA [MRS. ARCHIBALD]
Born at Lincolnton, N. C., and now living at Chapel Hill, N. C.
A Chant of Hate against England 2549

HENDERSON, FLORENCE L.
No biographical data available.
The Garden That I Love . . . 3441

HENLEY, WILLIAM ERNEST
Born at Gloucester, England, August 23, 1849; died at Woking, England, June 11, 1903.
"As Like the Woman as You Can" 1900
Ballade of Ladies' Names . . 1761
Blackbird, The 1527
Culture in the Slums 1951
"England, My England" . . . 2239
Home 3229
"I Took a Hansom on To-day" 827
Inter Sodales 1986
Invictus 3500
"Late Lark Twitters from the Quiet Skies, A" 3501
"Or Ever the Knightly Years Were Gone" 655
Spirit of Wine, The 2013
Stanzas, "Where forlorn sunsets flare and fade" . . . 2862
Villon's Straight Tip to all Cross Coves 1857
"What is to Come" 3422
With Strawberries 1760

HENSLEY, SOPHIA ALMON
Born in Nova Scotia, May 31, 1866; now living in New York City.
"Because of You" 665

HEPBURN, THOMAS NICOLL, see SETOUN, GABRIEL.

HERBERT, GEORGE
Born at Montgomery Castle, Wales, April 3, 1593; died at Bemerton, near Salisbury, England, in February, 1633.
Collar, The 3719
Discipline 3720
Holy Baptism 3721
Life 2931
Love 3718
Pulley, The 370
Unkindness 3722
Virtue 3720

HERFORD, OLIVER
Born at Manchester, England, in December, 1863; now living in New York City.
Child's Natural History . . . 2082
The Elf and the Dormouse. 234

HERRICK, ROBERT
Born in London, England, in August, 1591; died at Dean Prior, Devonshire, England, in October, 1674.
Argument of His Book, The 3105
Bracelet, The: to Julia 596
Ceremonies for Christmas . . 223
Corinna's Going A-Maying . 1359
Delight in Disorder 378
His Litany to the Holy Spirit 3744
His Winding-sheet 3454
Night-piece, The: to Julia . . 695
"No Fault in Women" 1901
Primrose, The 1495
Rubies and Pearls 528
Ternarie of Littles, A 1723
Thanksgiving to God for His House, A 3713
To Ænone 595
To Anthea, Who may Command Him Anything 595
To Blossoms 1504
To Daffodills 1474
To Daisies, Not to Shut so Soon 1477
To Dianeme 816
To Electra 684
To Keep a True Lent 3745
To Meadows 1439
To Music, to Becalm His Fever 3123
To Primroses Filled with Morning Dew 1496

To the Rose: a Song. . . . 931
To the Virgins, to make Much of Time. . . . 328
To the Western Wind. . . . 596
To the Willow-tree. . . . 1406
To Violets. . . . 1501
Upon Julia's Clothes. . . . 529
White Island, The. . . . 3698

HEWITT, ETHEL M.
No biographical data available.
Wild Wishes. . . . 664

HEYWOOD, JOHN
Born in England about 1497; died at Malines, Belgium, about 1580.
A Praise of His Lady. . . . 378

HEYWOOD, THOMAS
Born in Lincolnshire, England, date unknown; died about 1650.
Matin-Song. . . . 696
Message, The. . . . 598
Valerius on Women. . . . 818

HIGGINSON, ELLA
Born at Council Grove, Kansas, in 1862; now living at Bellingham, Wash.
Four-Leaf Clover. . . . 1472
The Lamp in the West. . . . 3473

HIGGINSON, THOMAS WENTWORTH
Born at Cambridge, Mass., December 22, 1823; died there, May 9, 1911.
Ode to a Butterfly. . . . 1517

HILL, AARON
Born in London, England, February 10, 1685; died there in 1750.
A Strong Hand. . . . 1902

HILL, THOMAS
Born at New Brunswick, N. J., January 7, 1818; died at Waltham, Mass., November 2, 1891.
The Bobolink. . . . 1531

HINDS, SAMUEL
Born in Barbadoes in 1793; died in London, England, February 7, 1872.
Baby Sleeps. . . . 27

HINKSON, KATHERINE TYNAN, see TYNAN, KATHERINE.

HODGSON, RALPH
An English writer, born in Northumberland about forty years ago; now living in London.
Eve. . . . 2816
Mystery, The. . . . 3776
Stupidity Street. . . . 3061
"Time, You Old Gipsy Man". . . . 2817
Wood Song, A. . . . 1329

HOFFMAN, CHARLES FENNO
Born in New York City in 1806; died at Harrisburgh, Pa., June 7, 1884.
Monterey. . . . 2470
"Sparkling and Bright". . . . 2007

HOFFMANN, AUGUST HEINRICH
Born at Fallersleben, Hanover, Prussia, April 2, 1798; died near Hoxter, Prussia, January 20, 1874.
The Story of Augustus who would not have any Soup. . . . 122
The Story of Little Suck-a-Thumb. . . . 123

HOGG, JAMES
Born at Ettrick, Selkirkshire, Scotland, in 1770; died at Eltrive Lake, November 21, 1835. The "Ettrick Shepherd."
Boy's Song, A. . . . 128
Kilmeny. . . . 3151
"Love is Like a Dizziness". . . . 750
Moggy and Me. . . . 1227
"My Love She's but a Lassie Yet". . . . 543
Skylark, The. . . . 1566
"There's Gowd in the Breast". . . . 1142
When the Kye Comes Hame. . . . 775
Women Folk, The. . . . 749

HOLCROFT, THOMAS
Born in London, England, December 10, 1745; died there, March 23, 1809.
Gaffer Gray. . . . 1996

HOLLAND, JOSIAH GILBERT
Born at Belchertown, Mass., July 24, 1819; died in New York City, October 21, 1881.
Cradle Song. . . . 86
Daniel Gray. . . . 3327
Gradatim. . . . 3707
Lullaby. . . . 86

HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL
Born at Cambridge, Mass., August 29, 1809; died there, October 7, 1894.
Ballad of the Oysterman, The. . . . 2139
Bill and Joe. . . . 3002
Boys, The. . . . 1745
Brother Jonathan's Lament for Sister Caroline. . . . 2485
Chambered Nautilus, The. . . . 2913
Contentment. . . . 1743
Crooked Footpath, The. . . . 3739
Deacon's Masterpiece, The. 1871
Dorothy Q. . . . 1738
Height of the Ridiculous, The. . . . 2138
La Grisette. . . . 909
Last Leaf, The. . . . 1741
My Aunt. . . . 1740
Old Ironsides. . . . 2456
Old Man Dreams, The. . . . 461
To an Insect. . . . 1512

HOOD, THOMAS
Born in London, England, May 23, 1799; died there, May 3, 1845.
Bridge of Sighs, The. . . . 3390
Death-bed, The. . . . 3546
Dream of Eugene Aram, The 2767
Epigram. . . . 1919
Fair Inez. . . . 959
Faithless Nelly Gray. . . . 2126

Faithless Sally Brown ... 2128
False Poets and True ... 3085
Flowers ... 1465
"I Remember, I Remember" 443
I'm Not a Single Man" ... 1713
No ... 2048
Ode to Autumn ... 1376
Parental Ode to My Son, A. 268
Please to Ring the Belle ... 2130
Queen Mab ... 237
Ruth ... 332
Serenade ... 704
Song, "A lake and a fairy boat" ... 630
Song of the Shirt, The ... 3393
To Minerva ... 2048
Water Lady, The ... 869

HOOD, THOMAS, THE YOUNGER
Born at Wanstead, Essex, England, January 19, 1835; died at Peckham Rye, Surrey, England, November 20, 1874.
Poets and Linnets ... 1938

HOOK, THEODORE EDWARD
Born in London, England, September 22, 1788; died at Fulham, England, August 24, 1841.
Cautionary Verses to Youth of Both Sexes ... 2021

HOOKER, WILLIAM BRIAN
Born in New York City, November 2, 1880, and now living at Farmington, Conn.
From Life ... 390
Portrait, A ... 393

HOOPER, ELLEN
An American writer of the first half of the nineteenth century, concerning whom no biographical data are available.
Beauty and Duty ... 2972
The Straight Road ... 2973

HOPE, LAURENCE [MRS. MALCOLM NICHOLSON]
Born at Stoke Bishop, Gloucestershire, England, April 9, 1865; died of poison, self-administered, at Madras, India, October 4, 1904.
Ashore ... 916
Bride, The ... 1198
Khrishna and His Flute ... 916
Masters, The ... 2947

HOPKINSON, JOSEPH
Born at Philadelphia, Pa., November 12, 1770; died there, January 15, 1842.
Hail Columbia ... 2200

HOPPER, NORA [MRS. WILFRID HUGH CHESSON]
Born at Exeter, England, January 2, 1871; died in London, April 14, 1906.
Dark Man, The ... 910
March ... 1351
Marriage Charm, A ... 1199

HORACE, see FLACCUS, QUINTUS HORATIUS.

HORNE, HERBERT P.
Born in London, England, in 1864; now living at Florence, Italy.
"If She be Made of White and Red" ... 570
Nancy Dawson ... 988

HORNE, RICHARD HENGIST
Born in London, England, January 1, 1803; died at Margate, England, March 13, 1884.
The Plow ... 1652

HOUGHTON, LORD, see MILNES, RICHARD MONCKTON.

HOUSMAN, ALFRED EDWARD
An English writer, born March 26, 1859, and now living at Cambridge.
"Along the Field as We Came by" ... 856
Blackbird, The ... 1526
"On Wenlock Edge" ... 1401
Power of Malt, The ... 2016
"When I was One-and-Twenty" ... 857

HOUSMAN, LAURENCE
An English writer, born July 18, 1867, and now living in London.
Comrades ... 3008
The Settlers ... 3536

HOVELL-THURLOW, EDWARD [SECOND BARON THURLOW]
Born in London, England, June 10, 1781; died at Brighton, England, June 4, 1829.
Heron, The ... 1540
May ... 1361
"When in the Woods I Wander all Alone" ... 1399

HOVEY, RICHARD
Born at Normal, Ill., in 1864; died in 1900.
Accident in Art ... 3112
At the Crossroads ... 3009
Barney McGee ... 1980
Chanson de Rosemonde ... 997
Envoy from "More Songs from Vagabondia" ... 3000
Hunting-Song ... 1662
Kavanagh, The ... 2017
Love in the Winds ... 1269
Sea Gipsy, The ... 1688
Stein Song, A ... 1048
Two Lovers, The ... 1044
Unmanifest Destiny ... 2209
Wander-lovers, The ... 1686
Word of the Lord from Havana, The ... 2535

HOWARD, HENRY [EARL OF SURREY]
Born in Norfolk, England, about 1517; beheaded on Tower Hill, London, January 21, 1547.
The Means to Attain Happy Life ... 2979

HOWARTH, ELLEN CLEMENTINE
Born at Cooperstown, N. Y., in 1827; died there in 1899.
"'Tis but a Little Faded Flower" 3363

HOWE, JULIA WARD
Born in New York City, May 27, 1819; died at Newport, R. I., October 17, 1910.
Battle-Hymn of the Republic 2206

HOWELLS, MILDRED
An American writer, living in New York City.
God's Will 3736
Moral in Sevres, A 1805

HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN
Born at Martin's Ferry, Ohio, March 1, 1837, and now living in New York City.
Song the Oriole Sings, The .. 1556
Thanksgiving, A 2933

HOWITT, MARY
Born at Coleford, Gloucestershire, England, March 12, 1799; died at Rome, January 30, 1888.
Broom Flower, The 1468
Buttercups and Daisies 117
Fairies of the Caldon-Low, The 238
Rose of May, The 1499
Spider and the Fly, The 176

HOWLAND, MARY WOOLSEY
An American writer, born in 1832, died in 1864.
In the Hospital 3463

HUEFFER, FORD MADOX
An English writer, born in 1873, and now living in London.
Children's Song 282
Wisdom 512

HUNT, JAMES HENRY LEIGH
Born at Southgate, near London, England, October 19, 1784; died at Putney, England, August 28, 1859.
Abou Ben Adhem 2909
Cupid Drowned 488
Dearest Poets, The 3085
Fairy Song 235
Glove and the Lions, The .. 833
Jaffar 3013
Jenny Kissed Me 687
Nun, The 624
Sneezing 2021
To the Grasshopper and the Cricket 1510

HUNTER, ANNE
Born in Scotland in 1742; died in London, England, January 7, 1821.
"My Mother Bids me Bind my Hair" 942

HUNTINGTON, HELEN [MRS. ARCHER HUNTINGTON]
An American writer, living in New York City.
The Wayfarer 2854

HUSTON, FRANCIS
No biographical data available.
Forty Years Ago 469

HUXLEY, THOMAS HENRY
Born at Ealing, near London, England, May 4, 1825; died at Eastbourne, England, June 28, 1895.
Tennyson 3636

I

INGALLS, JOHN JAMES
Born at Middleton, Mass., in 1833; died in 1900.
Opportunity 2921

INGELOW, JEAN
Born at Boston, Lincolnshire, England, March 17, 1820; died at Kensington, England, July 20, 1897.
Divided 968
High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire, The .. 3318
"Like a Laverock in the Lift" 1200
Long White Seam, The 1613
"One Morning, Oh! so Early" 1144
Singing-lesson, The 147
Song of the Old Love 1097
Songs of Seven 426

INGRAM, JOHN KELLS
Born in County Donegal, Ireland, in 1823; died in 1907.
The Memory of the Dead .. 2262

IRIS, SCHARMEL
No biographical data available.
After the Martyrdom 3736

IRONQUILL, see WARE, EUGENE F.

IRVING, WASHINGTON
Born in New York City, April 3, 1783; died at Sunnyside, near Tarrytown, N. Y., November 28, 1859.
A Certain Young Lady 731

IRWIN, WALLACE
Born at Oneida, N. Y., March 15, 1875, and now living in New York City.
From Romany to Rome 1683
Grain of Salt, A 2085

J

JACKSON, HELEN HUNT
Born at Amherst, Mass., October 18, 1831; died at San Francisco, Cal., August 12, 1885.
Coronation 2085
My Legacy 3727
Spinning 3467

JAGO, RICHARD
Born at Beaudesert, Warwickshire, England, October 1, 1715; died at Snitterfield, England, May 8, 1781.
Absence 942

JANVIER, MARGARET THOMSON ["MARGARET VANDEGRIFT"]
Born at New Orleans, La., in 1845, died at Norwood, Mass., in February, 1913.
Little Wild Baby 1035
The Sandman 72

JELLICOE, S. CHARLES
No biographical data available.
Advice to a Lover 1171

JEWETT, SOPHIE
Born at Moravia, N. Y., June 3, 1861; died at Wellesley, Mass., in 1909.
"If Spirits Walk" 1118

JOHNS, ORRICK G.
Born at St. Louis, Mo., June 2, 1887, and still living there.
The Sea-lands 958

JOHNSON, E. PAULINE
A Canadian writer of Indian descent, born in 1862; died, March 7, 1913.
The Song my Paddle Sings 1676

JOHNSON, LIONEL PIGOT
Born at Broadstairs, Kent, England, March 15, 1867; died in London, October 4, 1902.
By the Statue of King Charles at Charing Cross 3598
Comrades 3006
Friend, A 3001
Ireland 2253
Precept of Silence 3351
Te Martyrum Candidatus 3751
To the Dead of '98 2261

JOHNSON, ROBERT UNDERWOOD
Born at Washington, D. C., January 12, 1853; now living in New York City.
Dewey at Manila 2537
English Mother, An 2242
Irish Love-Song, An 741
Italian Rhapsody 2613
"Love Once was like an April Dawn" 508
Star Song 673
Ursula 576

JOHNSON, SAMUEL
Born at Lichfield, England, September 18, 1709; died in London, December 13, 1784.
Epigram 1916
On the Death of Mr. Robert Levet 3628

JOHNSON, SAMUEL
Born at Salem, Mass., October 10, 1822; died at North Andover, Mass., February 19, 1882.
Inspiration 2973

JOHNSON, WILLIAM SAMUEL
Born at Ellicottville, N. Y., in 1859; now living at Mamaroneck, N. Y.
Chiffons! 1788

JOHNSON-CORY, WILLIAM
Born at Torrington, Devonshire, England, January 9, 1823; died at Hampstead, England, June 11, 1892.
Amaturus 497
Heraclitus 3529
Invocation, An 3099
Mimnermus in Church 1767
"Oh, Earlier Shall the Rosebuds Blow" 3378

JOHNSTONE, HENRY [LORD JOHNSTONE]
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, February 5, 1844, and still living there.
The Fastidious Serpent 2070

JONES, THOMAS S., JR.
Born at Boonville, N. Y., November 6, 1882; now living at Utica, N. Y.
Ave atque Vale 3668
In the Fall o' Year 1131
Little Ghosts, The 436
Sometimes 436
To Song 3088

JONES, [SIR] WILLIAM
Born in London, England, September 28, 1746; died at Calcutta, India, April 27, 1794.
An Ode in Imitation of Alcæus 2236
"On Parent Knees" 21

JONSON, BEN
Born in London, England, about 1573; died there, August 6, 1637.
Epitaph on Elizabeth L. H. 3516
Epitaph on Salathiel Pavy 3516
Her Triumph 526
Kiss, The 682
Noble Nature, The 2836
On the Portrait of Shakespeare 3652
Queen Mab 233
Simplex Munditiis 377
Song, "O, do not wanton with those eyes" 592
Song: That Women are but Men's Shadows 811
Song: To Cynthia 1320
To Celia 591
To the Memory of My Beloved Master William Shakespeare 3650
Venus' Runaway 479
Verses over the Door at the Entrance into the Apollo Room at the Devil Tavern 1988

JORDAN, THOMAS
Born in London, England, about 1612; died there in 1685.
Coronemus nos Rosis antequam Marcescant 1992

JOYCE, JAMES
Born in Dublin, Ireland on February 2, 1882; now living in London.
"Bid Adieu to Girlish Days" 1170

K

KAUFFMAN, REGINALD WRIGHT
Born at Columbia, Pa., September 8, 1877, and still living there.
Call, The 509
Troia Fuit 441
Wastrel, The 440

KEATS, JOHN
Born in London, England, October 29, 1795; died at Rome, February 23, 1821.
Dove, The 3379
Eve of St. Agnes, The 3284
Fairy Song 237
Human Seasons, The 2
La Belle Dame sans Merci 1005
Last Sonnet 3489
Lines on the Mermaid Tavern 1989
Ode on a Grecian Urn 3163
Ode to a Nightingale 1552
Ode to Psyche 3164
On First Looking into Chapman's Homer 3082
On Melancholy 3349
On the Grasshopper and the Cricket 1510
On the Sea 1588
Stanzas "In a drear-nighted December" 3395
To Autumn 1375
To Fancy 3166
"To one Who has been Long in City Pent" 1653
To the Poets 3090
"When I Have Fears" 3488
"Where be you Going, You Devon Maid" 732

KEBLE, JOHN
Born at Fairfield, Gloucestershire, England, April 25, 1792; died at Bournemouth, Hampshire, England, March 27, 1866.
Effect of Example, The 2924
Holy Matrimony 1197
"We Need not Bid, for Cloistered Cell" 3747

KEMBLE, FRANCES ANNE
Born in London, England, November 27, 1809; died there, January 15, 1893.
Faith 2919
Lament of a Mocking-Bird 1544

KEMP, HARRY
Born in Ohio in 1883, and still living.
Conquerors, The 3068
Prayer, A 2939
Resurrection 3553
Voice of Christmas, The 3750

KENYON, JAMES BENJAMIN
Born at Frankfort, N. Y., April 26, 1858; now living in New York City.
The Play 2854

KENDALL, MAY
Born at Bridlington, Yorkshire, England, in 1861, and still living there.
Ballad, He said: "The shadows darken down" 1090

KEPPEL, CAROLINE
A Scotch writer, born in 1735; date of death unknown.
Robin Adair 979

KEY, FRANCIS SCOTT
Born in Frederick County, Md., August 9, 1780, died at Washington, D. C., January 11, 1843.
The Star-Spangled Banner 2196

KILMER, JOYCE
Born at New Brunswick, N. J., December 6, 1886, and now living in New York City.
Ballade of my Lady's Beauty 575
Gates and Doors 215
King's Ballad, The 1123
Trees 1407

KIMBALL, HARRIET MCEWEN
Born at Portsmouth, N. H., in November, 1834; and still living there.
White Azaleas 1467

KING, BEN [JAMIN FRANKLIN]
Born at St. Joseph, Mich., March 17, 1857; died at Bowling Green, Ky., April 7, 1894.
How Often 1950
If I Should Die To-night 1950

KING, GEORGIANA GODDARD
Born August 5, 1871, at West Columbia, W. Va.; now living at Bryn Mawr, Pa.
"A Man Called Dante, I Have Heard" 3084
Song, "Something calls and whispers" 1703

KING, HENRY
Born at Worminghall, Buckinghamshire, England, in January, 1592; died at Chichester, England, September 30, 1669.
A Contemplation upon Flowers 1466
Exequy, The 1228
On the Life of Man 2837

KINGSLEY, CHARLES
Born in Devonshire, England, June 12, 1819; died at Eversley, England, January 23, 1875.
Airly Beacon 1040
Dolcino to Margaret 1215
Farewell, A 125
Last Buccaneer, The 1630
Margaret to Dolcino 1215
Sands of Dee, The 1619
Sing Heigh-ho 735
Song, "Oh! that we two were Maying" 885
Three Fishers, The 1620
Tide River, The 1415
Young and Old 417

KINGSLEY, HENRY
Born at Barnack, Northamptonshire, England, in 1830; died, May 24, 1876.
Magdalen 3735

KINNEY, COATES
Born near Penn Yan, Yates County, N. Y., November 24, 1826; died in Ohio in 1904.
Rain on the Roof 458

KIPLING, RUDYARD
Born at Bombay, India, December 30, 1865; now living in Sussex, England.
Ballad of East and West, The 2830
Betrothed, The 860
Certain Maxims of Hafiz ... 1911
Commonplaces 1946
Conundrum of the Workshops, The 1884
Danny Deever 2293
Dedication, A 3816
Foreloper, The 1703
"Fuzzy-Wuzzy" 2533
General Summary 1919
Gipsy Trail, The 1677
Gunga Din 2294
Jane Smith 1926
Jam-pot, The 1939
L'Envoi 3504
Limerick, "There was a small boy of Quebec" 2090
Long Trail, The 1704
Mandalay 2638
Post that Fitted, The 2046
Recessional 2248
Sons of Martha, The 3072
Vampire, The 1045

KNOWLES, FREDERIC LAWRENCE
An American writer, born in 1869, died in 1905.
"If Love Were Jester at the Court of Death" 3474
Last Word, The 675
Laus Mortis 3487
Love Triumphant 1153
Memory, A 1152
On a Fly-leaf of Burns's Songs 3596
Song of Desire, A 1589
To Mother Nature 1299

KNOX, WILLIAM
Born at Firth, Roxburghshire, Scotland, August 17, 1789; died at Edinburgh, November 12, 1825.
"Oh, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud" 3409

KOBBÉ, GUSTAV
Born in New York City, March 4, 1857; present address, Babylon, L. I.
From the Harbor Hill 1041
To a Little Girl 267

KYNASTON, [SIR] FRANCIS
Born at Oteley, Shropshire, England, in 1587; died in 1642.
To Cynthia on Concealment of her Beauty 529

L

LA CONTE, MARIE R.
An American writer of the middle-nineteenth century.
Somebody's Darling 2318

LAIGHTON, ALBERT
Born at Portsmouth, N. H., in 1829; died there in 1887.
Under the Leaves 1401

LAING, ALEXANDER
Born at Brechin, Forfarshire, Scotland, May 14, 1787; died there, October 14, 1857.
My ain Wife 1206

LAIRD, WILLIAM [PSEUD. OF WILLIAM LAIRD BROWN]
Born in Philadelphia, Pa., March 21, 1888; now living at Lansdowne, Pa.
A Very Old Song 1051

LAMAR, MIRABEAU BUONAPARTE
Born at Louisville, Ga., August 16, 1798; died at Richmond, Texas, December 19, 1859.
The Daughter of Mendoza . 569

LAMB, CHARLES
Born in London, England, February 10, 1775; died at Edmonton, England, December 27, 1834.
Anger 113
Hester 3547
Housekeeper, The 1514
Old Familiar Faces, The ... 453

LAMB, MARY ANN
Born in London, England, in 1764; died in 1847.
Anger 113
Choosing a Name 14

LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE
Born at Warwick, England, January 30, 1775; died at Florence, Italy, September 17, 1864.
Advice 1710
"Around the Child" 356
Death 3491
Defiance 728
Epigrams 1916
"Fault is not Mine, The" .. 831
"I Strove with None" 3491
Late Leaves 406
Maid's Lament, The 1077
"Mother, I Cannot Mind My Wheel" 1040
Of Clementina 729
On Music 3131
One White Hair, The 362
Plays 1910
Resignation 2993
Rose Aylmer 622
Song, "Often I have heard it said" 686
Test, The 831
Time to be Wise 1709
To Age 406
To the Sister of Elia 3625

To Youth 354
Under the Lindens 1710
Verse, "Past ruined Ilion Helen lives" 3089
Years 407

LANG, ANDREW
Born at Selkirk, Scotland, March 31, 1844; died, London, Eng., July 20, 1912
Ballade of a Friar 1874
Ballade of Dead Ladies 1784
Ballade of Middle Age 363
Ballade of Summer 1769
Ballade of the Primitive Jest 1708
Homeric Unity 3083
Lost Love 849
Man and the Ascidian 1895
Odyssey, The 3083
Old Tune, An 920
Romance 1120
Scythe Song 1371
Villon's Ballade 1858

LANIER, SIDNEY
Born at Macon, Ga., February 3, 1842; died at Lynn, N. C., September 8, 1881.
Ballad of Trees and the Master, The 3776
Marshes of Glynn, The 1426
Song of the Chattahoochee . . 1423

LANIER, SIDNEY and CLIFFORD
The Power of Prayer 2038

LANIGAN, GEORGE THOMAS
Born on the St. Charles river, Canada, December 10, 1845; died at Philadelphia, Pa., February 5, 1886.
A Threnody 2069

LARCOM, LUCY
Born at Beverly, Mass., in 1824; died at Boston, April 17, 1893.
Brown Thrush, The 105
Hannah Binding Shoes 1624
Strip of Blue, A 1647

LATHROP, GEORGE PARSONS
Born at Oahu, Sandwich Islands, August 25, 1851; died in 1898.
Child's Wish Granted, The . 320
Keenan's Charge 2497

LAZARUS, EMMA
Born in New York City, July 22, 1849; died there in 1887.
The Crowing of the Red Cock 3254
The World's Justice 3255

LE GALLIENNE, RICHARD
Born at Liverpool, England, January 20, 1866; now living in New York City.
Old Man's Song, An 425
Passionate Reader to His Poet, The 3102
Second Crucifixion, The 3749
Song, "She's somewhere in the sunlight strong" 995
Song, "Take it, love" 510
Songs for Fragoletta 12
Spirit of Sadness 3362
What of the Darkness 3515
Wife from Fairyland, The . . 1130

LEA, FANNIE HEASLIP [MRS. HAMILTON POPE AGEE]
Born at New Orleans, La., October 30, 1884; now living at Honolulu, Hawaii.
The Dead Faith 3396

LEAR, EDWARD
Born in London, England, May 12, 1812; died at San Remo, Italy, in 1888.
Courtship of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bô, The 2054
Jumblies, The 2050
Nonsense Verses 2057
Owl and the Pussy-cat, The 2052
Pobble Who Has no Toes, The 2053

LEARNED, WALTER
Born at New London, Conn., June 22, 1847; died there December 11, 1915.
Growing Old 742
In Explanation 743
On the Fly-leaf of a Book of Old Plays 1806
Prime of Life, The 805
Time's Revenge 743
To Critics 366

LECKY, WILLIAM EDWARD HARTPOLE
Born near Dublin, Ireland, March 26, 1838; died there October 22, 1903.
On an Old Song 3087

LEDOUX, LOUIS V.
Born in New York City, June 6, 1880, and still living there.
At Sunset 1144

LEE-HAMILTON, EUGENE JACOB
Born in London, England, January 6, 1845; died at the Bagni di Lucca, Italy, September 7, 1907.
Sonnets from "Mimma Bella" 323

LEHMANN, RUDOLPH CHAMBERS
Born near Sheffield, England, January 3, 1856; now living in Bucks, England.
Middle Age 363

LEIGH, HENRY SAMBROOKE
Born in London, England, March 29, 1837; died there, June 16, 1883.
Only Seven 1925
'Twas Ever Thus 1930
Twins, The 2068

LELAND, CHARLES GODFREY
Born at Philadelphia, Pa., August 15, 1824; died in 1903.
El Capitan-General 2026
Hans Breitmann's Party . . . 2152
The Legend of Heinz von Stein 2028

LETTS, WINIFRED, M.
An Irish writer, now living in Dublin.
The Spires of Oxford..... 2560

LEVER, CHARLES JAMES
Born at Dublin, Ireland, August 31, 1806; died at Triest, Austria-Hungary, June 1, 1872.
"The Pope He Leads a Happy Life"..... 2137
The Widow Malone..... 1973

LEWIS, MATTHEW GREGORY
Born in London, England, July 9, 1775; died at sea, of yellow fever, May 14, 1818.
Allan Water..... 1042

LIDDELL, CATHERINE C.
An English writer, born in 1848.
Jesus the Carpenter..... 3768

LINDSAY, NICHOLAS VACHEL
Born at Springfield, Ill., November 10, 1879, and still living there.
Eagle that is Forgotten, The 3587
General William Booth Enters into Heaven..... 3593
O. Henry..... 3610

LIPPMAN, JULIA MATHILDE
Born in Brooklyn, N. Y., June 27, 1864; now living in New York City.
Love and Life..... 924

LISSAUER, ERNST
A German writer, born in 1882, and still living.
Hassgesang gegen England. 3846

LITCHFIELD, GRACE DENIO
Born in New York City, November 19, 1849; present address, Washington, D. C.
My Other Me..... 436

LOCHORE, ROBERT
Born at Strathaven, Lanarkshire, Scotland, July 7, 1762; died at Glasgow, April 27, 1852.
Marriage and the Care O't. 748

LOCKER-LAMPSON, FREDERICK
Born at Greenwich, England, May 29, 1821; died at Rowfant, England, May 30, 1895.
At Her Window..... 708
Cuckoo, The..... 1537
Garden Lyric, A..... 1732
Love, Time, and Death.... 3458
Mrs. Smith..... 1733
My Mistress's Boots..... 1730
Nice Correspondent, A..... 1812
Rhyme of One, A..... 8
St. James's Street..... 2599
Skeleton in the Cupboard, The..... 1734
Terrible Infant, A..... 1736
To My Grandmother..... 1728
Widow's Mite, The..... 3554

LOCKHART, JOHN GIBSON
Born at Cambusnethan, Scotland, July 14, 1704; died at Abbotsford, November 25, 1854.
The Wandering Knight's Song..... 626

LODGE, THOMAS
Born, probably in London, England, about 1558; died there in 1625.
Rosalind's Madrigal..... 477

LOGAN, GEORGE B., Jr.
An American writer, no biographical data available.
Dawn..... 1328

LOGAN, JOHN
Born at Soutra, Fala, Midlothian, Scotland, in 1748; died in London, December 25, 1788.
The Braes of Yarrow..... 1065
To the Cuckoo..... 1536

LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH
Born at Portland, Maine, February 27, 1807; died at Cambridge, Mass., March 24, 1882.
Arrow and the Song, The... 2923
Arsenal at Springfield, The. 3069
Ballad of the French Fleet, A 2421
Beleaguered City, The..... 2863
Belfry of Bruges, The..... 2627
Bridge, The..... 3356
Children's Hour, The..... 252
Christmas Bells..... 211
Day-break..... 3443
"Day is Done, The"..... 3355
Divina Commedia..... 3084
Endymion..... 500
Excelsior..... 2915
Fire of Drift-wood, The.... 3236
Flowers..... 1463
God's Acre..... 3439
Hymn to the Night..... 1327
Maidenhood..... 327
My Lost Youth..... 444
Nature..... 1301
Nuremberg..... 2632
Old Clock on the Stairs, The 3242
Paul Revere's Ride..... 2422
Psalm of Life, A..... 2914
Rainy Day, The..... 3350
Reaper and the Flowers, The 3418
Resignation..... 3510
Seaweed..... 3094
Serenade from "The Spanish Student"..... 705
Sir Humphrey Gilbert..... 2368
Skeleton in Armor, The.... 3323
Song, "Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest"..... 3232
Song of the Silent Land.... 3456
Three Kings, The..... 216
Village Blacksmith, The.... 2916
Warden of the Cinque Ports, The..... 3770
Wreck of the Hesperus, The 2461

LOVELACE, RICHARD
Born in Kent, England, in 1618; died in London in 1658.
Rose, The..... 696

To Althea, from Prison.... 605
To Aramantha..... 533
To Lucasta, Going beyond the Seas..... 933
To Lucasta, Going to the Wars..... 933

LOVEMAN, ROBERT
Born at Cleveland, Ohio, April 11, 1864; present address, Dalton, Ga.
April Rain..... 1442

LOVER, SAMUEL
Born at Dublin, Ireland, February 24, 1797; died at St. Heliers, Jersey, July 6, 1868.
Ask and Have..... 754
Birth of St. Patrick, The... 1966
Father Land and Mother Tongue..... 3259
Father Molloy..... 1958
Low-backed Car, The..... 777
Paddy O'Rafther..... 1960
Rory O'More, or, Good Omens..... 753
Widow Machree..... 1974

LOW, BENJAMIN ROBBINS CURTIS,
Born at Fair Haven, Mass., June 22, 1880, and now living in New York City
To-day..... 663

LOWELL, AMY
Born in Brookline, Mass., February 9, 1874, and still living there.
Crowned..... 851
Patterns..... 1134

LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL
Born at Cambridge, Mass., February 22, 1819; died there, August 12, 1891.
Aladdin..... 357
Auf Wiedersehen..... 990
Courtin', The..... 736
Debate in the Sennit, The.. 1840
Fatherland, The..... 3260
First Snow-fall, The..... 315
Hebe..... 852
Heritage, The..... 263
In the Twilight..... 450
June..... 1367
My Love..... 1213
Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration..... 2518
She Came and Went..... 314
To the Dandelion..... 1481
Washers of the Shroud, The 2488
What Mr. Robinson Thinks 1839
Without and Within..... 1764

LOWELL, MARIA WHITE
Born at Watertown, Mass., July 8, 1821; died at Cambridge, Mass., October 27, 1853.
The Morning-Glory..... 312

LOWELL, ROBERT TRAILL SPENCE
Born at Boston, Mass., October 8, 1816; died at Schenectady, N. Y., September 12, 1891.
The Relief of Lucknow..... 2475

LUCAS, EDWARD VERRALL
An English writer, born in 1868 and now living in London.
Clay..... 1768
Friends..... 3000
Mr. Coggs..... 162

LUCAS, ST. JOHN
An English writer; now living in London.
Pain..... 3353

LUCE, MORTON
Born at High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, England, May 7, 1840; now living at Weston-Super-Mare, England.
Sonnets from "Thysia"..... 1273

LÜDERS, CHARLES HENRY
An American writer, born in 1858; died at Philadelphia, Pa., in 1891.
A Corsage Bouquet..... 1783
The Four Winds..... 1123

LULHAM, HABBERTON
No biographical data available.
Nested..... 1176

LUTHER, MARTIN
Born at Eisleben, Prussian Saxony, November 10, 1483; died there, February 18, 1546.
Ein Feste Burg..... 3831

LYLY, JOHN
Born in the Weald of Kent, England, about 1554; died in London in November, 1606.
Apollo's Song..... 520
Cupid and Campaspe..... 520

LYTE, HENRY FRANCIS
Born at Kelso, Scotland, June 1, 1793; died at Nice, France, November 20, 1847.
"Abide with Me"..... 3802

LYTLE, WILLIAM HAINES
Born at Cincinnati, Ohio, November 2, 1826; killed in the battle of Chickamauga, September 20, 1863.
Antony to Cleopatra..... 2346

LYTTELTON, LUCY (MRS. C. F. MASTERMAN)
An English writer, born in 1884, and now living in London.
Simon the Cyrenean..... 3753

LYTTLETON, GEORGE [FIRST BARON LYTTLETON]
Born at Hagley, Worcestershire, England, January 17, 1709; died there, August 22 1773.
"Tell me, my Heart, if This be Love"..... 535

LYTTON, EDWARD GEORGE EARLE LYTTON BULWER [FIRST BARON LYTTON]
Born in London, England, May 25,

1803; died at Torquay, Devonshire, England, January 18, 1873.
Night and Love..... 710

LYTTON, EDWARD ROBERT LYTTON BULWER [FIRST EARL OF LYTTON] [OWEN MEREDITH]
Born in London, Eng., Nov. 8, 1831; died in Paris, France, Nov. 24, 1891.
Aux Italiens..... 889
Chess-board, The..... 888
Portrait, The..... 1025
Since we Parted..... 641

M

MACAULAY, THOMAS BABINGTON [FIRST BARON MACAULAY]
Born in Leicestershire, Eng., Oct. 25, 1800; died in London, Dec. 28, 1859.
Armada, The..... 2370
Battle of Naseby, The..... 2392
Horatius at the Bridge..... 2329
Ivry..... 2374
Last Buccaneer, The..... 1631

MACCARTHY, DENIS ALOYSIUS
Born in County Tipperary, Ire., 1871; now living at East Cambridge, Mass.
"Ah, Sweet is Tipperary".. 2608

MACCARTHY, DENIS FLORENCE
Born at Dublin, Ireland, May 26, 1817; died at Blackrock, near Dublin, April 7, 1882.
Summer Longings..... 1363

MCCARTHY, JUSTIN HUNTLY
Born at Liverpool, England, in 1860; now living in London.
A Ballad of Dead Ladies.. 1785
If I Were King..... 1786

MCCREERY, JOHN LUCKEY
Born at Sweden, Monroe County, N. Y., December 21, 1835; died at Duluth, Minn., September 8, 1906.
"There is no Death"..... 3763

MACDERMOTT, MARTIN
Born at Dublin, Ire., April 8, 1823; died at Bristol, Eng., April 25, 1905.
"Girl of the Red Mouth".. 568

MACDONALD, GEORGE
Born at Huntly, West Aberdeenshire, Scotland, December 10, 1824; died at Ashtead, England, September 18, 1905.
Baby..... 4
Epigram..... 1917
Little White Lily..... 137
Sir Lark and King Sun: A Parable..... 180
That Holy Thing..... 3774
What Christ Said..... 3774
Wind and the Moon, The.. 133

MCGAFFEY, ERNEST
A Canadian poet, born in 1861, and now living at Victoria, British Columbia.
"I Fear no Power a Woman Wields"..... 1659

MCGEE, THOMAS D'ARCY
Born at Carlingford, County Louth, Ireland, April 13, 1825; came to America in 1842; murdered at Ottawa, Canada, April 7, 1888.
The Irish Wife..... 1207

MCGIFFERT, GERTRUDE HUNTINGTON
An American writer, now living in New York City.
A Maine Trail..... 1681

MCGROARTY, JOHN STEVEN
Born in Luzerne County, Pa., August 20, 1862; now living at Los Angeles, Cal.
"Blow, Bugles, Blow"..... 2316
The King's Highway..... 1685
The Port o' Heart's Desire. 1604

MACKAY, CHARLES
Born at Perth, Scotland, March 27, 1814; died in London, December 24, 1889.
Little and Great..... 2925
The Miller of the Dee..... 2982

MACKAY, ISABEL ECCLESTONE
An American writer, no biographical data available.
"When as a Lad"..... 356

MACKENZIE, H. C. COMPTON
Born at West Hartlepool, England, January 17, 1883; now living in London.
A Song of Parting..... 975

MACKINTOSH, NEWTON
Born January 9, 1858, and now living at Roxbury, Mass.
Lucy Lake..... 1926

MACLEOD, FIONA, see SHARP, WILLIAM.

MCLEOD, IRENE RUTHERFORD
An English writer, now living in London.
Song, "How do I love you" 580
"Where My Beloved Sleeping Lies"..... 924

MACMANUS, MRS. SEUMAS, see CARBERY, ETHNA.

MACMANUS, THEODORE F.
An American writer, no biographical data available.
Cave Sedem..... 2036

MCMASTER, GUY HUMPHREYS
Born at Clyde, N. Y., January 31, 1829; died at Bath, Steuben county, N. Y., September 13, 1887.
Carmen Bellicosum..... 2433

MAGINN, WILLIAM
Born at Cork, Ireland, July 10, 1793

died at Walton-on-Thames, England, August 21, 1842.
"I Give My Soldier Boy a Blade" 2287
The Irishman and the Lady 1962

MAHONY, FRANCIS SYLVESTER [FATHER PROUT]
Born at Cork, Ireland, in 1804; died at Paris, France, May 18, 1866.
The Bells of Shandon 2610
The Sabine Farmer's Serenade 1971

MAITLAND, DOLLIE, see RADFORD MRS. ERNEST.

MALONE, WALTER
Born in De Soto county, Miss., February 10, 1866; died at Memphis, Tenn., May 18, 1915.
Opportunity 2922

MANGAN, JAMES CLARENCE
Born at Dublin, Ireland, May 1, 1803; died in Meath Hospital, June 30, 1849.
Dark Rosaleen 2249
The Nameless One 3365

MANNING, FREDERIC
An English writer, now living at Edenham, Bourne, Lincolnshire.
Kore 1382

MANSFIELD, RICHARD
Born on the island of Helgoland, May 24, 1857; came to America at the age of seventeen; died in 1907.
The Eagle's Song 2207

MARKHAM, EDWIN
Born at Oregon City, Ore., April 23, 1852; now living at West New Brighton, Staten Island.
Invisible Bride, The 1132
Joy of the Morning 3100
Lincoln, the Man of the People 3639
The Man with the Hoe 3041
The Wharf of Dreams 3224

MARKS, MRS. L. S., see PEABODY, JOSEPHINE PRESTON.

MARLOWE, CHRISTOPHER
Born at Canterbury, England, in February 1564; killed in a street fight at Deptford, England, June 1, 1593.
The Passionate Shepherd to his Love 584

MAROT, CLÉMENT
Born at Cahors, France, in 1495; died at Turin, Italy, in 1544.
Ballade de Frère Lubin 3838

MARQUIS, DON (ROBERT PERRY)
Born at Walnut, Bureau County, Ill., July 29, 1878; now living in New York City.
A Little While 2911
The God-maker, Man 3065
The Name 2868

MARRYAT, FREDERICK
Born in London, England, July 10, 1792; died at Langham, Norfolk, England, August 9, 1848.
"The Captain Stood on the Carronade" 2125

MARSTON, PHILIP BOURKE
Born in London, England, August 13, 1850; died there, February 13, 1887.
After 898
After Summer 899
At the Last 1261
How My Songs of Her Began 1260
If You Were Here 981
Old Churchyard of Bonchurch, The 3436

MARTIN, ADA LOUISE
No biographical data available.
Sleep 3222

MARTIN, EDWARD SANDFORD
Born at Owasco, N. Y., January 2, 1856; now living in New York City.
A Girl of Pompeii 280
A Little Brother of the Rich 1859

MARVELL, ANDREW
Born at Winestead, in Holderness, Yorkshire, England, March 31, 1621; died in London, August 18, 1678.
Bermudas 2566
Garden, A 1448
Garden, The 1446
Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland, An 2400
Nymph Complaining for the Death of Her Fawn 1817
Picture of Little T. C. in a Prospect of Flowers, The 273
To His Coy Mistress 607

MARZIALS, THÉOPHILE JULIUS HENRY
An English writer, born in 1850.
May Margaret 1145
Pastoral, A 1167
Tragedy, A 1040
Twickenham Ferry 761

MASEFIELD, JOHN
Born in Shropshire, England, in 1874; and now living in London.
August, 1914 2547
C. L. M. 397
Sea Fever 1590
Seekers, The 2863
Sonnets 3401

MASON, CAROLINE ATWATER
Born at Providence, R. I., July 10, 1853; now living at Beverly, Mass.
"En Voyage" 2993

MASSEY, GERALD
Born near Tring, England, May 29,

1828; died at South Norwood, England, October 29, 1907.
England 2240
His Banner Over Me 3768
"O, Lay Thy Hand in Mine, Dear" 1228
Our Wee White Rose 26
Parting 984

MASTERMAN, MRS. C. F., see LYTTELTON, LUCY.

MAXWELL, [SIR] WILLIAM STIRLING, see STIRLING-MAXWELL, SIR WILLIAM.

MAY, CURTIS
No biographical data available.
Tucking The Baby In 93

MAYNE, JOHN
Born at Dumfries, Scotland, March 26, 1759; died in London, England, March 14, 1836.
Hallowe'en 2028

MEREDITH, GEORGE
Born in Hampshire, England, in 1828; died in London, May 18, 1909.
Juggling Jerry 3312
Lines 1153
Love in the Valley 556
Lucifer in Starlight 3771
Marian 562
Question Whither, The 2860
Stanzas from "Modern Love" 1264

MEREDITH, OWEN, see LYTTON, EDWARD ROBERT LYTTON BULWER.

MEREDITH, WILLIAM TUCKER
An American writer, born in 1839, and now living in New York City,
Farragut 2507

MERIVALE, HERMAN CHARLES
Born at Dawlish, Devonshire, England, November 8, 1806; died in London, February 9, 1874.
"Ready, Ay, Ready" 2234

MERRICK, JAMES
Born at Reading, England, in 1720; died there in 1769.
The Chameleon 1875

MESSINGER, ROBERT HINCKLEY
Born at Boston, Mass., in 1811; died at Stamford, Conn., October 1, 1874.
Give Me the Old 2011

MEYNELL, [MRS.] ALICE CHRISTIANA [THOMPSON]
An English writer, born about 1853, and now living in London.
At Night 674
In Early Spring 1335
Lady Poverty, The 2934
"My Heart Shall be Thy Garden" 673
Renouncement 1263
San Lorenzo Giustiniani's Mother 3775
Shepherdess, The 393

MICKLE, WILLIAM JULIUS
Born at Langholm, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, September 28, 1735; died at Forest Hill, near Oxford, England, October 28, 1788.
The Sailor's Wife 1217

MIDDLETON, RICHARD
An English writer, born in 1882; committed suicide in Brussells in December, 1911.
Any Lover, Any Lass 578
Dream Song 236
For He Had Great Possessions 886
Lass that Died of Love, The 1052
Serenade 714
Song of the King's Minstrel, The 1056

MIDDLETON, THOMAS
Born, probably in London, England, about 1570; died at Newington Butts, England, in 1627.
Lips and Eyes 682

MIFFLIN, LLOYD
Born at Columbia, Pa., September 15, 1846, and still living there.
Flight, The 3575
"Harvest Waits, The" 3734
He Made the Night 1326
Sesostris 2847
Sovereigns, The 3105

MILLAY, EDNA ST. VINCENT
An American writer, born in 1892, and living at Camden, Me.
Ashes of Life 929
God's World 1302

MILLER, EMILY HUNTINGTON
Born at Brooklyn, Conn., October 22, 1833; died at St. Paul, Minn., November 2, 1913.
The Land of Heart's Desire 1206
The Wood-Dove's Note 1583

MILLER, JOAQUIN [CINCINNATUS HINER]
Born in Wabash District, Indiana, November 10, 1841; died at Oakland Heights, Cal., February 17, 1913.
Columbus 2366
Defence of the Alamo, The. 2458
Song, "There is many a love" 693
Tantalus—Texas 1007

MILLER, WILLIAM
Born at Glasgow, Scotland, in August, 1810; died there, August 20, 1872.
Willie Winkie 72

MILLIGAN, ALICE
Born at Omagh, Co. Tyrone, Ireland; and now living in Dublin.
Fainne Gael an Lae 2265

MILLIKIN, RICHARD ALFRED
Born at Castlemartyr, County Cork, Ireland, September 8, 1767; died at Cork, December 16, 1815.
The Groves of Blarney 2609

MILNES, RICHARD MONCKTON [FIRST BARON HOUGHTON]
Born in London, England, June 19, 1809; died at Vichy, France, August 11, 1885.
Brookside, The 1147
In Memoriam 3545
Palm-tree and the Pine, The 963
Shadows 837

MILTON, JOHN
Born in London, England, December 9, 1608; died there, November 8, 1674.
At a Solemn Music 3125
Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet, W. Shakespeare 3653
Il Penseroso 3147
L'Allegro 3143
Lycidas 3519
On His Blindness 2844
On the Late Massacre in Piedmont 2404
On the Morning of Christ's Nativity 223
Song: On May Morning 1358
Sonnet, "How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth" 359
Sonnet on His Having Arrived to the Age of Twenty-three 359
To the Nightingale 1551

MITCHELL, RUTH COMFORT (MRS. WILLIAM SANBORN YOUNG)
An American writer, born in San Francisco, and now living at Los Gatos, California.
The Night Court 3055

MITCHELL, S(ILAS) WEIR
Born in Philadelphia, February 15, 1829; died January 4, 1914.
Good-night 679

MITCHELL, WALTER
Born at Nantucket, Mass., January 22, 1826; died in New York City in 1908.
Tacking Ship Off Shore 1595

MONKHOUSE, WILLIAM COSMO
Born in London, England, March 18, 1840; died at Skegness, England, July 2, 1901.
Dead March, A 3540
Limerick 2089
Song of the Seasons, A 1331
To a New-born Child 9

MONRO, HAROLD
An English writer, born in 1879, and now living in London.
Dawn of Womanhood 390
"She Was Young and Blithe and Fair" 1051
Suburb 859
Youth in Arms 2555

MONROE, HARRIET
Born in 1860 at Chicago, Illinois, and still living there.
"I Love my Life, but not Too Well" 681
Mountain Song 3481
Now 2573
Shadow-Child, The 288

MONTGOMERY, JAMES
Born at Irvine, Ayrshire, Scotland, November 4, 1771; died, April 30, 1854.
At Home in Heaven 3702
Christ Our Example in Suffering 3799
Field Flower, A 1476
Good Tidings of Great Joy to all People 3798
Night 1325
Patriot's Pass-word, The 2353

MONTGOMERY, MARY, see FANE, VIOLET.

MONTROSE, MARQUIS of, see GRAHAM, JAMES.

MOODY, WILLIAM VAUGHN
Born at Spencer, Ind., July 8, 1869; died at Colorado Springs, Col., October 17, 1910.
An Ode in Time of Hesitation 2211
Gloucester Moors 2569
On a Soldier Fallen in the Philippines 2210
The Serf's Secret 667

MOORE, CHARLES LEONARD
Born at Philadelphia, Pa., March 16, 1854; and still living there.
"The Spring Returns" 1339

MOORE, CLEMENT CLARKE
Born in New York City, July 15, 1779; died at Newport, R. I., July 10, 1863.
A Visit from St. Nicholas 221

MOORE, THOMAS
Born at Dublin, Ireland, May 28, 1779; died at Bromham, near Devizes, England, February 25, 1852.
At the Mid Hour of Night 1079
"Believe Me, if all those Endearing Young Charms" . 624
"Bird, Let Loose in Eastern Skies, The" 3715

Canadian Boat-song 1426
Cupid Stung 488
Dear Fanny 730
Epigrams 1918
"Farewell! But Whenever" 3015
"Fill the Bumper Fair" 2002
Journey Onwards, The 3360
Light of Other Days, The .. 454
Love's Young Dream 864
Minstrel Boy, The 2302
My Birth-day 358
"Oh, Breathe Not His Name" 3609
"Peace to the Slumberers" 2302
"Row Gently Here" 700
"She is Far from the Land" 1078
Snake, The 831
Sweet Innisfallen 2607
"Take Back the Virgin Page" 623
Temple of Friendship, A ... 832
"This World is all a Fleeting Show" 3699
"Time I've Lost in Wooing, The" 729
"'Tis the Last Rose of Summer" 1505
To Fanny 1711
When I Loved You 832
"Wreathe the Bowl" 2003
"Young May Moon, The". 699

MORGAN, BESSIE

An American writer; no biographical data available.

"Spăcially Jim" 2183

MORRIS, CHARLES

Born, probably at Bell Bridge, near Carlisle, England, in 1745; died at Brockham, England, July 11, 1838.

"A Reason Fair to Fill my Glass" 1997

MORRIS, GEORGE POPE

Born at Philadelphia, Pa., October 10, 1802; died in New York City, July 6, 1864.

The Retort 2175
"Woodman, Spare that Tree" 1409

MORRIS, HARRISON SMITH

Born at Philadelphia, Pa., October 4, 1856, and still living there.

June 1369

MORRIS, [SIR] LEWIS

Born at Carmarthen, Wales, January 23, 1833; died at Penbyn, Wales, November 12, 1907.

The Surface and the Depths 499
To a Child of Fancy 340

MORRIS, WILLIAM

Born near London, England, March 24, 1834; died in London, Oct. 3, 1896.

March 1350
Nymph's Song to Hylas, The 894
Praise of My Lady 562
Shameful Death 2746
Singer's Prelude, The 3080
Song, "Fair is the night, and fair the day" 977
Voice of Toil, The 3017

MORSE, SIDNEY HENRY

No biographical data available.

The Way 2973

MORTON, DAVID

Born at Elkton, Ky., February 21, 1886; now living at Louisville, Ky.

Immortalis 3401

MOTHERWELL, WILLIAM

Born at Glasgow, Scotland, October 13, 1797; died there, November 1, 1835.

Cavalier's Song, The 2282
Jeanie Morrison 955
Last Verses 3496
"Sing on, Blithe Bird" 102

MOULTON, LOUISE CHANDLER

Born at Pomfret, Conn., April 10, 1835; died at Boston, Mass., in 1908.

Laus Veneris 913
Love's Resurrection Day ... 1112
Shadow Dance, The 854
Somebody's Child 345
"Spring is Late, The" 3741
Summer Wooing, A 1032
Tryst, A 1111
"Were but My Spirit Loosed Upon the Air" 1262

MUHLENBERG, WILLIAM AUGUSTUS

Born at Philadelphia, Pa., September 16, 1796; died in New York City, April 8, 1877.

"I Would not Live Alway". 3476

MULHOLLAND, ROSA [LADY GILBERT]

Born at Belfast, Ireland, and now living at Dublin.

Love and Death 1104

MUNBY, ARTHUR JOSEPH

Born in Yorkshire, England, in 1828; died near Ripley, Eng., Jan. 29, 1910.

Doris 1201

MURRAY, ADA FOSTER [MRS. HENRY MILLS ALDEN]

An American writer, now living in New York City.

Above Salerno 2616
Her Dwelling-place 1129
Old-fashioned Poet, An 3089
Prevision 1373
Unguarded 1455

MURRAY, KENTON FOSTER

An American writer, now living at Washington, D. C.

Challenge 320

MYERS, FREDERIC WILLIAM HENRY
Born at Keswick, England, February 6, 1843; died at Rome, January 17, 1901.
The Inner Light 3730

N

NADAUD, GUSTAVE
Born at Roubaix, France, February 20, 1820; died in 1893.
Carcassonne 3844

NAIRNE, CAROLINA OLIPHANT [BARONESS NAIRNE]
Born in Perthshire, Scotland, August 16, 1766; died there, October 26, 1845.
Auld House, The 3234
Caller Herrin' 1622
Heavenward 3700
Laird o' Cockpen, The 2013
Land o' the Leal, The 3699
Lass o' Gowrie, The 773
Lullaby 81
"Rest is not Here" 3701
Rowan Tree, The 3236

NASHE, THOMAS
Born at Lowestoft, England, in 1567; died in London in 1601.
Death's Summons 3453
Spring 1336

NASON, EMMA HUNTINGTON
Born at Hallowell, Me., August 6, 1845, and now living at Augusta, Me.
The Cricket's Story 145

NEAL, JOHN
Born at Falmouth, Mass., August 25, 1793; died there June 21, 1876.
Good King Wenceslas 3752

NEALE, JOHN MASON
An English writer, born about 1818; died in 1866.
Jerusalem 3689

NEELE, HENRY
Born in London, England, January 29, 1798; suicided there, February 7, 1828.
"Moan, Moan, Ye Dying Gales" 3351

NEIHARDT, JOHN GNEISENAU
Born near Sharpsburg, Ill., January 8, 1881; now living at Bancroft, Neb.
Battle Cry 2952
Child's Heritage, The 279
Envoi 3505
Outward 1599
Prayer for Pain 2940
When I Have Gone Weird Ways 3498

NERVAL, GÉRARD DE [GÉRARD LABRUNIE]
Born in Paris, May 21, 1808; suicided there, January 25, 1855.
Fantaisie 3842

NESBIT, EDITH [MRS. HUBERT BLAND]
Born in London, England, in 1858, and now living in Kent, England.
Baby Seed Song 135
Child's Song in Spring 135
Tragedy, A 1019

NEWBOLT, HENRY JOHN
Born at Bilston, England, June 6, 1862; now living in London.
Craven 2509
Drake's Drum 3607
Fighting Téméraire, The 2444
He Fell Among Thieves 2797
Messmates 1629
Moss-rose, The 3550
Only Son, The 2324

NEWMAN, JOHN HENRY
Born in London, England, February 21, 1801; died at Edgbaston, England, August 11, 1890.
The Pillar of the Cloud 3804

NICOLL, ROBERT
Born in the parish of Auchtergaven, Perthshire, Scotland, January 7, 1814; died near Edinburgh, December 7, 1837.
The Hero 3244
"We Are Brethren A'" 3035

NOEL, RODEN BERKELEY WRIOTHESLEY
An English writer, born in Kent, August 27, 1834; died at Mainz, Germany, May 26, 1894.
A Casual Song 1049
"I Flung Me Round Him" 3213

NOEL, THOMAS
Born at Kirby-Mallory, Leicestershire, England, May 11, 1799; died at Brighton, England, May 16, 1861.
Old Winter 1386

NORTON, CAROLINE ELIZABETH SARAH
Born in London, England, in 1808; died, June 15, 1877.
Bingen on the Rhine 2634
"I do not love Thee" 962
King of Denmark's Ride, The 1088
Love Not 871

NORTON, GRACE FALLOW
An American writer now living in Ulster Co., New York.
Little Gray Songs from St. Joseph's 3399
"Love is a Terrible Thing" 1014
O Sleep 3224
"O World, be not so Fair" 3483
"This is my Love for You" 681

NOYES, ALFRED
Born in Staffordshire, England, September 16, 1880; and now living at Rottingdean, Sussex.
Barrel-organ, The 3025
Edinburgh 2603

Highwayman, The 2809
"In the Cool of the Evening" 1316
Love's Rosary 999
Song of Sherwood, A 2591
Song, "I came to the door of the House of Love" 511
Unity 670
"When Spring Comes Back to England 1348

O

O'CONNER, MICHAEL
Born at Eastchester, N. Y., in 1837; died at Potomac Station, Va., December 28, 1862.
Reveille 2286

O'HARA, THEODORE
Born at Danville, Ky., in 1820; died near Guerryton, Ala., in 1867.
The Bivouac of the Dead ... 2310

O'KEEFE, ADELAIDE
An English writer, born in 1776, died about 1855.
The Butterfly 116

O'NEILL, MOIRA (Pseud. of MRS. NESTA HIGGINSON SKRINE)
Born at Cushendall, Co. Antrim, Ireland, and still living there.
Birds 1521
Corrymeela 2604
"Forgettin'" 800
Song of Glenann, A 2605

O'REILLY, JOHN BOYLE
Born at Dowth Castle, County Meath, Ireland, June 28, 1844; exiled to Australia, but escaped to the United States in 1869; died at Hull, Mass., August 10, 1890.
Forever 3571
Lure, The 1905
What is Good 2918
White Rose, A 657

O'SHAUGHNESSY, ARTHUR WILLIAM EDGAR
Born in London, England, March 14, 1844, died there, January 30, 1884.
Enchainment 1008
"If She but Knew" 978
Love Symphony, A 647
Ode, "We are the music-makers" 3128
St. John Baptist 3740
Song, "Has summer come without the rose" 897
Song, "I made another garden, yea" 896

O SHEEL, SHAEMAS
Born in New York City, September 19, 1886, and still living there.
"He Whom a Dream Hath Possessed" 2938
Lover Thinks of His Lady in the North, The 996
Mary's Baby 214
"They Went Forth to Battle but They always Fell" ... 2946

O'SULLIVAN, SEUMAS
Born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1878.
My Sorrow 3362
Praise 582

OLDMIXON, JOHN
Born at Oldmixon, near Bridgewater, England, in 1673; died in London, July 9, 1742.
"I lately Vowed, but 'twas in Haste" 826

OPDYCKE, JOHN BAKER ("OLIVER OPDYKE")
Born at Doylestown, Pa., February 28, 1878; now living in New York City.
My Road 657

OPPENHEIM, JAMES
Born at St. Paul, Minn., May 24, 1882; now living in New York City.
Immoral 2097
Reason, The 1164
Saturday Night 3024

ORR, PATRICK
No biographical data available.
Annie Shore and Johnnie Doon 1057

OSBORN, SELLECK
Born at Trumbull, Conn., in 1783; died at Philadelphia, Pa., October 1, 1826.
A Modest Wit 1845

OSGOOD, FRANCES SARGENT
Born at Boston, Mass., June 18, 1811; died at Hingham, Mass., May 12, 1850.
Calumny 2924

OSGOOD, KATE PUTNAM
Born at Freyburg, Me., in 1841.
Driving Home the Cows 2517

OTWAY, THOMAS
Born at Trotton, near Midhurst, Sussex, England, March 3, 1652; died in London, April 14, 1685.
The Enchantment 613

OUTRAM, GEORGE
Born at the Clyde ironworks, near Glasgow, Scotland, March 25, 1805; died at Rosemore, Scotland, September 15, 1856.
The Annuity 2132

OWEN MEREDITH, see LYTTON, EDWARD ROBERT LYTTON BULWER.

OXFORD, EARL OF, see VERE, EDWARD.

P

PACKARD, WINTHROP
Born at Boston, Mass., March 7, 1862, and still living there.
The Shoogy-Shoo 447

PAI TA-SHUN, see PETERSON, FREDERICK.

PAIN, BARRY
An English writer; now living in London.
The Poets at Tea 1953

PAINE, ALBERT BIGELOW
Born at New Bedford, Mass., July 10, 1861; now living at Redding, Conn.
The Hills of Rest 3577

PALGRAVE, FRANCIS TURNER
Born at Great Yarmouth, England, September 28, 1824; died at Oxford, October 24, 1897.
Crecy 2352
"God Save Elizabeth" 2373

PALMER, ALICE FREEMAN
Born at Colesville, N. Y., February 21, 1855; died at Cambridge, Mass., December 6, 1902.
Butterfly, The 1519
Hallowed Places 632
Spring Journey, A 1147

PALMER, JOHN WILLIAMSON
Born at Baltimore, Md., April 4, 1825; died there in 1906.
Fight at San Jacinto, The . . 2459
For Charlie's Sake 308
Maryland Battalion, The . . . 2429
Stonewall Jackson's Way . . . 2288

PALMER, RAY
Born at Little Compton, R. I., November 12, 1808; died at Newark, N. J., March 29, 1887.
Faith 3810
"I Saw Thee" 3769

PALMER, WILLIAM PITT
Born at Stockbridge, Mass., February 22, 1805; died at Brooklyn, N. Y., May 2, 1884.
The Smack in School 2136

PARKER, THEODORE
Born at Lexington, Mass., August 24, 1810; died at Florence, Italy, May 10, 1860.
The Higher Good 2069
The Way, the Truth, and the Life 3730

PARRISH, RANDALL
Born in Henry County, Illinois, June 10, 1858; now living at Kewanee, Illinois.
Your Lad, and My Lad 2563

PARSONS, THOMAS WILLIAM
Born at Boston, Mass. August 18, 1819; died at Scituate, Mass., September 3, 1892.
Dirge 2314
Her Epitaph 3545
Obituary 278
On a Bust of Dante 3604
Saint Peray 2005

PARTRIDGE, SYBIL F.
An English writer; now Sister Mary Xavier, a teacher in a conventual school at Liverpool.
"Just for To-day" 3808

PATMORE, COVENTRY KERSEY DIGHTON
Born at Woodford, Essex, England, July 23, 1823; died at Lymington, England, November 26, 1896.
Departure 974
Farewell, A 974
"If I were Dead" 296
Joyful Wisdom, The 2953
Married Lover, The 1212
Preludes from "The Angel in the House" 384
Toys, The 296

PAYNE, JOHN
An English writer, who died in 1800.
Kyrielle 2840
Rondeau Redoublé 542

PAYNE, JOHN HOWARD
Born in New York City, June 9, 1792; died at Tunis, April 10, 1852.
Home, Sweet Home 3226

PEABODY, JOSEPHINE PRESTON [MRS. L. S. MARKS]
Born in New York City in 1874, and now living at Cambridge, Mass.
Cradle Song 88
Singing Man, The 3045
Spinning in April 1357

PEACOCK, THOMAS LOVE
Born at Weymouth, England, October 18, 1785; died in London, January 23, 1866.
Castles in the Air 435
Grave of Love, The 865
"In the Days of Old" 489
Love and Age 790
Song. "Oh! say not woman's heart is bought" 489

PEALE, REMBRANDT
Born in Bucks county, Pa., February 22, 1778; died at Philadelphia, Pa., October 3, 1860.
"Don't be Sorrowful, Darling" 1220

PECK, HARRY THURSTON
Born at Stamford, Conn., November 24, 1856, died March 23, 1914.
Heliotrope 1124

PECK, SAMUEL MINTURN
Born at Tuskaloosa, Ala., November 4, 1854; and still living there.
Captain's Feather, The 2305
My Grandmother's Turkey-tail Fan 1804

PEELE, GEORGE
An English writer, born about 1558, died about 1597.
A Farewell to Arms 399

PERCIVAL, JAMES GATES
Born at Berlin, Conn., September 15, 1795; died at Hazel Green, Wis., May 2, 1856.
"It is Great for our Country to Die" 2303

PERCY, THOMAS
Born at Brignorth, England, April 13, 1729; died at Dromore, Ireland, September 30, 1811.
Friar of Orders Gray, The . . 2710
"O Nancy, Wilt Thou Go With Me" 618

PERCY, WILLIAM ALEXANDER
Born in Greenville, Miss., May 14, 1885, and still living there.
A Little Page's Song 115

PERRONET, EDWARD
Born in England in 1721; died at Canterbury, England, January 8, 1792.
Coronation 3792

PERRY, NORA
Born at Dudley, Mass., in 1832; died there in 1896.
Love-knot, The 798
Riding Down 799
"Some Day of Days" 658

PETERSON, FREDERICK
Born at Faribault, Minn., March 1, 1859; now living in New York City.
The Bridge 3257
Wild Geese 1582

PHILIPS, AMBROSE
An English writer, born about 1675; died in 1749.
To Charlotte Pulteney 273

PHILLPOTTS, EDEN
Born at Mount Aboo, India, November 4, 1862; now living at Torquay, England.
Man's Days 2910

PIATT, SARAH MORGAN BRYAN
Born at Lexington, Ky., August 11, 1836; now living at North Bend, Hamilton county, Ohio.
After Wings 119
Into the World and Out 27
Witch in the Glass, The 157

PICKTHALL, MARJORIE LOWRY CHRISTIE
Born in London, England, September 14, 1883, and still living there.
Child's Song of Christmas, A 219
Duna 3241
Lamp of Poor Souls, The . . 3552
Little Sister of the Prophet, The 3071
Lovers of Marchaid, The . . . 994
Mother in Egypt, A 3558

PIERPONT, JOHN
Born at Litchfield, Conn., April 6, 1785; died at Medford, Mass., August 27, 1866.
My Child 318
The Pilgrim Fathers 2390
Warren's Address at Bunker Hill 2428

PIKE, ALBERT
Born at Boston, Mass., December 29, 1809; died at Washington, D.C., April 2, 1891.
Dixie 2219

PINKNEY, EDWARD COATE
Born in London, England, October 1, 1802; brought to America at the age of nine; died at Baltimore, Md., April 11, 1828.
Health, A 387
Serenade 704
Song, "We break the glass, whose sacred wine" 905

PIOZZI, HESTER THRALE
Born at Bodvel, near Pwllheli, Carnarvonshire, Wales, January 16, 1741; died at Bath, England, May 2, 1821.
The Three Warnings 2102

PLUNKETT, EDWARD JOHN MORLTON DRAX [18th BARON DUNSANY]
Born at Dunsany Castle, County Meath, Ireland, July 24, 1878, and still living there.
Songs from an Evil Wood . . 2557

PLARR, VICTOR GUSTAVE
An English writer, born June 21, 1863, and now living in London.
Che Sara Sara 1170

POE, EDGAR ALLAN
Born at Boston, Mass., January 19, 1809; died at Baltimore, Md., October 7, 1849.
Annabel Lee 1105
Bells, The 3174
City in the Sea, The 3417
Conqueror Worm, The 3416
Eldorado 3397
For Annie 1107
Haunted Palace, The 3168
Israfel 3077
Raven, The 3170
To Helen 551
To One in Paradise 1105

POPE, ALEXANDER
Born in London, England, May 21, 1688; died at Twickenham, England, May 30, 1744.
Dying Christian to His Soul, The 3489
Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady 3530
Epigrams 1916, 1918
Ode on Solitude 1635
On a Certain Lady at Court 380
Universal Prayer 3788

POULSSON, ANNE EMILIE
Born at Cedar Grove, N. J., September 8, 1853, now living at Hopkinton, Mass.
Baby's Breakfast 56
Bed-time Song 92
Breakfast Song, The 42
Lovable Child, The 99

POUND, EZRA
Born at Haley, Idaho, October 30, 1885; now living on London.
Ballad of the Goodly Fere 2814
Immorality, An 452

POWERS, HORATIO NELSON
Born at Amenia, Dutchess county, N. Y., April 30, 1826; died in 1890.
Chimney Swallows 1575
Our Sister 389

PRAED, WINTHROP MACKWORTH
Born in London, England, July 26, 1802; died there, July 15, 1839.
Belle of the Ball-room, The 1718
Letter of Advice, A 1809
Newly-Wedded, The 1195
Talented Man, The 1807
To —— 1714
To Helen 791
Vicar, The 1715

PRATT, ANNA MARIA
Born at Chelsea, Mass., and later a resident of Cleveland, Ohio.
A Mortifying Mistake 166

PRESCOTT, MARY NEWMARCH
Born at Calais, Me., August 2, 1849; died in 1888.
"In the Dark, in the Dew" .. 652

PRIEST, NANCY WOODBURY [WAKEFIELD]
An American writer, born in 1836, died in 1870.
"Over the River" 3509

PRINGLE, THOMAS
Born at Blaiklaw, Teviotdale, Roxburghshire, Scotland, January 5, 1789; died in London, England, December 5, 1834.
"Afar in the Desert" 1669

PRIOR, MATTHEW
Born, probably in East Dorset, England, July 21, 1664; died at Wimpole, Cambridgeshire, England, September 18, 1721.
Epigrams 1917
Female Phæton, The 1904
For My Own Monument 1861
Reasonable Affliction, A 1907
Remedy Worse than the Disease, The 1910
Song, "In vain you tell your parting lover" 937
Song, "The merchant to secure his treasure" 720
To a Child of Quality 276
To Chloe Jealous 766

PROCTER, ADELAIDE ANNE
Born in London, England, October 30, 1825; died there, February 3, 1864.
Doubting Heart, A 2865
Lost Chord, A 3398
One by One 3761
Woman's Question, A 1162

PROCTER, BRYAN WALLER [BARRY CORNWALL]
Born in London, England, November 21, 1787; died there, October 4, 1874.
Blood Horse, The 1520
Poet's Song to His Wife, The 1223
Sea, The 1592
"Softly Woo Away Her Breath" 3548
Song for the Seasons, A 1330
Stormy Petrel, The 1572

PROCTOR, EDNA DEAN
Born at Henniker, N. H., October 10, 1838; now living at Framingham, Mass.
Forward 3733
Heroes 2322
Take Heart 3732

PROUT, FATHER, see MAHONY, FRANCIS SYLVESTER.

Q

QUARLES, FRANCIS
Born at Ramford, Essex, England, May 8, 1592; died in London, September 8, 1644.
Divine Rapture, A 3742

QUILLER-COUCH, [SIR] ARTHUR THOMAS
Born in Cornwall, England, November 21, 1863, and still living there.
Chant Royal of High Virtue 2957
Sage Counsel 2082
Splendid Spur, The 2959

R

RADFORD, MRS. ERNEST [DOLLIE MAITLAND]
An English writer, born in 1858; and now living in London.
Plymouth Harbor 667

RALEIGH, [SIR] WALTER
Born at Hayes, Devonshire, England,

about 1552; beheaded in the Tower of London, October 29, 1618.
Conclusion, The 3453
His Pilgrimage 3451
Lie, The 3449
"Now What is Love" 475
Nymph's Reply to the Passionate Shepherd, The ... 585
"Wrong Not, Sweet Empress of My Heart" 586

RAMSAY, ALLAN
Born at Leadhills, parish of Crawford, Lanarkshire, Scotland, October 15, 1686; died at Edinburgh, January 7, 1758.
My Peggy 534
Lochaber no More 940
Song, "At setting day and rising morn" 940
Widow, The 2020

RAND, KENNETH
Born at Minneapolis, Minn., May 8, 1891; now living at New Haven, Conn.
The Lonely Road 893

RANDALL, JAMES RYDER
Born at Baltimore, Md., January 1, 1839; died at Augusta, Ga., in 1908.
My Maryland 2220

RANDOLPH, THOMAS
Born at Newnhamcum-Badby, Northamptonshire, England, June 15, 1605; died at Blatherwick, England, in March, 1635.
Devout Lover, A 531
Ode to Master Anthony Stafford, An 1649

RANDS, WILLIAM BRIGHTY
Born in London, England, December 24, 1823; died at East Dulwich, Surrey, England, April 23, 1882.
First Tooth, The 56
Peddler's Caravan, The ... 161
Reformation of Godfrey Gore, The 114
Wonderful World, The 126

RANKIN, JEREMIAH EAMES
Born at Thornton, N. H., January 2, 1828; died at Washington, D. C., in 1904.
The Babie 19
"The Word of God to Leyden Came" 2386

RAYMOND, ROSSITER WORTHINGTON
Born at Cincinnati, Ohio, April 27, 1840; now living in New York City.
Christus Consolator 3773

READ, THOMAS BUCHANAN
Born in Chester county, Pa., March 12, 1822; died in New York City, May 11, 1872.
Brave at Home, The 2318
Closing Scene, The 3419
Drifting 1609
Sheridan's Ride 2510

REALF, RICHARD
Born at Framfield, Sussex, England, June 14, 1834; came to the United States in 1854; killed himself at Oakland, Cal., October 28, 1878.
De Mortuis Nil Nisi Bonum. 3367
Indirection 2870
Old Man's Idyl, An 1222

REESE, LIZETTE WOODWORTH
Born in Baltimore county, Md., January 9, 1856, and still living at Baltimore.
After 1127
"Love Came back at Fall o' Dew" 1016
"Lydia is Gone this Many a Year" 1126
Road of Remembrance, The 449
Robert Louis Stevenson ... 3657
Tears 2855
That Day You Came 660
Wise 3387

RHYS, ERNEST
Born in London, England, July 17, 1859; and still living there.
Dagonet's Canzonet 545

RICE, CALE YOUNG
Born at Dixon, Ky., December 7, 1872; now living at Louisville, Ky.
Chanson of the Bells of Oseney 2818
Kinchinjunga 1434
New Dreams for Old 2851
On the Moor 307

RICE, WALLACE DE GROOT CECIL
Born at Hamilton, Canada, November 10, 1859; now living in Chicago, Ill.
Sweet Clover 1472

RICH, HIRAM
No biographical data available.
Jerry an' Me 1219

RICHARDS, LAURA ELIZABETH
Born at Boston, Mass., February 27, 1850; now living at Gardiner, Me.
Bird Song 1555
Difference, The 59
In Foreign Parts 2084
Nursery Song, A 165
Owl and the Eel and the Warming-pan, The 47
Prince Tatters 155

RIDDELL, HENRY SCOTT
Born at Sorbie, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, September 23, 1798; died at Teviothead, Scotland, July 30, 1870.
Scotland Yet 2268

RILEY, JAMES WHITCOMB
Born at Greenfield, Ind., in 1852; died at Indianapolis, Ind., July 22, 1916.
Life-Lesson, A 349

Little Orphant Annie . . . 169
Man in the Moon, The . . . 168
Old Swimmin' Hole, The . . . 468
Our Hired Girl . . . 171
Parting Guest, A . . . 3507
Raggedy Man, The . . . 166
When She Comes Home . . . 1000
"When the Frost is on the Punkin" . . . 1381

RIVES, AMÉLIE [PRINCESS TROUBETZKOY]
Born at Richmond, Va., August 23, 1863, and now living at Cobham, Albemarle county, Va.
My Laddie . . . 676

ROBERT II. OF FRANCE
Born at Orleans, France, in 971; died at Melun, France, in 1031.
Veni, Sancte Spiritus . . . 3822

ROBERTS, CHARLES GEORGE DOUGLAS
Born at Douglas, New Brunswick, January 10, 1860, and now living in New York City.
Afoot . . . 1682
April Adoration, An . . . 1354
Frosted Pane, The . . . 1388
Hawkbit, The . . . 1539
Recessional, The . . . 3480
When the Sleepy Man Comes . . . 70

ROBERTS, GEORGE EDWARD THEODORE
Born at Fredericton, N. B., in 1877, and still living there.
The Maid . . . 2834

ROBERTSON, HARRISON
Born at Murfreesboro, Tenn., January 16, 1856, and now living at Louisville, Ky.
Kentucky Philosophy . . . 2041
Two Triolets . . . 1783

ROBERTSON, W. GRAHAM
An English writer born in 1867; now living in London.
Glad Day . . . 139

ROBINSON, AGNES MARY FRANCES [MADAME DUCLAUX]
Born at Leamington, England, in 1857, and now living in Paris, France.
Ballad of Orleans, A . . . 2364
Dawn-Angels . . . 1309
Orchard at Avignon, An . . . 1414
Temple Garlands . . . 442
Twilight . . . 420

ROBINSON, CORINNE ROOSEVELT
Born in New York City, September 27, 1861, and still living there.
Life, a Question . . . 2908

ROBINSON, EDWIN ARLINGTON
Born at Head Tide, Me., December 22, 1869; now living at Gardiner, Me.
Field of Glory, The . . . 3067
Master, The . . . 3640
Miniver Cheevy . . . 1881
Old King Cole . . . 1797
Twilight Song . . . 3011

ROCHE, JAMES JEFFREY
Born at Mountmellick, Queen's County, Ireland, May 31, 1847; came to America in infancy; died at Genoa, Italy, in 1908.
Andromeda . . . 2253
Don't . . . 741
If . . . 740
Net of Law, The . . . 1911
V-a-s-e, The . . . 1886

ROCHESTER, EARL OF, see WILMOT, JOHN.

RODD, [SIR] JAMES RENNELL
An English writer, born November 9, 1858, and now living in Rome.
A Song of Autumn . . . 985

RODGER, ALEXANDER
Born at Mid-Calder, Midlothian, Scotland, July 16, 1784; died at Glasgow, September 26, 1846.
"Behave Yourself' Before Folk" . . . 751

ROGERS, ROBERT CAMERON
Born at Buffalo, N. Y., January 7, 1862; died, April 20, 1912, at Santa Barbara, Cal.
The Rosary . . . 1140

ROGERS, SAMUEL
Born at Stoke Newington, England, July 30, 1763; died in London, December 18, 1855.
On a Tear . . . 3380
Sleeping Beauty, The . . . 699
Wish, A . . . 1634

ROLLESTON, THOMAS WILLIAM
Born at Glasshouse, Shinrone, King's County, Ireland, in 1857; now living at Hampstead, England.
Dead at Clonmacnois, The . . . 2607
Night . . . 3469

ROMANES, GEORGE JOHN
Born at Kingston, Can., May 20, 1848; died at Oxford, Eng. May 23, 1894.
Simple Nature . . . 1658

ROONEY, JOHN JEROME
Born at Binghamton, N. Y., March 19, 1866; now living in New York City.
The Men Behind the Guns . . . 2297

ROSCOE, WILLIAM CALDWELL
Born at Liverpool, England, September 20, 1823; died at Richmond, Surrey, England, July 30, 1859.
For Ever . . . 990

ROSE, ALEXANDER MACGREGOR
Born at Tomantoul, South Banffshire, Scotland, August, 17, 1846; died at Montreal, Canada, May 10, 1898.
Hoch! der Kaiser . . . 1849

ROSS, ALEXANDER
Born in the parish of Kincardine O'Neil, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, April 13, 1699; died at Lochlee, Angus, Scotland, May 20, 1784.
"Wooed and Married and A'" 746

ROSSETER, PHILIP
An English writer, born about 1575; died in London, May 5, 1623.
All is Vanity 2838

ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA GEORGINA
Born in London, England, Dec. 5, 1830; died there, Dec. 20, 1894.
Better Resurrection, A 3461
Bourne, The 3415
City Mouse and the Country Mouse, The 44
Consider 1481
First Day, The 1223
"Heaven Overarches Earth and Sea" 3706
Holy Innocents 85
Meeting 1223
Next of Kin 3460
Paradise 3705
Remember 1224
Rest 1224
Song, "When I am dead, my dearest" 1102
Summer is Ended, The 3462
Three Seasons 452
Uphill 3415
"Who Has Seen the Wind" 130

ROSSETTI, DANTE GABRIEL
Born in London, England, May 12, 1828; died at Birchington, near Margate, England, April 10, 1882.
Ballad of Dead Ladies, The. 1783
Blessed Damozel, The 3198
Choice, The 3568
House of Life, The, sonnets from 1255
One Hope, The 3473
Song of the Bower, The 903
Sonnet, The 3107
Sunset Wings 3375
Superscription, A 435
Three Shadows 640
Vain Virtues 2866

ROSSLYN, EARL OF, see ERSKINE, F. R. St. C.

ROUGET DE LISLE, CLAUDE JOSEPH
Born at Montaigu, Lous-le-Saulnier, France, May 10, 1760; died at Choisy-le-Roi, near Paris, June 27, 1836.
La Marseillaise 3836
The Marseillaise 2271

ROWLANDS, RICHARD
An English writer, who died in 1620.
A Lullaby 78

RUSKIN, JOHN
Born in London, England, February 8, 1819; died at Brantwood, England, January 20, 1900.
"Awake! Awake" 3016

RUSSELL, GEORGE WILLIAM (A. E., pseud.)
An Irish poet born in 1867, and now living in Dublin.
Gates of Dreamland, The .. 3216
Refuge 1143
The Secret Love 627

RUSSELL, IRWIN
An American writer, born in 1853, died in 1879.
De Fust Banjo 2190
Nebuchadnezzar 2040

RYAN, ABRAM JOSEPH
Born at Norfolk, Va., August 15, 1839; died at Louisville, Ky., April 22, 1888.
Conquered Banner, The 2515
Rosary of My Tears, The .. 3381
Sentinel Songs 2322

RYAN, RICHARD
Born in London, England, in 1796; died in 1849.
"O, Saw Ye the Lass" 1159

S

SACKVILLE, CHARLES [SIXTH EARL OF DORSET AND MIDDLESEX]
An English writer, born January 24, 1638; died at Bath, England, January 29, 1706.
Song, "To all you ladies now at land" 935

SALIS-SEEWIS, JOHANN GAUDENZ VON
Born in the Grisons, Switzerland, December 26, 1762; died there, January 29, 1834.
Lied, "Ins stille Land" 3832

SANGSTER, MARGARET ELIZABETH
Born at New Rochelle, N. Y., February 22, 1838; died at Glen Ridge, N. J., June 4, 1912.
Are the Children at Home.. 311
The Building of the Nest .. 163
The Sin of Omission 2926

SANTAYANA, GEORGE
Born in Madrid, Spain, December 16, 1863; now living in England.
Before a Statue of Achilles . 3212
"O World" 2907
Rustic at the Play, The 2908
"What Riches Have You' . 2907

SARGENT, EPES
Born at Gloucester, Mass., September 27, 1813; died at Boston, December 31, 1880.
"Life on the Ocean Wave, A' 1594
Deeds of Kindness 119

SAWYER, FREDERICK WILLIAM
Born at Saco, Me., April 22, 1810; died at Boston, Mass., about 1875.
The Recognition 1935

SAXE, JOHN GODFREY
Born at Highgate, Vt., June 2, 1816; died at Albany, N. Y., March 31, 1887.
Blind Men and the Elephant, The. 1877
"Darling, Tell Me Yes". 650
"Do I Love Thee". 651
Early Rising. 2024
"Justine, You Love Me Not" 853
My Familiar. 2151
Puzzled Census Taker, The. 2148
Pyramus and Thisbe. 2147
To Lesbia. 690
To My Love. 690
Too Candid by Half. 1909
Woman's Will. 1910
"Wouldn't You Like to Know". 734

SCHAUFFLER, ROBERT HAVEN
Born at Brünn, Austria, April 8, 1879; now living at Greenbush, Mass.
"Scum o' the Earth". 3052

SCHNECKENBURGER, MAX
Born at Thalheim, Wurtemberg, Germany, February 17, 1819; died at Burgdorf, near Bern, Switzerland, May 3, 1849.
Die Wacht am Rhein. 3833
The Watch on the Rhine. 2268

SCOLLARD, CLINTON
Born at Clinton, N. Y., September 18, 1860, and still living there.
"As I Came Down from Lebanon". 2637
"Be Ye in Love with April-tide". 670
Cricket. 3101
Deeds of Valor at Santiago. 2540
If Only the Dreams Abide. 2850
King of Dreams, The. 2850
Sleeper, The. 3553
"There is a Pool on Garda" 2623
To William Sharp. 3654
Valor of Ben Milam, The. 2457

SCOTT, CLEMENT WILLIAM
An English writer, born in London, in 1841; died there in 1904.
Rus in Urbe. 656

SCOTT, DUNCAN CAMPBELL
Born at Ottawa, Canada, August 2, 1862, and still living there.
Off Rivière du Loup. 1601

SCOTT, FREDERICK GEORGE
Born at Montreal, Canada, in 1861, and now living at Quebec.
Van Elsen. 3574

SCOTT, [SIR] WALTER
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, August 15, 1771; died at Abbotsford, September 21, 1832.
Alice Brand. 2716
Bonnie Dundee. 2408
Border Ballad. 2278
Coronach. 2351
Jock of Hazeldean. 786
Lochinvar. 784
Lullaby of an Infant Chief 82
Pibroch of Donald Dhu. 2277
Proud Maisie. 1076
Rosabelle. 2715
Rover's Adieu, The. 948
"Soldier, Rest, Thy Warfare O'er". 2301
Song from "Rokeby". 2720

SCOTT, WILLIAM BELL
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, September 12, 1811; died at Penhill Castle, Ayrshire, Scotland, November 22, 1890.
Glenkindie. 2730
Love's Calendar. 1203

SEARS, EDMUND HAMILTON
Born at Sandisfield, Mass., in 1810; died at Weston, Mass., January 14, 1876.
Christmas Carols. 206

SEDLEY, [SIR] CHARLES
Born at Aylesford, Kent, England, about 1639; died in London, August 20, 1701.
Phyllis. 802
Song, "Love still has something of the sea". 486
To Celia. 610
To Chloris. 720

SEEGER, ALAN
Born in New York City, June 22, 1888; killed on the field of Belloy-en-Santerre, France, July 4, 1916.
"I Have a Rendezvous with Death". 2560
To —— In Church. 581

SELVA, SALOMON DE LA
A Nicaraguan poet, born in 1893, and now living in New York City.
Tropical Town. 3374

SERVICE, ROBERT WILLIAM
Born at Preston, England, January 16, 1874, and still living.
Carry On. 2941
The Law of the Yukon. 2575

SETOUN, GABRIEL [THOMAS NICOLL HEPBURN]
Born at West Wemyss, Fifeshire, Scotland, April 21, 1861; now living at Edinburgh.
Jack Frost. 151
Wind's Song, The. 131
World's Music, The. 127

SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM
Born at Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire, England, in April, 1564; died there, April 23, 1616.
"Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind". 3039
"Crabbed Age and Youth" 717
Dirge from "Cymbeline". 3431
Fairy Songs. 231
"Hark, Hark, the Lark". 694

"It Was a Lover and His Lass" ... 717
"Jog on, Jog on" ... 2978
Love's Perjuries ... 479
Sea Dirge, A ... 3516
"Sigh no more, Ladies" ... 807
Silvia ... 519
Song from "Love's Labor Lost" ... 2019
Song, "O mistress mine" ... 930
Sonnets ... 1246
"Under the Greenwood Tree" ... 1636
"When Daffodils begin to Peer" ... 1337
"When that I Was and a Little Tiny Boy" ... 400

SHANLY, CHARLES DAWSON
Born at Dublin, Ireland, March 9, 1811; came to America in 1857; died at Arlington, Fla., August 15, 1875.
Civil War ... 2492
Kitty of Coleraine ... 750

SHARP, WILLIAM [FIONA MACLEOD]
Born at Paisley, England, September 12, 1855; died near Mount Etna, Sicily, December 14, 1905.
On a Nightingale in April ... 1548
The Mystic's Prayer ... 2854
The White Peace ... 2853

SHAW, JOHN
Born in Westmoreland, England, in 1559; died at Woking, Surrey, England, in September, 1625.
Song, "Who has robbed the ocean cave" ... 539

SHEFFIELD, JOHN [FIRST DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM]
Born in London, England, April 7, 1648; died there, February 24, 1721.
Song, "Come, Celia, let's agree at last" ... 612

SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE
Born at Field Place, near Horsham, Sussex, England, August 4, 1792; drowned in the Bay of Spezia, Italy, July 8, 1822.
Adonais ... 3612
Arethusa ... 1418
Autumn: a Dirge ... 1380
Chorus from "Hellas" ... 2623
Cloud, The ... 1440
Dirge for the Year ... 1396
Flight of Love, The ... 1001
From the Arabic ... 626
Good-night ... 703
Hymn of Apollo ... 1306
Hymn of Pan ... 3162
"I Fear Thy Kisses, Gentle Maiden" ... 688
Lines to an Indian Air ... 702
Love's Philosophy ... 688
Mutability ... 3377
Ode to the West Wind ... 1378
Ozymandias of Egypt ... 2844
Question, The ... 867
Song, "Rarely, rarely comest thou" ... 3364
Time Long Past ... 442
To ——, "One word is too often profaned" ... 625
To a Skylark ... 1569
To Jane: the Invitation ... 1667
To Night ... 1323
With a Guitar, to Jane ... 3126

SHENSTONE, WILLIAM
Born at Hales Owen, England, October 18, 1714; died there, February 11, 1763.
Written at an Inn at Henley 2988

SHEPHERD, NATHANIEL GRAHAM
Born in New York City in 1835; died there, May 23, 1869.
Roll-Call ... 2313

SHERIDAN, HELEN SELINA [LADY DUFFERIN, and COUNTESS OF GIFFORD]
Born in England in 1807; died in London, June 13, 1867.
Lament of the Irish Emigrant ... 1086
"Love Hath a Language" ... 496

SHERIDAN, RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER
Born at Dublin, Ireland, September 30, 1751; died in London, July 7, 1816.
Air, "I ne'er could any lustre see" ... 827
Epigrams ... 1916
"Let the Toast Pass" ... 1999
Song, "Had I a heart for falsehood framed" ... 620

SHIRLEY, JAMES
Born in London, England, September 18, 1596; died there, October 29, 1666.
Death's Final Conquest ... 3404
Death's Subtle Ways ... 3405

SHIVELL, PAUL
Born at Indianapolis, Ind., September 25, 1874; now living in the Stillwater valley, near Pleasant Hill, Ohio.
"In God's Eternal Studios" 2869

SHORTER, DORA SIGERSON
Born at Dublin, Ireland, and now living in London.
Mother's Prayer, The ... 304
Piper on the Hill, The ... 132
"Rose Will Fade, A" ... 1047

SIBLEY, CHARLES
A Scotch writer; no biographical data available.
The Plaidie ... 755

SICKELS, DAVID BANKS
Born in New York City, February 8, 1837, and now living at Paterson, N. J.
"It Cannot Be" ... 3712

SIDGWICK, HENRY
Born at Skipton, Yorkshire, England, May 31, 1838; died August 28, 1901.
Goethe and Frederika..... 1055

SIDNEY, [SIR] PHILIP
Born at Penshurst, Kent, England, November 29, 1554; died at Arnhem, Netherlands, October 7, 1586.
Astrophel and Stella, First Song from..... 518
Astrophel and Stella, Sonnets from..... 1235
"My True-love Hath My Heart"..... 1141
Philomela..... 1551
"Truth Doth Truth Deserve"..... 1212

SIGERSON, DORA, see SHORTER, DORA SIGERSON.

SIGERSON, GEORGE
Born at Dublin, Ireland, in 1839, and still living there.
"My Own Cáilin Donn"..... 1165

SIGOURNEY, LYDIA HUNTLY
Born at Norwich, Conn., September 1, 1791; died at Hartford, Conn., June 10, 1865.
Columbus..... 2365
Indian Names..... 2567

SILL, EDWARD ROWLAND
Born at Windsor, Conn., April 29, 1841; died at Cleveland, Ohio, February 27, 1887.
Baker's Duzzen uv Wize Sawz, A..... 1915
Fool's Prayer, The..... 3764
Future, The..... 2976
Home..... 3711
Lover's Song, The..... 571
Opportunity..... 2923

SILLERY, CHARLES DOYNE
Born at Athlone, Ireland, March 2, 1807; died at Edinburgh, Scotland, May 16, 1837.
"She Died in Beauty"..... 3548

SIMMS, WILLIAM GILMORE
Born at Charleston, S. C., April 17, 1806; died there, June 11, 1870.
Grape-Vine Swing, The..... 467
Song in March..... 1351

SIMPSON, HENRY
Born in London, England, October 22, 1868, and now living at Wimbledon, near London.
In February..... 574

SKELTON, JOHN
Born in Norfolk, England, about 1460; died in London in 1529.
To Mistress Margaret Hussey..... 329

SKIPSEY, JOSEPH
Born at Percy, Tynemouth, England, March 17, 1832; died at Gateshead, England, September 3, 1903.
Mother Wept..... 289

SKRINE, NESTA HIGGINSON (MRS. WALTER SKRINE), see O'NEILL, MOIRA

SMART, CHRISTOPHER
Born at Shipbourne, Kent, England, April 11, 1722; died in London, May 18, 1771.
Song to David..... 3783

SMEDLEY, MENELLA BUTE
An English writer born about 1825, died about 1875.
"Wind Me a Summer Crown"..... 3388

SMITH, ADA
No biographical data available.
In City Streets..... 1674

SMITH, ALEXANDER
Born at Kilmarnock, Scotland, December 31, 1830; died at Wardie, near Granton, Midlothian, Scotland, January 5, 1867.
Barbara..... 1100

SMITH, CHARLOTTE
Born in London, England, May 4, 1749; died at Tetford, near Farnham, Surrey, England, October 28, 1806.
The First Swallow..... 1573

SMITH, HORACE
Born in London, England, December 31, 1779; died at Tunbridge Wells, England, July 12, 1849.
Address to a Mummy..... 2116

SMITH, MARY LOUISE RILEY
Born at Rochester, N. Y., May 27, 1842, and now living in New York City.
Sometime..... 3513
Tired Mothers..... 321

SMITH, SAMUEL FRANCIS
Born at Boston, Mass., October 21, 1808; died at Newton Center, Mass., in 1895.
America..... 2195

SMITH, SYDNEY
Born at Woodford, Essex, England, June 3, 1771; died in London, February 22, 1845.
A Salad..... 1987

SOUTHESK, EARL OF, see CARNEGIE JAMES.

SOUTHEY, ROBERT
Born at Bristol, England, August 12, 1774; died at Greta Hall, near Keswick, England, March 21, 1843.
Battle of Blenheim, The..... 2410
Cataract of Lodore, The..... 1420

God's Judgment on a Wicked Bishop . . . 189
Holly-Tree, The . . . 1407
Inchcape Rock, The . . . 1617
"My Days Among the Dead are Passed" . . . 2920
Old Man's Comforts, The . . . 405
Well of St. Keyne, The . . . 2114

SOUTHWELL, ROBERT
Born in Norfolk, England, about 1561; hanged at Tyburn, February 21, 1595.
Burning Babe, The . . . 208
Child My Choice, A . . . 3747
Times Go by Turns . . . 2838

SPALDING, JOHN LANCASTER
Born at Lebanon, Ky., June 2, 1840; now living at Peoria, Ill.
The Starry Host . . . 3729

SPALDING, SUSAN MARR
Born at Bath, Me., and later a resident of Philadelphia, Pa.
Fate . . . 502

SPENCER, CAROLINE
No biographical data available.
Living Waters . . . 3761

SPENSER, EDMUND
Born in London, England, about 1552; died there, January 13, 1599.
Amoretti, Sonnets from . . . 1232
Epithalamion . . . 1183
Prothalamion . . . 1178
Sweet and Sour . . . 2837

SPINGARN, JOEL ELIAS
Born in New York City, May 17, 1875, now living in England.
Spring Passion . . . 1171

SPOFFORD, HARRIET PRESCOTT
Born at Calais, Me., April 3, 1835; now living at Newburyport, Mass.
Ballad, "In the summer even" . . . 1621
Hereafter . . . 1012
Only . . . 3
Sigh, A . . . 1011

SPRAGUE, CHARLES
Born at Boston, Mass., October 26, 1791; died there, January 22, 1875.
The Family Meeting . . . 3562
The Winged Worshippers . . . 3754

STANLEY, THOMAS
Born in Hertfordshire, England, in 1625; died in London, April 12, 1678.
A Deposition from Beauty . . . 608

STANTON, FRANK LEBBY
Born at Charleston, S. C., February 22, 1857; and now living at Atlanta, Ga.
A Plantation Ditty . . . 2043
"Wearyin' fer You" . . . 993

STARBUCK, VICTOR
Born at Chuluota, Florida, November 16, 1887; now living at Orlando, Florida.
Night for Adventures . . . 1701

STEAD, WILLIAM FORCE
An American writer, now living in England.
Sweet Wild April . . . 1355

STEDMAN, EDMUND CLARENCE
Born at Hartford, Conn., October 8, 1833; died in New York City in 1908.
Discoverer, The . . . 298
Doorstep, The . . . 794
Falstaff's Song . . . 2014
How Old Brown Took Harper's Ferry . . . 2479
Hymn of the West . . . 2204
Kearny at Seven Pines . . . 2493
Morgan . . . 2404
Pan in Wall Street . . . 1751
Toujours Amour . . . 793
"Voice of the Western Wind" . . . 446

STEPHEN, JAMES KENNETH
Born in London, England, in 1859; died there in 1892.
A Grievance . . . 1031
Sincere Flattery . . . 1951
Wordsworth . . . 1956

STEPHENS, JAMES
An Irish writer, now living in Dublin.
The Waste Places . . . 2819
The Watcher . . . 1089

STERLING, GEORGE
Born at Sag Harbor, N. Y., December 1, 1869; now living at Carmel, Cal.
Black Vulture, The . . . 1581
In Extremis . . . 3466
Master Mariner, The . . . 1799
Music at twilight . . . 3131
Swimmers, The . . . 3194
Three Sonnets on Oblivion . . . 2847

STEVENSON, BURTON EGBERT
Born at Chillicothe, Ohio, November 9, 1872, and still living there.
Henry Hudson's Quest . . . 2382

STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, November 13, 1850; died at Vailima, near Apia, Samoa, December 4, 1894.
Celestial Surgeon, The . . . 3729
Christmas at Sea . . . 1602
Envoy . . . 3106
Foreign Lands . . . 160
Gardener, The . . . 160
Good and Bad Children . . . 100
Happy Thought . . . 98
In the Highlands . . . 1675
Lad that is Gone, A . . . 438
Land of Counterpane, The . . . 158
Land of Story-books, The . . . 159
My Bed is a Boat . . . 161
My Shadow . . . 158
Requiem . . . 3485
Romance . . . 654

"Trusty, Dusky, Vivid, True" 394
Vagabond, The 1674
Whole Duty of Children . . . 98

STICKNEY, JOSEPH TRUMBULL
Born at Geneva, Switzerland, June 20, 1874; died in Boston, Mass., October 11, 1904.
Driftwood 2906
"Love, I Marvel What You Are" 575

STILL, JOHN
Born at Grantham, England, about 1543; died, Bishop of Bath and Wells, at Wells, England, February 26, 1608.
"Jolly Good Ale and Old" . 1990

STIRLING-MAXWELL, [SIR] WILLIAM
Born at Kenmure, Scotland, March 8, 1818; died at Venice, Italy, January 15, 1878.
To Anne 692

STODDARD, CHARLES WARREN
Born at Rochester, N. Y., August 7, 1843; died at Monterey, Cal., April 24, 1909.
A Rhyme of Life 3499

STODDARD, RICHARD HENRY
Born at Hingham, Mass., July 2, 1825; died in New York City in 1903.
At Last 1215
Birds 1522
"Day and Night my Thoughts Incline" 2014
Dying Lover, The 1114
Flight of Youth, The 351
Sea, The 1619
Three Score and Ten 457

STODDART, THOMAS TOD
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, February 14, 1810; died at Kelso, Scotland, November 21, 1880.
The Angler's Invitation 1663

STORY, WILLIAM WETMORE
Born at Salem, Mass., February 19, 1819; died at Rome, Italy, October 5, 1895.
Io Victis 2945
Snowdrop 854
The Violet 1502

STOWE, HARRIET BEECHER
Born at Litchfield, Conn., June 14, 1811; died at Hartford, Conn., July 1, 1896.
The Other World 3708

STRINGER, ARTHUR
Born at London, Ontario, Canada, February 26, 1874; now living in New York City.
At the Comedy 926
Memories 1127

STRONG, [REV.] GEORGE AUGUSTUS
Born at Norwich, Conn., January 21, 1832; died at Cambridge, Mass., March 6, 1912.
The Modern Hiawatha 1950

SUCKLING, [SIR] JOHN
Born at Whitton, Middlesex, England, in February, 1609; suicided at Paris, France, in June 1642.
Ballad upon a Wedding, A . . 763
Constant Lover, The 818
Doubt of Martyrdom, A . . . 602
Song, "I prithee send me back my heart" 763
Song, "Why so pale and wan, fond lover" 820
"When, Dearest, I but Think of Thee" 601

SURREY, EARL OF, see HOWARD, HENRY.

SWAIN, CHARLES
Born at Manchester, England, January 4, 1801; died at Prestwich Park, near Manchester, September 22, 1874.
"Smile and never Heed Me" . 630
Song, "A violet in her lovely hair" 548
"Tripping Down the Field-path" 870

SWEENEY, (MRS.) MILDRED I. (MCNEAL)
An American writer, born in 1871, and still living.
Chavez 3600

SWIFT, JONATHAN
Born in Dublin, Ireland, November 30, 1667; died there, October 19, 1745.
Epigram 1917

SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES
Born in London, England, April 5, 1837; died, April 10, 1909.
At Parting 978
Ballad of Dreamland, A 499
Ballad of Life, A 642
"Before the Beginning of Years" 368
Child's Laughter, A 254
Étude Réaliste 16
Forsaken Garden, A 1459
Garden of Proserpine, The . 3424
Higher Pantheism in a Nutshell, The 1935
Hope and Fear 2844
In Memory of "Barry Cornwall" 3647
In Memory of Walter Savage Landor 3626
Itylus 1576
Leave-Taking, A 645
Love at Sea 1159
Lyric, A 646
Madonna Mia 565
Mary Beaton's Song 1160
Match, A 641
Nephelidia 1944
Oblation, The 903

On the Deaths of Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot 3596
Rococo 900
Rondel, "Kissing her hair" 1146
Rondel, "These many years" 902
Seven Years Old 255
Singing Lesson, A 3086
Stanzas, "I will go back to the great sweet mother" 1585
"When the Hounds of Spring" 1339

SYLVESTER, JOSHUA
Born in Kent, England, in 1563; died at Middleburg, Holland, September 28, 1618.
A Contented Mind 2980
"Were I as Base as is the Lowly Plain" 1253

SYMONDS, JOHN ADDINGTON
Born at Bristol, England, October 5, 1840; died at Rome, Italy, April 19, 1893.
Farewell 962
Gaudeamus Igitur 2895
Lauriger Horatius 2896
Love in Dreams 895
Night 1324
On a Picture by Poussin 1079
Sonnet, The 3108
Venice 2619

SYMONS, ARTHUR
Born in Wales, February 28, 1865; now living at Wittersham, Kent, England.
Emmy 1058
Fisher's Widow, The 1622
Last Memory, The 928
Modern Beauty 1004
Roundel of Rest, A 3423

T

TABB, JOHN BANISTER
Born in Virginia, March 22, 1845; died at Ellicott City, Md., in 1909.
Childhood 440
Evolution 2866
Foot Soldiers 59
Fraternity 3036
Overflow 1579
To a Wood-Violet 1503
White Jessamine, The 3549

TALBOT, ETHEL
No biographical data available.
Give Love To-day 1115

TANNAHILL, ROBERT
Born at Paisley, Scotland, June 3, 1774; drowned himself there, May 17, 1810.
"By Yon Burn Side" 1166
Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane 544
"Loudoun's Bonnie Woods and Braes" 949
"Midges Dance Aboon the Burn, The" 1652

TAPPAN, WILLIAM BINGHAM
Born at Beverly, Mass., October 26, 1794; died at West Needham, Mass., June 18, 1849.
The Hour of Peaceful Rest 3803

TATE, NAHUM
Born at Dublin, Ireland, in 1652; died in London, England, August 12, 1715.
"While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night" 205

TAYLOR, ANN [MRS. ANN GILBERT]
Born in London, England, January 30, 1782; died at Nottingham, England, December 20, 1866.
Cow, The 47
Jane and Eliza 109
Meddlesome Matty 110
Pin, The 108

TAYLOR, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
Born at Lowville, N. Y., July 19, 1819; died at Cleveland, Ohio, February 24, 1887.
The Isle of the Long Ago 417

TAYLOR, JAMES BAYARD
Born at Kenneth Square, Chester County, Pa., January 11, 1825; died in Berlin, Germany, December 19, 1878.
Bedouin Song 709
Nubia 2640
Promissory Note, The 1949
Song of the Camp, The 2285
Storm Song 1614
Story for a Child, A 175

TAYLOR, JANE
Born in London, England, September 23, 1783; died at Ongar, Essex, England, April 12, 1824.
Contented John 111
Dirty Jim 107
Good-night 82
"I Like Little Pussy" 102
Morning 116
Philosopher's Scales, The 1879
Star, The 41
Violet, The 106

TAYLOR, JEFFREYS
Born at Lavenham, Suffolk, England, October 30, 1792; died in London, October 8, 1853.
The Lion and the Mouse 120

TAYLOR, JOSEPH RUSSELL
Born at Circleville, Ohio, July 10, 1868, and now living at Columbus, Ohio.
"Blow Softly, Thrush" 1581
Breath on the Oat 2541
Dove's Nest 266

TAYLOR, RACHEL ANNAND
No biographical data available.
May-Music 1150
The Question 3742

TAYLOR, TOM
Born at Bishop-Wearmouth, near Sunderland, England, October 19, 1817; died at Wandsworth, England, July 12, 1880. See note under Brooks, Shirley.
Abraham Lincoln 3642

TAYLOR, VIOLA
No biographical data available.
Babylon 448

TEASDALE, SARA [MRS. ERNEST B. FILSINGER]
Born at St. Louis, Mo., August 8, 1884, and still living there.
"Child, Child" 512
Four Winds 850
"I Shall Not Care" 1017
Kiss, The 1194
Leaves 2856
Look, The 923
Mastery 2938
To Rose 272

TENNYSON, ALFRED [FIRST BARON TENNYSON]
Born at Somersby, Lincolnshire, England, August 7, 1809; died at Aldsworth House, near Haslemere, Surrey, England, October 6, 1892.
"Ask Me No More" 875
Beggar Maid, The 1143
"Break, Break, Break" 472
Brook's Song, The 1416
Bugle Song 635
Charge of the Light Brigade, The 2473
"Come Into the Garden, Maud" 706
Crossing the Bar 3504
Death of the Old Year, The 1395
Eagle, The 1539
Early Spring 1333
Farewell, A 3354
Flower, The 2927
Godiva 2593
Higher Pantheism, The 2852
"Home They Brought Her Warrior Dead" 1093
In Memoriam 2898
In the Children's Hospital 292
Lady Clara Vere de Vere 835
Lady Clare 2727
Lady of Shalott, The 3188
Letters, The 1177
Lilian 634
Locksley Hall 3295
Lotos-Eaters, The 3178
Lullaby from "The Princess" 83
Mariana 873
Minnie and Winnie 92
Morte d' Arthur 3181
"O Swallow, Swallow, Flying South" 963
Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington 3672
"Of Old Sat Freedom on the Heights" 2235
"Oh That 'twere Possible" 1092
Reconciliation, The 1168
"Revenge," The 2377
St. Agnes' Eve 3767
Sir Galahad 2724
Song, "It is the miller's daughter" 633
Song, "O let the solid ground" 497
Song of the Milkmaid 733
Song: the Owl 1557
Spring 1338
"Tears, Idle Tears" 454
Throstle, The 1578
Ulysses 3179
"Voice by the Cedar-tree, A" 552
"What Does Little Birdie Say" 150

TENNYSON, FREDERICK
Born at Louth, Ireland, June 5, 1807, died in London, England, February 26, 1898.
Blackbird, The 1523
Skylark, The 1567

THACKERAY, WILLIAM MAKEPEACE
Born at Calcutta, India, July 18, 1811; died in London, England, December 24, 1863.
Ad Ministram 1987
Age of Wisdom, The 838
At the Church Gate 792
Ballad of Bouillabaise, The 1726
Cane-bottomed Chair, The 3239
Credo, A 2022
Garret, The 463
Jolly Jack 1847
King of Brentford, The 1848
Little Billie 2140
Mahogany Tree, The 2008
Mr. Molony's Account of the Ball 1968
Ronsard to His Mistress 635
Sorrows of Werther 838
Tragic Story, A 2049
Willow-tree, The 1936

THAXTER, CELIA LEIGHTON
Born at Portsmouth, N. H., in 1835; died at the Isles of Shoals, August 28, 1894.
Compensation 1294
Little Gustava 154
Nikolina 153
Sandpiper, The 1562

THAYER, ERNEST LAWRENCE
An American writer; no biographical data available.
Casey at the Bat 2185

THAYER, WILLIAM ROSCOE
Born at Boston, Mass., January 16, 1859, and now living at Cambridge, Mass.
The Last Hunt 2799

THOM, WILLIAM
Born at Aberdeen, Scotland, about 1789; died at Hawkhill, Dundee, Scotland, February 29, 1848.
The Mitherless Bairn 283
"They Speak o' Wiles" 493

THOMAS, EDITH MATILDA
Born at Chatham, Medina county, Ohio, August 12, 1854; now living at West New Brighton, Staten Island.
Evoe . . . 3098
In the Lilac Rain . . . 3539
Moly . . . 1493
Mother England . . . 2230
Muses, The . . . 3097
Music . . . 3130
Patmos . . . 1303
Triumph of Forgotten Things, The . . . 449

THOMAS, FREDERICK WILLIAM
An American writer, a native of Rhode Island, born in 1811, died in 1864.
Song, "'Tis said that absence conquers love" . . . 983

THOMPSON, FRANCIS
Born at Preston, England, Dec. 18, 1859; died in London, Nov. 13, 1907.
Daisy . . . 341
Envoy . . . 3106
Ex Ore Infantium . . . 277
Hound of Heaven, The . . . 3204
May Burden, A . . . 1358
To a Snowflake . . . 1391
To Daisies . . . 1479
Veteran of Heaven, The . . . 3770

THOMPSON, JAMES MAURICE
Born at Fairfield, Ind., in 1844; died in 1901.
A Prelude . . . 3081

THOMPSON, JOHN REUBEN
Born at Richmond, Va., October 23, 1823; died in New York City, April 30, 1873.
Carcassonne [tr] . . . 438
Music in Camp . . . 2289

THOMPSON, WILL HENRY
Born at Calhoun, Ga., March 10, 1848; now living at Seattle, Wash.
The High Tide at Gettysburg . . . 2502

THOMSON, JAMES
Born at Ednam, Roxburghshire, Scotland, September 11, 1700; died near Richmond, England, August 27, 1748.
Rule, Britannia . . . 2232

THOMSON, JAMES
Born at Port Glasgow, Scotland, November 23, 1834; died in London, England, June 3, 1882.
E. B. B. . . . 3594
Gifts . . . 617
Requiem, A . . . 3551
Song, "Let my voice ring out and over the earth" . . . 616
Vine, The . . . 487
William Blake . . . 3589

THOREAU, HENRY DAVID
Born at Concord, Mass., July 12, 1817; died there, May 6, 1862.
Conscience . . . 2960
Great Adventure, The . . . 2037
Inspiration . . . 2961
My Prayer . . . 2961
Nature . . . 1295

THORLEY, WILFRID CHARLES
Born in London, England, in 1878, and still living there.
Buttercups . . . 1468

THORNBURY, GEORGE WALTER
Born in London, England, November 13, 1828; died there, June 11, 1876.
The Cavalier's Escape . . . 2742
The Court Historian . . . 1789
The Sally from Coventry . . . 2745
The Three Troopers . . . 2743

THORPE, ROSE HARTWICK
Born at Mishawaka, Ind., July 18, 1850, and now living at San Diego, Cal.
"Curfew Must Not Ring To-Night" . . . 3329

THRALE, HESTER, see PIOZZI, HESTER THRALE.

THURLOW, LORD, see HOVELL-THURLOW, EDWARD.

TICHBORNE, CHIDIOCK
Born at Southampton, England, about 1558; executed at London, for treason, September 20, 1586.
A Lament . . . 401

TICKELL, THOMAS
Born at Bridekirk, Cumberland, England, in 1686; died at Glasnevin, near Dublin, Ireland, April 23, 1740.
To the Earl of Warwick on the Death of Mr. Addison 3584

TICKNOR, FRANCIS ORRAY
Born in Baldwin county, Ga., in 1822; died near Columbus, Ga., in 1874.
Little Giffen . . . 2320
The Virginians of the Valley 2223

TILTON, THEODORE
Born in New York City, October 2, 1835; died there in 1907.
"Even This Shall Pass Away" . . . 2845

TIMROD, HENRY
Born at Charleston, S. C., December 8, 1829; died at Columbia, S. C., October 6, 1867.
Ode, "Sleep sweetly in your humble graves" . . . 2320
Serenade . . . 705
Sonnet, "Most men know love but as a part of life" 3036
Spring . . . 1344
Trifle, A . . . 654

TIPPLE, E. H.
An English writer, living in India.
Hot Weather in the Plains—India . . . 3230

TODHUNTER, JOHN
Born at Dublin, Ireland, December 30, 1839, and now living in London, England.
Maureen 647

TODI, JOCOPONE DA
Born at Todi, in the province of Perugia, Italy, about the middle of the thirteenth century; died in 1306.
Stabat Mater Dolorosa 3891

TONNA, MRS. "CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH"
An Irish writer born October 1, 1790; died July 12, 1846.
The Maiden City 2606

TOOKER, L. FRANK
Born at Port Jefferson, N. Y., December 18, 1855; now living in New York City.
"He Bringeth Them Unto Their Desired Haven" ... 3537

TOPLADY, AUGUSTUS MONTAGUE
Born at Farnham, Surrey, England, November 4, 1740; died in London, August 11, 1778.
Rock of Ages 3797

TORRENCE, FREDERIC RIDGELEY
Born at Xenia, Ohio, November 27, 1875, and now living in New York City.
Conclusion of the Whole Matter, The 2897
Evensong 893

TOWNE, CHARLES HANSON
Born at Louisville, Ky., February 2, 1877; now living in New York City.
Song, "I saw the day's white rapture" 892
The Quiet Singer 3665

TOWNSEND, MARY ASHLEY
Born at Lyons, N. Y., in 1832, and died in 1901.
Embryo 3079

TRAILL, HENRY DUFF
Born at Morden Hill, Blackheath, England, August 14, 1842; died in London, February 21, 1900.
After Dilettante Concetti ... 1942

TRENCH, HERBERT
Born at Avoncore, County Cork, Ireland, in November 1865, and now living at Richmond Hill, Surrey, England.
A Charge 2919
"I Heard a Soldier" 927

TROUBETZKOY, AMÉLIE RIVES, see RIVES, AMÉLIE.

TROWBRIDGE, JOHN TOWNSEND
Born at Ogden, Monroe county, N. Y., September 18, 1827; died at Arlington, Mass., February 12, 1916.
Cup, The 1645
Darius Green and His Flying-Machine 2163
Midsummer 1364
Midwinter 1393
Pewee, The 1558
Vagabonds, The 3340

TUCKER, ST. GEORGE
Born in the island of Bermuda, July 10, 1752; died at Warminster, Nelson county, Va., November 10, 1828.
"Days of My Youth" 352

TURNER, CHARLES TENNYSON
Born at Somersby, Lincolnshire, England, July 4, 1808; died at Cheltenham, England, April 25, 1879.
Letty's Globe 265
Mary Queen of Scots 3646

TURNER, ELIZABETH
An English writer for children, who died in 1846.
Politeness 98
Rebecca's After-Thought 100

TYNAN, [HINKSON] KATHARINE
Born at Condalkin, County Dublin, Ireland, in 1861, and now living at Clanberg, Shankill, County Dublin, Ireland.
Beloved, The 3727
Chanticleer 149
Dead Coach, The 3429
Desire, The 253
Footpath Way, The 1679
Little Ghost, The 302
Of an Orchard 1414
Quiet Nights, The 3222
Sheep and Lambs 3759
Turn o' the Year 1332

U

UNTERMEYER, LOUIS
Born in New York City, October 1, 1885; and still living there.
Caliban in the Coal-mines .. 3059
Folk-song 1050
Landscapes 3060
Only of Thee and Me 625
Prayer 2940
Reveillé 2562

UPSON, ARTHUR WHEELOCK
Born at Camden, N. Y., January 10, 1877; drowned in Lake Bermidji, Minn., February 12, 1908.
"Ex Libris" 3466
Failures 2950
Old Gardens 992
Song, "Flame at the core of the world" 1151
Vers la Vie 2856

UPTON, JAMES
Born at Winslow, Cheshire, England, December 10, 1670; died at Taunton, England, August 13, 1749.
The Lass of Richmond Hill. 615

USHER, JOHN
No biographical data available.
The Pipe of Tobacco 1984

V

VANDEGRIFT, MARGARET, see JANVIER, MARGARET THOMSON.

VAN DYKE, HENRY
Born at Germantown, Pa., November 10, 1852, and now living at Princeton, N. J.
Child in the Garden, The . . . 435
Four Things 2918
Lover's Envy, A 672
Maryland Yellow-throat The 1543
My April Lady 572
Valley of Vain Verses, The . . 2933

VAN RENSSELAER, MARIANA GRISWOLD
Born in New York City in 1851, and still living there.
Love's Prisoner 925

VAUGHAN, HENRY
Born at Newton-by-Usk, in the parish of Llansaintffraed, Brecknockshire, Wales, April 17, 1622; died there, April 23, 1695.
Eclipse, The 3766
Friends Departed 3508
Man 369
Peace 3695
Retreat, The 434
Song to Amoret, A 615
World, The 3696

VAUTOR, THOMAS
A household musician in the family of Anthony Beaumont, of Leicestershire, England, from about 1592 until his death, some time after 1620.
"Sweet Suffolk Owl" 1558

VAUX, THOMAS, [SECOND BARON VAUX OF HARROWDEN]
An English writer, born in 1510; died in London, in October, 1556.
On a Contented Mind" 2978

VENABLE, WILLIAM HENRY
Born in Warren County, Ohio, April 29, 1836; and now living at Cincinnati, Ohio.
My Catbird 1533

VERE, see also DE VERE.

VERE, EDWARD DE [SEVENTEENTH EARL OF OXFORD]
An English writer, born April 2, 1550; died at Newington, Middlesex, England, June 24, 1604.
A Renunciation 807

VERY, JONES
Born at Salem, Mass., August 28, 1813; died there, May 8, 1880.
Nature 1293
The Idler 2970
The Tree 1403

VIELÉ, HERMAN KNICKERBOCKER
Born in New York City, January 31, 1856; died there December 14, 1908.
The Good Inn 1700

VILLON, FRANÇOIS
Born in Paris in 1431; died about 1484.
Ballade des Dames du Temps Jadis 3837

W

WADDINGTON, SAMUEL
Born at Boston Spa, Yorkshire, England, November 9, 1844, and now living at London.
Mors et Vita 3422

WAKEFIELD, NANCY PRIEST, see PRIEST, NANCY WOODBURY.

WALLER, EDMUND
Born at Coleshill, Hertfordshire, England, March 3, 1606; died at Beaconsfield, England, October 21, 1687.
"Go, Lovely Rose" 930
Of the Last Verses in the Book 401
On a Girdle 531
On Her Coming to London . . 330
To Flavia 600

WALLER, JOHN FRANCIS
Born at Limerick, Ireland, in 1810; died at Bishop Stortford, England, January 19, 1894.
Kitty Neil 756

WALSH, WILLIAM
Born at Abberley, Worcestershire, England, in 1663; died in London, March 18, 1708.
Rivals 826

WALTON, IZAAK
Born in Staffordshire, England, August 9, 1593; died at Winchester, England, December 15, 1683.
The Angler's Wish 1664

WARD, ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS
Born at Boston, Mass., August 31, 1844; died there, January 28, 1911.
Afterwards 3512
Lost Colors, The 2464

WARD, LYDIA AVERY COONLEY
Born at Lynchburg, Va., January 31, 1845, and now living at Wyoming, N. Y.
Heredity 3731
To-day 2932

WARE, EUGENE, FITCH ("IRONQUILL")
Born at Hartford, Conn., May 29, 1841; died at Cascade, Colo., July 1, 1911.
The Aztec City 3211

WARNER, CHARLES DUDLEY
Born at Plainfield, Mass., September 12, 1829; died at Hartford, Conn., October 20, 1900.
Bookra 2854

WARREN, JOHN BYRNE LEICESTER [THIRD BARON DE TABLEY]
Born in Cheshire, England, April 26, 1835; died there November 22, 1895.
The Churchyard on the Sands 1067

WARTON, THOMAS
Born at Basingstoke, England, in 1728; died May 21, 1790.
Inscription in a Hermitage .. 1640

WASSON, DAVID ATWOOD
Born at West Brooksville, Me., May 4, 1823; died at West Medford, Mass., January 21, 1887.
Joy-Month 1579

WASTELL, SIMON
Born, probably at Wasdale, Cumberland, England, date unknown; died at Northampton, England, in January, 1632.
Man's Mortality 3405

WATERMAN, NIXON
Born at Newark, Ill., November 12, 1850; now living in Boston, Mass.
Recompense 2929
Rose to the Living, A 1890

WATSON, MINOR
No biographical data available.
Constancy 3475

WATSON, ROSAMUND MARRIOTT
Born in London, England, in 1863, died there December 29, 1911.
Ave atque Vale 353
Omnia Somnia 424
Requiescat 1122

WATSON, WILLIAM
Born at Burley-in-Wharfedale, Yorkshire, England, August 2, 1858; now living at London.
Dawn on the Headland 1308
Great Misgiving, The 3428
Invention 3100
Keyboard, The 3132
Lachrimæ Musarum 3659
Leavetaking 366
Song, "April, April" 1354
Song, "O, like a queen's her happy tread" 577
Sonnets from "Sonnets to Miranda" 1271
Woman with the Serpent's Tongue, The 1908
Wordsworth's Grave 3682

WATTS, ISAAC
Born at Southampton, England, July 17, 1674; died at Theobalds, Herts, England, November 25, 1748.
Cradle Hymn, A 79
"How Doth the Little Busy Bee" 104
"O God! Our Help in Ages Past" 3790
Sluggard, The 106

WATTS-DUNTON, WALTER THEODORE
Born at St. Ives, Huntingdonshire, England, October 12, 1832; died at Putney Hill, England, June 7, 1914.
Coleridge 3601
First Kiss, The 689
Sonnet's Voice, The 3106

WAUGH, EDWIN
Born at Rochdale, Lancashire, England, January 29, 1817; died at New Brighton, England, April 30, 1890.
The Dule's i' this Bonnet o' Mine" 757

WEATHERLY, FREDERIC EDWARD
Born at Portishead, Somersetshire, England, October 4, 1848, and now living in London.
The Dustman 73

WEBBE, CHARLES
An English writer, living in the latter half of the seventeenth century.
Against Indifference 615

WEBSTER, AUGUSTA
Born at Poole, Dorset, England, January 3, 1837; died at Kew, England, September 5, 1894.
The Pine 1408
The Violet and the Rose 1503

WEBSTER, JOHN
An English writer, born about 1580, and died about 1625.
A Dirge 3430
Song, "All the flowers of the spring" 3517

WELBY, AMELIA COPPUCK
Born at St. Michael's, Maryland, February 3, 1819; died in Louisville, Ky., May 3, 1852.
Twilight at Sea 1317

WELLS, CAROLYN
Born at Rahway, New Jersey, about 1868, and still living there.
Four Limericks 2088
The Poster-Girl 1941

WELSH, ROBERT GILBERT
Born in Glasgow, Scotland, but a resident of the United States since childhood, and now living in New York City.
Azrael 3414

WERNER, ALICE
Born at Trieste, Austria-Hungary, June 26, 1859, and now living in London.
A Song of Fleet Street 2597

WESLEY, CHARLES
Born at Epworth, Lincolnshire, England, December 28, 1707; died in London, March 29, 1788.
"A Charge to Keep I Have" 3792
"Jesus, Lover of My Soul". 3791

WEST, JOHN [FIRST EARL DE LA WARR]
Born in England, April 4, 1693; died in London, March 16, 1766.
Fair Hebe..... 721

WESTWOOD, THOMAS
Born at Enfield, England, November 26, 1814; died in Belgium, March 13, 1888.
Little Bell..... 259
Under My Window..... 258

WHEELER, EDWARD J.
Born in Cleveland, Ohio, March 11, 1859; now living in New York City.
Night's Mardi Gras..... 1328

WHEELOCK, JOHN HALL
Born at Far Rockaway, Long Island, N. Y., in 1886, and now living at Morristown, N. J.
Sunday Evening in the Common..... 3059

WHITE, GLEESON (JOSEPH WILLIAM GLEESON)
Born at Christ Church, England, in 1851; died in London in 1898.
A Primrose Dame..... 740

WHITE, HENRY KIRKE
Born at Nottingham, England, March 21, 1785; died at Cambridge, England, October 19, 1806.
The Early Primrose..... 1496

WHITE, HERVEY
Born at New London, Ia., November 26, 1866; now living in Chicago, Ill.
"I Saw the Clouds"..... 2984

WHITE, JOSEPH BLANCO
Born at Seville, Spain, July 11, 1775; died at Liverpool, England, May 20, 1841.
To Night..... 1324

WHITMAN, WALT
Born at West Hills, Long Island, N. Y., May 31, 1819; died at Camden, N. J., March 26, 1892.
"As Toilsome I Wandered Virginia's Woods..... 3004
Beasts, The..... 2996
"Darest Thou Now, O Soul" 3494
Last Invocation, The..... 3494
Mannahatta..... 2568
"O Captain! My Captain". 3629
Song for All Seas, All Ships,. 1584
To the Man-of-War Bird... 1542
"When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed"..... 3630

WHITNEY, ADELINE DUTTON TRAIN
Born in Boston, Mass., September 15, 1824; died at Milton, Mass., in 1906.
Equinoctial..... 367
Humpty Dumpty..... 2034

WHITNEY, HELEN HAY
An American writer, born in New York City and still living there.
Song, "We only ask for sunshine"..... 3386
To Diane..... 1128

WHITTAKER, FREDERICK
An American writer, born in 1838, died in 1917.
Custer's Last Charge..... 2529

WHITTIER, JOHN GREENLEAF
Born at Haverhill, Mass., December 17, 1807; died at Hampton Falls, N. H., September 7, 1892.
Barbara Frietchie..... 2494
Barefoot Boy, The..... 261
Bayard Taylor..... 3658
Brown of Ossawatomie..... 2484
Frost Spirit, The..... 1388
Henchman, The..... 553
Ichabod..... 1837
Maud Muller..... 905
My Playmate..... 972
Proem..... 3078
Skipper Ireson's Ride..... 2445
Telling the Bees..... 1109

WIDDEMER, MARGARET
Born at Doylestown, Pa., and now living in New York City.
Factories, The..... 3057
Greek Folk Song..... 3506

WILCOX, ELLA WHEELER
Born at Johnson Center, Wisconsin, in 1855; now living at Short Beach, Conn.
Interlude..... 3472
Midsummer..... 922
Solitude..... 2929

WILDE, OSCAR O'FLAHERTIE WILLS
Born at Dublin, Ireland, October 15, 1856; died in Paris, France, November 30, 1900.
Ave Imperatrix..... 2244
Ballad of Reading Gaol, The 2773
Endymion..... 1013
Requiescat..... 1119
Serenade..... 712
Theocritus..... 3664

WILDE, RICHARD HENRY
Born at Dublin, Ireland, September 24, 1789; brought to United States in 1797; died at New Orleans, La., September 10, 1847.
"My Life is Like the Summer Rose"..... 3358

WILKINSON, FLORENCE (MRS. WILFRID MUIR EVANS)
Born at Tarrytown, N. Y., and now living at Westport, Conn.
At the Salon 3373
Students 1792

WILLARD, EMMA HART
Born at Berlin, Conn., February 27, 1787; died at Troy, N. Y., April 15, 1870.
"Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep" 1599

WILLIAMS, [SIR] CHARLES HANBURY
Born, probably at Pontypool, Monmouthshire, England, December 8, 1708; committed suicide, November 2, 1759.
"Come, Chloe, and Give me Sweet Kisses" 685

WILLIS, NATHANIEL PARKER
Born at Portland, Me., January 20, 1806; died at Idlewild, near Newburgh, N. Y., January 20, 1867.
"Chamber Scene" 348
Love in a Cottage 732
On the Picture of a "Child Tired of Play" 280
To Laura W—, Two Years Old 270
Unseen Spirits 1032

WILLSON, BYRON FORCEYTHE
Born at Little Genesee, Alleghany county, N. Y., April 10, 1837; died at Alfred, N. Y., February 2, 1867.
Old Sergeant, The 3332

WILMOT, JOHN [SECOND EARL OF ROCHESTER]
Born at Ditchley, Oxfordshire, England, April 10, 1647; died there, July 26, 1680.
Constancy 611
Epitaph on Charles II 1911
Love and Life 611
Song, "My dear mistress has a heart" 610
Song, "Too late, alas! I must confess" 612

WILSON, JOHN [CHRISTOPHER NORTH]
Born at Paisley, Scotland, May 18, 1785; died at Edinburgh, April 3, 1854.
Evening Cloud, The 1320

WILSON, ROBERT BURNS
Born in Washington county, Pa., October 30, 1850; now living at Frankfort, Ky.
Passing of March, The 1353
"Such is the Death the Soldier Dies" 2317

WINCHILSEA, COUNTESS OF, see FINCH, ANNE

WINKWORTH, CATHARINE
Born at London, England, September 13, 1827; died near Geneva, Switzerland, July 1, 1878.
Veni, Sancte Spiritus [tr] 3780

WINTER, WILLIAM
Born at Gloucester, Mass., July 15, 1836; died at New Brighton, Staten Island, N. Y., June 30, 1917.
Age 424
Queen, The 671
Refuge 921
Rubicon, The 3497

WISDOME, ROBERT
Born, probably in Oxfordshire, England, about 1500; died at Wilburton, England, in September, 1568.
A Religious Use of Tobacco 1983

WITHER, GEORGE
Born at Brentworth, Hampshire, England, June 11, 1588; died in London, May 2, 1667.
"I Loved a Lass" 718
Lover's Resolution, The 813
"Sleep, Baby, Sleep" 75
Stolen Kiss, A 683

WOLCOT, JOHN [PETER PINDAR]
Born at Dodbrooke, near Kingsbridge, Devonshire, England, May 9, 1738; died at Somers Town, England, January 14, 1819.
The Razor-Seller 2101
To a Kiss 686

WOLFE, CHARLES
Born at Blackhall, County Kildare, Ireland, December 14, 1791; died at the Cove of Cork, Ireland, February 21, 1823.
Burial of Sir John Moore after Corunna 2448
"Go, Forget Me" 953
To Mary 1082

WOODBERRY, GEORGE EDWARD
Born at Beverley, Mass., May 12, 1855; and still living there.
At Gibraltar 2229
Comrades 3005
"O, Inexpressible as Sweet" 668
Rose of Stars, The 506
Secret, The 505
Song of Eros 507
Sonnets Written in the Fall of 1914 2552
"When First I Saw Her" . . . 571
Wild Eden 3209

WOODS, MARGARET LOUISA
Born at Rugby, England in 1856, and now living at Oxford, England.
Genius Loci 3110
Young Windebank 2325

WOODS, WILLIAM HERVEY
Born in Green county, Ky., November 17, 1852, and now living at Baltimore, Md.
The Prayer of Beaten Men . 2944

WOODWORTH, SAMUEL
Born at Scituate, Mass., January 13,

1785; died in New York City, December 9, 1842.
Bucket, The..... 466
Needle, The..... 2120

WOOLSEY, SARAH CHAUNCEY [SUSAN COOLIDGE]
Born at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1845; died at Newport, R. I., in 1905.
Helen..... 1102
How the Leaves Came Down 142
When..... 3464

WOOLSON, CONSTANCE FENIMORE
Born at Claremont, N. H., in 1848; died at Venice, Italy, January 23, 1894.
Yellow Jessamine..... 1490

WORDSWORTH, DOROTHY [MRS. EDWARD QUILLINAN]
Born August 6, 1804; the second child of William Wordsworth; died at Rydal Mount, Westmoreland, England, July 9, 1847.
The Cottager to her Infant. 84

WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM
Born at Cockermouth, Cumberland, England, April 7, 1770; died at Rydal Mount, Westmoreland, England, April 23, 1850.
Character of the Happy Warrior, The..... 2935
Elegiac Stanzas..... 3587
England, 1802..... 2237
Expostulation and Reply... 1657
Green Linnet, The..... 1541
"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"..... 1473
Inner Vision, The..... 3087
"It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free"..... 1314
Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey 2578
Lines Written in Early Spring..... 1334
Lucy..... 1073
Lucy Gray, or, Solitude.... 290
"O Nightingale, Thou Surely Art"..... 1545
Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood..... 371
Ode to Duty..... 2955
On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic..... 2619
Pass of Kirkstone, The..... 2582
Perfect Woman..... 380
Rainbow, The..... 366
Reverie of Poor Susan, The. 281
"Scorn Not the Sonnet"... 3109
Small Celandine, The..... 1469
Solitary Reaper, The..... 333
Sonnet, "Earth has not anything to show more fair". 2597
Stepping Westward..... 398
"Surprised by Joy"..... 3566
Tables Turned, The..... 1611
Three Cottage Girls The... 334
To a Butterfly..... 1517
To a Child..... 125
To a Skylark..... 1565
To a Skylark..... 1566
To Hartley Coleridge..... 275
To Sleep..... 3221
To the Cuckoo..... 1538
To the Daisy..... 1478
To the Small Celandine.... 1470
Trosachs, The..... 1430
Two April Mornings, The.. 3564
We Are Seven..... 316
"Why Art Thou Silent"... 1254
"With Ships the Sea was Sprinkled"..... 1589
"World is too much with us, The"..... 1292
Written in March..... 1352
Yarrow Unvisited..... 2584
Yarrow Visited..... 2586

WOTTON, [SIR] HENRY
Born at Boston, Malherbe, Kent, England, in 1568; died at Eton, England, in December, 1639.
Character of a Happy Life, The..... 2986
Elizabeth of Bohemia..... 525

WRIGHT, WILLARD HUNTINGTON
Born at Charlottesville, Va., and now living in New York City.
Song against Women..... 829

WYATT, [SIR] THOMAS
Born in Kent, England, about 1503; died at Sherborne, Dorsetshire, England, October 10, 1542.
"Forget not Yet"..... 583

WYNDHAM [SIR] CHARLES [SECOND EARL OF EGREMONT]
Born in London, England, August 19, 1710; died there, August 21, 1763.
The Fair Thief..... 536

Y

YATES, EDMUND
Born at Edinburgh, Scotland, July 3, 1831; died in London, England, May 20, 1894.
All Saints'..... 1868

YBARRA, THOMAS RUSSELL
An American writer, born in 1880, and now living in New York City.
Lay of Ancient Rome..... 2044

YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER
Born at Dublin, Ireland, June 13, 1865; and now living in London, England.
Ballad of Father Gilligan, The..... 2803
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